



Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary – get smart: planning to protect



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Protective Service Review 2008

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Key points

It should be recognised that much progress has been made in enhancing the capability and capacity to deliver protective services on the ground since 2005 and this is evidenced in the growth of practical collaboration. However much remains to be done and future progress is dependent on good planning. Why are plans important? It is because they provide the public with clarity about the stated intention, direction and purpose of the service in dealing with these issues.

This is an overview of plans and planning processes around protective service improvement and not an assessment of actual capability and capacity. Identified gaps in planning do not necessarily show that forces/authorities fail to deliver an effective response in these areas. This must therefore be set alongside the outputs of HMIC's inspection programme as agreed with Ministers; the review is therefore retrospective and indicative but **not** definitive or predictive of outcome.

The policy objective is to achieve consistency in planning over years to come in an area where the public interest is quite clear in terms of building capacity and capability to reduce the risk of harm. The review provides a template for consistency in planning but does not address the issue of whether forces or police authorities will make best use of it. The definitive answer as to the question of whether the 2009 and 2011 milestones for improvement set out by the Government will be met can only be known when the plans have been implemented successfully. Monitoring this is the role of individual police authorities and may be subject to future scrutiny.

This report outlines the national context and headline findings. In addition, forces and authorities have received individual feedback on the review of evidence submitted to HMIC. The purpose of feedback is to assist forces to develop plans that are most likely to address gaps in capability and capacity. Whether the planning actually achieves the required improvements can also be expected to be the subject of future scrutiny.

The review found a proliferation of planning processes both within and across forces and authorities. Elements of planning are generally not commonly applied across each protective service area. While there are pockets of notable practice, there is no commonly applied standard for planning that would enable the sharing of meaningful operational product and good practice. A lack of comparable data sets, no common approach to analysis and inconsistent governance causes problems with regard to aggregation of issues and prioritisation of resource use. This inhibits information exchange, interoperability and operational flexibility both within forces and regionally between forces.

It will be evident that forces responses are mixed, some clearly set out the issues and provide convincing details of development, some do not. Overall 49% of forces had credible plans.

This report makes recommendations for improving the planning process rather than necessarily advocating a plan that is applicable in all circumstances. It is argued that having a corporate model for planning that is consistently applied across all areas of business is the key to 'working smarter'. Proper and effectively communicated planning will also cut bureaucracy, reduce duplication of effort, improve productivity, increase added value and encourage creative co-operation and collaboration.

Beyond the obvious organisational and operational benefits of sharing the same planning language, HMIC is concerned that forces are not sufficiently taking advantage of all opportunities provided, for instance through competitive tendering, collective bargaining and increased purchasing power, and therefore may not be achieving full benefit in terms of efficiency gains and productivity dividends.

This is not about increased bureaucracy but about 'working smarter'. In this context, particularly at a time of increased demand and expectation of enhanced service delivery, and at a time when forces have to meet the challenge of tackling increasingly sophisticated, mobile and borderless criminal enterprise, HMIC is of the view that a focus on more efficient planning processes and effective outcomes will assist forces and authorities in accomplishing more with less.



1. Executive summary

- 1.1 In 2007 the Government asked police forces to produce comprehensive plans for the major areas of policing known as protective services. The aim was a national safety net against harm from serious and organised criminals, major crime and critical incidents, disasters and public disorder, criminals on the roads and the threat to vulnerable people.
- 1.2 A report by HMIC in 2005 had identified gaps in many areas. The Home Office required 'significant' improvement in areas with serious gaps – also known as 'high need' areas – by the end of 2009 and said that all forces should meet acceptable standards by 2011. It was made clear that improved performance had to be financed from within existing budgets. Forces were urged to be 'smarter' in existing work and to 'raise their eyes to the common interest' by collaborating.
- 1.3 In 2008, the Government offered guidance on the elements to be covered in plans. The evidence of this HMIC review of planning processes shows that adherence to the guidance has been inconsistent. Responsibility for this may be shared between forces, the Government and national bodies, as the guidance could, and should, have been clearer and issued earlier. However, the Government could not have been clearer in its message about the importance of improving protective services.
- 1.4 Half of forces have credible and sufficient plans in all protective service areas. However, it is troubling, that some forces' plans have not established protective services as a strategic priority within their planning – part of core business. Some forces have serious weaknesses in important areas of planning and most are weak in establishing long-term measures of the success of improvement work. Some forces have looked almost exclusively inwards, while others are focused primarily outwards. The Government expects them to strike a balance. This is of course balanced in some part by those forces and authorities who have risen to the challenge and produced creative and appropriate plans.
- 1.5 There was a wide variability in plans, their structure and the amount of specific detail. This casts doubt on the reliability of the self-generated assessments of forces' need. In a handful of cases, HMIC cannot be satisfied that planning is in place for improvement in the areas of highest need – the most acute gaps – by the end of 2009. In general, because of the variability, even where plans exist it will only be clear that the highest need gaps have been closed in 2009 if, and when, the substance of plans is delivered on the ground, and validated by inspection. In conclusion, this review has not found the transparent and comprehensive picture of readiness and progress across the Service that the Government hoped for.
- 1.6 As a consequence, HMIC believes that the Service must urgently create a new, universal protective services planning language. Currently, there are 43 different 'dialects' to explain the way in which police forces plan for and deliver these vital areas of policing. No dialect is wrong in itself. They all have proud traditions. But they often lead to insularity and the risk of forces 'going it alone' – as the review suggests some are doing. At times, it means an aversion to new ideas. Dialects can be trapped in time and local culture, though the threats are regional and national and are evolving constantly.

- 1.7 The Government and Service leaders must offer clearer guidance and definitions – supported, if required, by tuition in the form of seminars or conferences. Forces must accept the common language and must be willing to be judged by the whole Service, including potential partners, on how ‘smart’ their internal and external planning is. The Government will not be able to judge whether the right balance has been struck – in the interests of the Service as a whole – until the picture is clearly understood. That is the ‘what’ – a planning-based safety net that everyone can understand.
- 1.8 This review is a contribution to the ‘how and why’ debate. It is a desktop analysis of forces’ planning processes. It should not add to the bureaucratic burden but should sharpen the thinking behind the planning. Some forces may argue that performance ‘on the ground’ is good, so why should they change their planning approach? Equally, some forces with clear planning processes are not necessarily performing well. This misses the point.
- 1.9 Performance on the ground – the way forces **have been addressing** protective services – is measured by traditional HMIC inspections, which continue. This review has looked at planning for the years to come – its coherence and attention to detail and its flexibility to adapt to dynamic challenges.
- 1.10 Good past performance **may** indicate future success but it is no guarantee of improvement by the force or for the Service. Nor should there be complacency about past performance. Even for serious and organised crime HMIC’s inspection found worrying gaps. It is vitally important that we do not put an artificial gloss on underdevelopment in the area.
- 1.11 Many planning shortcomings have been resolved by feedback from HMIC. However, this review has made seven recommendations. It has also offered a straightforward planning model, with five broad steps in logical sequence.
- 1.12 First, a capture of available assessments of threat and risk, which give a picture of the potential and likelihood of harm, and an assessment of capability and capacity to address these vulnerabilities. Second, analysis of what is going on – of threats and risks and the ability to meet them - must be completed. Gaps – areas of ‘need’ - can then be identified, placed in order of priority and aggregated appropriately both internally to achieve required co-ordination of activity and externally with partners to identify opportunities to collaborate. Third, a governance structure must be created to act on the analysis. Fourth, the system must produce ‘outputs’ – action plans which look internally at more efficient working and outwards, at collaboration. Finally, forces must be able to measure and analyse success, and failure, over the long-term – the outcomes stage.
- 1.13 The specific recommendations follow the same logical sequence:
- 1. The Protective Services Steering Group should consider producing a clearer definition of need and guide forces on how this will be applied in relation to the requirement that forces should have plans in place to deliver improvements in high need areas by 2009.***
- The Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) or the National Policing Improvement Agency (NPIA) should review the microanalysis tool and models that forces are using to articulate and prioritise need and consider their potential for wider application.***

HMIC believes that a nationally agreed points-based matrix system is the way forward. The microanalysis tool developed in North Yorkshire and other approaches adopted by Derbyshire, Cleveland and West Midlands is recognised as notable practice and may contribute to this, although each of these independently addresses only one essential element within a cohesive planning model.

2. Forces should be able to demonstrate an effective and robust governance structure for improvement work.

National bodies should consider offering best practice on governance models. There is no one structure that fits all, but protective services must be a core force activity that is embedded within planning internally and externally.

3. The National Policing Improvement Agency should consider developing templates for action plans, protective service improvement plans and externally focused partnership plans.

The creation of templates will allow the Government and potential collaboration partners to more easily 'read across' what individual forces are doing.

4. In light of the pressing requirement for forces to address highest areas of need by 2009, in addition to receiving detailed individual and confidential HMIC feedback on the review of their plans, those whose plans fall short of expectations, should be offered the opportunity to receive additional feedback from HMIC and targeted support from NPIA to assist in addressing shortfalls in plans.

The review raised questions about areas of high threat or need that did not appear to be adequately addressed in the initial assessment process, and cases where planning for the provision of services did not appear to match the identified areas of high threat or need. In other words, currently resources may not be targeted correctly in high need areas. These areas require urgent attention.

5. Opportunities should be exploited to extend collaborative arrangements that promise greater efficiency and productivity. Police authorities and forces should adopt effective and transparent performance frameworks that capture these benefits.

6. In relation to the requirement to meet the national minimum standards by 2011, all forces and authorities should be encouraged to review their existing assessment processes, products and governance arrangements, particularly in light of publication of the latest version of the ACPO standards.

7. The Protective Services Steering Group should consider defining mechanisms for 'intensive support' or engagement for forces and authorities that consistently fail to meet the requirement to improve protective services.

Forces, authorities, the Government and national policing bodies are all 'in it for the long haul' as far as protective services are concerned. There is a need, therefore, for medium- and long-term mechanisms and processes to bring up those who fall behind. PSSG should oversee this process.



2. Background

- 2.1 The decision in 2006 not to reshape the policing structure in England and Wales into fewer strategic forces ended the mergers debate for the moment. It did not, though, close in the 43 forces the gaps in protective services highlighted in HMIC's Closing the Gap report of 2005.
- 2.2 Seven broad categories of protective service have been identified:
- serious and organised crime;
 - major crime, such as serial murders;
 - critical incidents – single events that significantly impact on public safety;
 - civil contingencies – natural threats or disasters, such as rail crashes;
 - public order;
 - roads policing – in this context, the use of the roads by criminals; and
 - protecting vulnerable people. There were four sub-categories under this heading – domestic abuse, missing persons, child abuse and the management of violent and sexual offenders.
- An eighth major area of threat – counter-terrorism – is not the subject of this review.
- 2.3 The Government pressed forces to close the gaps through internal change and greater collaboration. HMIC was commissioned in 2008 to assess the quality of protective services planning – particularly in 'high need' areas. It was not a traditional HMIC inspection of 'capability' (skills and expertise) or 'capacity' (which relates to resources available).
- 2.4 Inspections of these aspects of protective services are under way. ACPO has set out clear national minimum standards to assess performance.
- 2.5 While there is no definitive planning model, there are legislative guidelines. On 14 February 2007, the then Minister for Policing, Tony McNulty, told forces and authorities to list their protective services priorities according to their view of highest need. They should be able to demonstrate their readiness to address the highest need areas by the end of 2009, he said. All forces were told to be 'match fit' in all protective services by 2011.
- 2.6 On 2 January 2008, the Minister asked each force and authority to produce protective service improvement plans (PSIPs). The Policing Plan Regulations 2008 were enacted on 6 February 2008. On 14 March 2008, the Home Office published guidance to accompany the regulations relating to protective services. Forces and authorities had been aware of the thrust of this guidance since late 2007.
- 2.7 Most forces tried to fill gaps by redirecting resources, building up their capacity and capability, or at least outlining plans to reach this goal. A few authorities raised the police precept on the council tax in order to raise money to improve protective services. HMIC inspections will continue to assess the operational impact of this response.

- 2.8 The PSSG – a subcommittee of the National Policing Board, whose membership includes representatives from the Home Office, police authorities and ACPO – has overseen this review. Sir Norman Bettison, the Chief Constable of West Yorkshire Police and a leading member of the PSSG, made clear in May 2008 that the aim was a transparent national picture – a ‘read-across to the protective services prioritised by forces’. The review terms of reference were two-fold:
- to assess the force’s view of demand – the threat – and whether their planned responses are sufficient to address the potential for harm in each protective service area; and
 - to prepare a view of overall progress and whether each force’s programme of work is succeeding in closing the protective service gaps.
- 2.9 The review has used the seven criteria, – these criteria are for elements that should be included in plans laid out in the legislation and guidance:
1. local assessments of levels of threat and capability (the identified gaps);
 2. details of plans supporting existing regional and national initiatives (existing work);
 3. an outline of collaborative relationships with other forces (collaboration);
 4. plans to address protective services, including prioritisation (prioritisation);
 5. resources allocated to deliver each plan (resource allocation);
 6. an indication of how plans are to be delivered (governance and compliance); and
 7. measures to review plans and ensure that they are sufficient (measures of success).
- 2.10 These criteria can be broken down into a list of elements that HMIC would expect to find within the local policing plan or the PSIP.
- 2.11 There are ‘inputs’, all relating to the assessment of problems and what the force is capable of doing about them: its capacity and capability assessment; a strategic and tactical intelligence report; an analysis of risk. The second stage of planning involves some analysis of gaps in capability and capacity in light of the likelihood of harm (threat and risk). There is then a ‘governance’ element. There are three ‘output’ elements – an overall action plan; internal improvement plans; and external, collaborative plans. There should also be ‘outcomes’ – measures of success. These include an analysis of the value of the process the force has set in train; a study of efficiency savings; and an assessment of productivity gains. The structure of the HMIC Protective Services Review 2008 and the assessment criteria appear in Appendix A.
- 2.12 As well as measuring, objectively, the planning elements, HMIC has also drawn some conclusions based on its experience and, it would assert, logic and sound common sense.

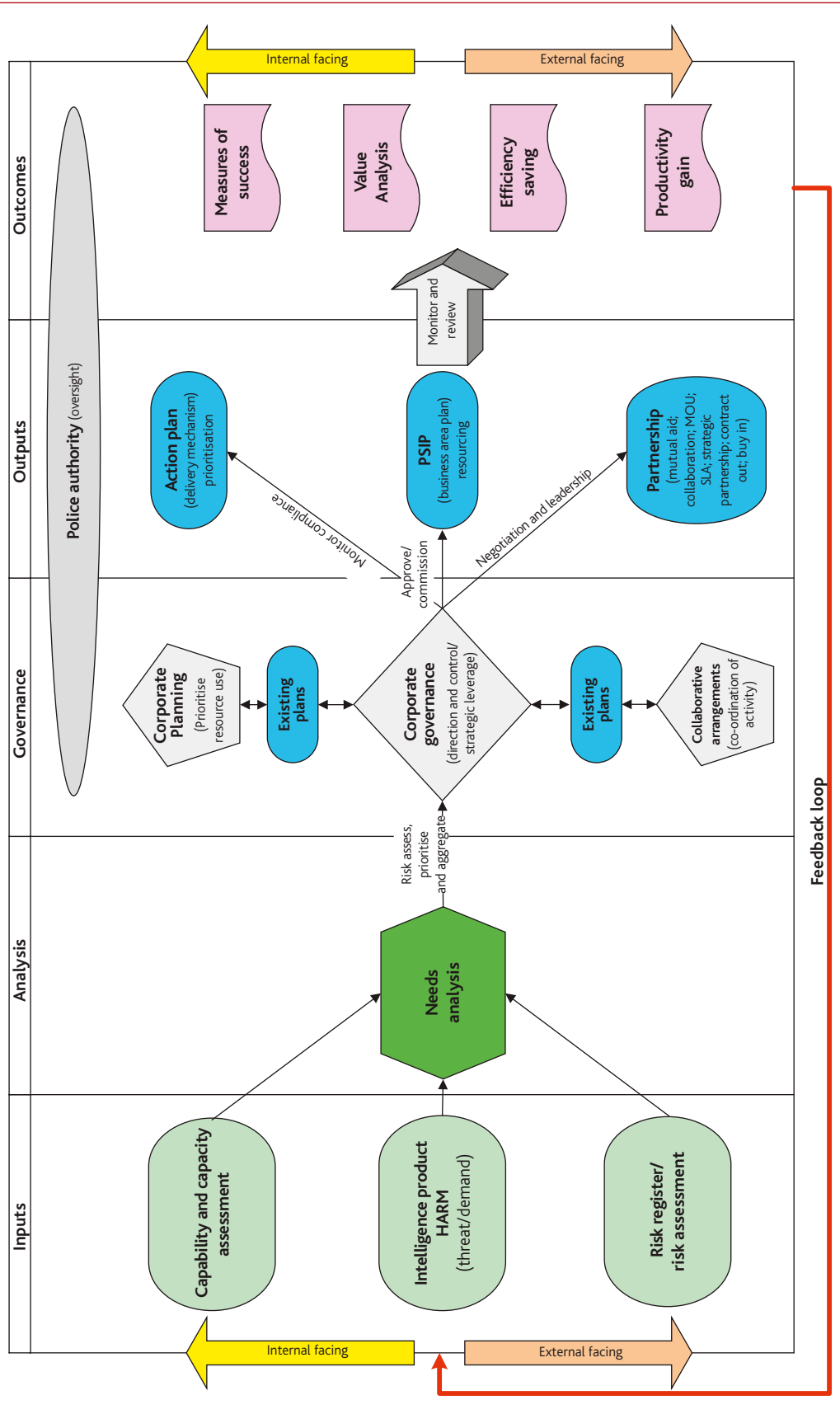
- 2.13 The review was commissioned as a snapshot in time. No doubt much more work has been undertaken by individual forces and authorities since the initial evidence was obtained, particularly in response to parallel pieces of work being undertaken following various strands of the HMIC inspection programme, the release of the latest version of the ACPO national minimum standards and ongoing development work by the NPIA on the implementation framework.
- 2.14 This is a new and complex area. The messages were mixed and not always clear with regard to some key definitions and expectations on forces/authorities. The review has identified gaps in planning in some forces which has been the subject of detailed individual feedback. HMIC is working closely with forces to improve matters.
- 2.15 The danger is that forces and authorities will respond to individual feedback in isolation, without collectively reflecting upon the national context outlined in this report. Clearly, there is a need for all organisations - HMIC, ACPO, the Association of Police Authorities and the NPIA - to consider the implications of failing to co-ordinate a response nationally.
- 2.16 This approach is in keeping with the Government's indication, in the Green Paper (Home Office (2008) *From the Neighbourhood to the National: Policing Our Communities Together*, London, TSO.) in 2008, that HMIC may assume the role of 'fierce advocate of the public interest'.



3. Protective services business planning model

- 3.1 While no one size of protective service plan can fit all forces, HMIC has offered a model that any force could adopt to shape their planning process (see figure 1).
- 3.2 This broadly comprises a high-level business planning model that commanders and business leads may put in place within and across protective service business areas. It would equally apply to any area of policing or public protection depending on structure and local circumstances.
- 3.3 This process may consist of five basic elements, which are common to all business planning processes and will be familiar within corporate planning:
 - **Inputs** are essential to the analysis of the business need and may include a capability and capacity assessment; an intelligence-based assessment of threat (strategic assessment); the ACPO/NPIA threat/harm matrix; and a corporate risk register or risk assessment tool (microanalysis).
 - **Analysis** describes a process by which all disparate pictures of demand, risk, threat and harm are weighted against organisational considerations and capability and capacity to produce a clear picture of the gap in service provision. Analysis should be undertaken of what the force faces, what it is currently doing, on its own and with other forces, and what it is capable of achieving. Gaps – areas of need – will emerge.
 - **The governance** element of planning describes the establishment of a structure to drive, co-ordinate and monitor what may be a complex web of actions. It should be clear what the terms of reference of these arrangements are, the roles and responsibilities, and lines of accountability. Leadership is also key to delivering the commitment for change. There are internal and external elements to this involving the coordination of internal plans and collaborative arrangements externally.
 - **Outputs** or products of the planning process are commissioned by the strategic lead to monitor three delivery mechanisms which are reflected as either internal or external facing:
 - **action plans** – providing high-level prioritisation, ownership and timelines for delivering elements of improvement;
 - **PSIPs** – internally focused business area or protective service-based plans providing the structure and resourcing of improvement; and
 - **externally focused partnership plans** – including collaborative arrangements, mutual aid, contracting and purchasing arrangements, and memoranda of understanding with partners that deliver improvement.
 - **Outcomes** should be defined by the strategic lead within the rationale for change (i.e. added value, efficiency savings and productivity gains, etc). These establish a set of mechanisms for judging what has worked, operationally and in terms of efficiency, and what should be built on; what is promising but requires modification; and what has failed. There has to be some analysis of these business results and account taken of the return on the investment in improvement planning. Learning – in which force leaders, their fellow forces, authorities and national bodies all play a role – must be fed back into the first assessment phase.

Figure 1: Business planning model for protective service improvement



- 3.4 If the threats underlying protective services are constantly evolving – particularly in the area of serious and organised crime – then, effectively, the planning model should be a living mechanism capable of keeping up with the evolution.
- 3.5 Common planning processes within each protective service business area should be able to produce corporate, coherent and consolidated products (capability assessment, assessment of harm and improvement plans) that can be aggregated up from the functional business lead, whether this is at OCU or Force (tactical) to be prioritised at corporate (strategic) level.
- 3.6 The elements within the planning model may be sequential and tied-in with parts of the business planning cycle (intelligence, budgetary, HR, and organisational planning cycles) at the governance level. The business planning cycle itself, within each Protective Service area, may be iterative in that once a cycle has been completed it begins a review; so it remains fresh, updated and in line with need and threat in a dynamic and changing policing environment. Planning does not stand still but is constantly being reviewed and refreshed.
- 3.7 To be of any benefit at all, the planning process must inform strategic decision making with regard to priorities, resource use and budget. A force may have a wonderful planning regime but if this does not inform decisions at a strategic level, gaps will appear between identified need, service provision and capability and capacity on the ground.
- 3.8 The Police Authority has a review and monitoring role overseeing the key processes within governance, taking a view as to how force planning product impacts on the Local Policing Plan and monitoring the outcome of planning in terms of influencing efficiency and effectiveness.
- 3.9 HMIC believes that this simple yet robust model can achieve this goal. The seven guidance criteria and the list of elements HMIC looked for in plans all fit logically into the structure of the proposed model.



4. Assessment of threat, capability, capacity and need

- 4.1 Unless forces are clear about threats from crime, disorder and potential disaster, and their ability to meet them, they cannot plan properly. Police forces are attempting to reduce the harm that a range of threats cause to communities. The nature and impact of those threats is changing constantly.
- 4.2 To avoid confusion from overuse of the word 'risk', this report generally uses the simple term 'threat' as shorthand for the dynamic and complex equation of threat and risk that forces grapple with on a daily basis.
- 4.3 'Capability' refers to the skills and expertise the force can summon up. Its 'capacity' is the strength and depth of its resources. The net result when the two are combined is the force's ability to tackle crime and threats.
- 4.4 'Need' is the difference or gap between the threat and capability/capacity. Major gaps are 'high need' areas.
- 4.5 High threat is not always the same as high need. If, for instance, a force faces armed crack cocaine dealers seeking to expand their market, then it faces a high threat. If its operations have disrupted the traffickers, then it may have commensurate capability/capacity. Therefore, this is an area of high threat but not necessarily of high need. Indeed, the operations should bring the threat down.
- 4.6 However, if it struggles, or cannot sustain the operations, the threat will grow and a high need gap may open up. It should also be remembered, that threat is not always visible or about volume of crime. The abduction of a child will be a major threat to the public's sense of safety if a force is not ready to deal with it, even though child abductions are rare.
- 4.7 Overall, protective service categories were classed as high threat in 25 per cent of strategic threat assessments. However, Table 1 shows that in 39 per cent of assessments there was found to be no evidence of threat. In 15 per cent, they were classed as low threat. The findings of no, or low, threat may be accurate. They may equally suggest failures in the assessment and analysis process in a number of forces.
- 4.8 Global figures may be of very limited use. The picture is clearer when the protective services are broken down into sub-categories. This shows that the areas defined by forces as the highest threats were serious and organised crime (77 per cent), sexual and violent offender management (33 per cent) and domestic abuse (30 per cent). These are areas with a visible threat. The police can 'see' drug traffickers, paedophiles and men of violence.

Table 1: 'Threat' as identified within forces' strategic intelligence product

Strategic threat assessment	Serious and organised crime	Major crime	Civil contingencies	Critical incidents	Public order	Roads policing	Domestic abuse	Missing persons	Child abuse	Sexual/violent offender management	Totals
No evidence	0%	37%	72%	56%	51%	28%	23%	53%	37%	28%	39%
Low threat	2%	14%	9%	12%	16%	23%	19%	21%	12%	21%	15%
Medium threat	21%	26%	14%	26%	26%	23%	28%	12%	26%	19%	22%
High threat	77%	23%	5%	7%	7%	26%	30%	14%	26%	33%	25%

- 4.9 By contrast, civil contingencies, critical incidents and public order were not identified as an area of threat by many forces. But does that mean that those forces are ready to respond effectively to problems in those areas? A conclusion may be drawn that forces find it easier to assess threat and risk in areas they understand best – such as organised crime. In other words, they judge by what they know and do now.
- 4.10 However, the gaps identified in *Closing the Gap* were not only related to the current response to obvious threats. They also concerned preparedness in less predictable areas. Assessment of true need is essential if forces are to target resources correctly to address gaps in protective services. 'Need' in this context means the need to improve.
- 4.11 There are a number of elements, and analysis tools, applicable to the process of assessing need. A capability and capacity assessment, an intelligence-based assessment of threat and a corporate risk register are among them. Forces can use the current ACPO/NPIA threat/harm matrix or a risk assessment tool (the microanalysis tool).
- 4.12 Each force is required to self-define high need. However, it is clear from the review, that self-assessment of need is fraught with problems and is inherently unreliable. Each force is assessing need differently. Some may be over-defining need and some may be under-defining high need.

4.13 As with the threat assessments, where high threat definitions are clustered around certain types of problem, the analysis of need supplied by most forces focuses on certain categories. By and large, they are the same categories. Table 2 shows that most forces selected serious and organised crime (65 per cent), major crime (40 per cent), child abuse (37 per cent) and sexual and violent offender management (33 per cent) as the highest areas of need. However, 12 per cent of the needs assessments did not class protective services as a need at all. High need was identified in slightly more than a quarter (27 per cent) of protective service areas.

Table 2: 'Need' as identified within forces' gap analysis

Needs – self-defined	Serious and organised crime	Major crime	Civil contingencies	Critical incidents	Public order	Roads policing	Domestic abuse	Missing persons	Child abuse	Sexual/violent offender management	Totals
No evidence	0%	5%	7%	9%	12%	5%	21%	33%	14%	12%	12%
Low need	5%	12%	42%	35%	49%	33%	19%	23%	23%	26%	27%
Medium need	30%	44%	47%	40%	35%	49%	30%	23%	26%	30%	35%
High need	65%	40%	5%	16%	5%	14%	30%	21%	37%	33%	27%

4.14 Again, it is difficult to resist the conclusion that forces are influenced in assessing threat and need by what they are used to responding to – and, therefore, possibly by the level of resources they already devote to certain areas. This risks over-provision in those areas.

4.15 Conversely, they may risk playing down the significance of other areas because they do not have the same experience of assessing threat and need in them. A way to test this proposition, based on Table 2, is to ask whether 56 per cent of forces genuinely believe they have low, or no, need to improve the way they handle missing persons inquiries, or that 44 per cent feel the same way about critical incidents.

4.16 Due to the variety of methods used to assess need, it is difficult to compare need nationally. It is the view of HMIC that, however well meaning and 'experienced' the assessment methods of forces, they are still subjective and expressed in a local dialect.

4.17 They are, therefore, open to short-term manipulation. Intense local political pressure to tackle 'the drugs menace' may lead a force to shift resources into organised crime, at the expense of other areas, when the long-term threat analysis does not justify it.

4.18 HMIC believes that the way forward lies in the use of a nationally accepted threat/risk/needs matrix approach. The precise format of information may differ, but a points-based matrix approach would bring greater clarity and consistency to the way in which forces weigh variables in order to grade their areas of need.

- 4.19 Self-reporting is an insufficiently reliable and potentially manipulable method of assessing need without the benefit of objective markers or guidance on how these might be constructed. A corporate model should be defined for the assessment and articulation of need so that this can be mapped out nationally and provide more efficient means of data capture and analysis, rather than having 43 different models being designed and produced by teams in each force area. In light of stretching efficiency savings, it makes absolutely no sense to apply different models in different areas.
- 4.20 A model should be defined that is sophisticated enough to encompass local conditions but robust and consistent enough to allow threat and need to be mapped nationally. Appendix B discusses some areas of notable practice by forces in this area. In particular, North Yorkshire Police has developed specialist software to support microanalysis for assessing areas of need. Cleveland Police has used and further developed this by finding a way to articulate need that supports decision making.
- 4.21 It appears to HMIC that the 'micro' approach – in which many discrete areas of threat, risk and need are addressed – is the way to raise standards across the board. The 'macro' approach, in which whole protective service areas, or clusters of areas, are assessed together, may risk preference for those areas in the distribution of resources. However, for the micro approach to work effectively, each area must be monitored rigorously and set against the overall picture.

Recommendation 1

The Protective Service Strategy Group (PSSG) should consider the benefits of defining of 'need' and providing guidance to forces on how this will be applied in relation to the requirement that forces should have plans in place to deliver improvements in high need areas by 2009.

The Association of Chief Police Officers or the National Policing Improvement Agency should review the microanalysis tool and models forces are using to articulate and prioritise need and consider whether they have potential for wider application.



5. Governance

- 5.1 Each force must have a decision-making structure allowing people with authority to dictate action and commit resources, and then follow through their decisions. There is no 'one size fits all' model for this. In some forces, single, overall protective services commands are being created. This may be impractical and unwieldy in large forces, where individual areas demand substantial policing commitments in their own right.
- 5.2 The key is to ensure that protective service coverage is effectively managed and resourced as core business. To achieve this, HMIC would expect to see:
- recognition of protective services as a strategic priority;
 - strong corporate – strategic – governance dedicated to improvement;
 - a supportive chief officer team and police authority;
 - a clearly defined and well structured planning process and a series of planning outputs (action plans, PSIPs and partnership plans) that are owned by the chief officer;
 - clear ownership of the policing plan by the police authority, and the policing plan taking account of the force's individual protective service plans;
 - co-ordination of the disparate strands of improvement – both internal and collaborative; and
 - dedicated funding streams for improvements.
- 5.3 The review, however, found a patchy picture:
- Only 26 forces (60 per cent) defined protective services as a strategic priority within the evidence submitted to the review.
 - Only 23 (53 per cent) had a documented strategy and policies on protective service planning.
 - Only 19 (44 per cent) had a strategic group chaired by an ACPO officer.
 - Despite the long-established importance of the tripartite system, only 21 forces (49 per cent) had defined a clear role for the police authority in overseeing improvement within their planning documents.
 - Only 15 (35 per cent) had a central co-ordination function.
 - 22 forces (51 per cent) – had a dedicated funding stream.
- 5.4 The importance of making protective services improvement a core part of policing is self-evident. If it is not, then plans may be knocked off course by sudden demands for resources in a short-term 'emergency', rather than adapted flexibly around the core strategic aims in response to the dynamic environment.
- 5.5 A case of notable practice in this area, in West Midlands – which uses a stocktake approach and a red/amber/green prioritisation system rigorously overseen by an ACPO lead – is discussed in Appendix B.

Recommendation 2

All forces should be able to demonstrate an effective and robust governance structure for the improvement of protective service delivery. The Association of Chief Police Officers, the National Policing Improvement Agency and HMIC should consider offering best practice governance models from which forces may choose one that best suits them. The Association of Police Authorities needs to define a clear role for police authorities in the oversight of protective service development.



6. Protective service improvement plans and action plans

- 6.1 In the 'outputs' stage, action plans will be drawn up. These will be produced as stand alone documents to drive accountability for discrete pieces of work contributing to the wider plan or strategy. They may also be incorporated within the PSIP or LPP.
- 6.2 Internally, PSIPs will focus on individual business areas, and on the whole protective service spectrum within the force, to identify the means of achieving improvements and where the resources will come from to finance them. This will also include inter-force projects already in existence.
- 6.3 They will also look to exploit opportunities for further collaboration, detailing mutual aid, contracting and joint purchasing agreements, and memoranda of understanding with partners.
- 6.4 The Home Office, ACPO, HMIC and NPIA should be able to lay individual force PSIPs together and judge whether there is a sensible balance of internal and external planning within regions.
 - However, given the lack of any nationally agreed template for plans, proposals to improve protective services are being delivered in a piecemeal fashion and through very different mechanisms, at times using very different structures for delivery.
 - Mechanisms to chase up and evaluate whether plans are on track to deliver also vary. Forces themselves have asked for guidance in this area and any planning tools offered should be straightforward and user-friendly.

Recommendation 3

As part of its work to develop a suite of tools to support a protective services and collaboration planning model, the National Policing Improvement Agency should consider including templates for action plans, protective service improvement plans and externally focused partnership plans.



7. Compliance with Home Office planning guidance

- 7.1 This area of the review assessed the quality and 'sufficiency' of the plans and, critically, the extent to which they were geared to address identified areas of high need.
- 7.2 Effectively there were three tests:
1. The first test looked from the perspective of the defined protective service areas (at the time the review was commissioned, 10 protective services). Did plans exist in those areas and include the seven elements, or criteria, set out in the guidance to the 2008 regulations, and in the list of elements HMIC looked for?
 2. The second test is linked to test 1 but looked from the perspective of the seven criteria. It measured the strength or weakness of compliance with the individual criteria.
 3. The third test and its findings lie at the heart of the review. How did the provision for improvements, which is reflected in the sufficiency of planning, compare with the areas of identified need? Were the most detailed and sufficient plans, which are an indication of the distribution of resources, seen in the high need areas?
- 7.3 The evidence suggests patchy and inconsistent compliance for tests 1 and 2 above and a clear disparity in the way in which some forces are gearing their plans towards need. In other words, close attention, and the resources that flow from this, is not always directed where it is most needed.
- 7.4 For the first test, the guidance offered to forces as part of the 2008 regulations required them to have credible plans for improvement in the ten protective service areas or sub-areas. The test of credibility and meeting standards used in the HMIC review was based on the extent to which the seven criteria elements appeared, if at all, in plans. This was an 'objective scoring' process. If plans included all the elements, they reached an acceptable standard. HMIC also used a degree of judgement. A force exceeded the standard if, in the view of HMIC, it provided sufficient depth and coherent detail to be assessed as notable practice. Table 3 provides a complete breakdown of total scoring for adequacy of planning within each protective service area under the first test.

Table 3: Provision by protective service area within forces' planning product (local policing plan/PSIP)

Protective service area	Serious and organised crime	Major crime	Civil contingencies	Critical incidents	Public order	Roads policing	Domestic abuse	Missing persons	Child abuse	Sexual/violent offender management	Provision total
No evidence	0%	0%	0%	5%	2%	0%	5%	9%	2%	2%	3%
Insufficient	5%	19%	23%	30%	35%	12%	23%	33%	19%	16%	21%
Meets standard	72%	67%	65%	53%	53%	74%	63%	47%	65%	65%	63%
High provision	23%	14%	12%	12%	9%	14%	9%	12%	14%	16%	13%
Compliant	95%	81%	77%	65%	63%	88%	72%	58%	79%	81%	76%

- 7.5 Just under half of forces – 21, or 49 per cent – had credible plans in all of the ten protective service areas. This means, of course, that nearly half did not, a troubling finding.
- Six forces (14 per cent) had no evidence of plans in one or more protective service areas. Nineteen forces (44 per cent) had inadequate plans in one or more areas. Nine forces (21 per cent) had inadequate plans in five or more protective service areas.
 - Overall, the majority of forces were either meeting (63 per cent) or exceeding (13 per cent) the standard in those areas covered.
 - The total proportion of forces that complied with the regulations to the acceptable standard was therefore 76 per cent.
 - Twenty-four per cent of forces, in consequence, fell short in complying with inclusion of elements that had been circulated to them at least six months before the review.
 - The most significant gaps in planning coverage were found in missing persons (42 per cent below standard), public order (37 per cent), critical incidents (35 per cent) and domestic abuse (28 per cent).
- 7.6 The second test drew out evidence regarding which of the seven Home Office criteria were most, or least, included. Table 4 provides a breakdown of the assessment of adequacy of planning elements.

Table 4: Provision by planning element, within forces' planning product (local policing plan/PSIP)

Planning elements	Identified gaps	Existing work	Collaboration	Prioritisation	Resource allocation	Governance/compliance	Measures of success	Provision total
No evidence	2%	2%	0%	0%	12%	2%	5%	3%
Insufficient	14%	7%	9%	26%	21%	26%	42%	21%
Meets standard	58%	77%	63%	60%	63%	56%	47%	60%
High provision	26%	14%	28%	14%	5%	16%	7%	16%
Compliant	84%	91%	91%	74%	67%	72%	53%	76%

- 7.7 Overall compliance with Home Office guidance on planning across all elements of planning was 76 per cent. Most forces could readily identify gaps in protective service coverage (84 per cent), work being undertaken (91 per cent) and collaboration (91 per cent). But they scored lower with regard to resource allocation (67 per cent) and measuring outcomes (53 per cent). Only around three-quarters of forces had action plans in place to prioritise areas for improvement (74%) or a governance structure (72 per cent) to monitor and review planning.

7.8 Table 5 sets out in greater detail the aspects of planning judged to be inadequate across each protective service for all forces. The table lays out the relationships between gaps in evidence of coverage across protective service areas (test 1) and planning elements (test 2) in matrix form. The story in relation to gaps in planning can of course be painted in positive terms: it must be recognised that the majority of forces are covering most protective service areas with consideration of each planning element. However, there were significant gaps in planning, which could indicate areas of vulnerability in preparedness,

Table 5: Gaps in planning elements within plans for each protective service area

	Serious and organised crime	Major crime	Civil contingencies	Critical incidents	Public order	Roads policing	Domestic abuse	Missing persons	Child abuse	Sexual/violent offender management	Number of inadequate areas out of 430	Inadequate areas (%)	Number of forces with an inadequate element in at least one area
Need assessment	4	6	5	9	9	5	9	11	6	5	69	16%	15
	9%	14%	12%	21%	21%	12%	21%	26%	14%	12%			
Existing work	1	5	6	9	6	3	4	8	3	3	48	11%	13
	2%	12%	14%	21%	14%	7%	9%	19%	7%	7%			
Collaboration	1	2	3	8	6	1	3	7	4	4	39	9%	12
	2%	5%	7%	19%	14%	2%	7%	16%	9%	9%			
Prioritisation	0	9	11	15	15	5	7	16	7	8	93	22%	22
	0%	21%	26%	35%	35%	12%	16%	37%	16%	19%			
Resource allocation	8	13	13	18	16	12	16	14	12	10	132	31%	22
	19%	30%	30%	42%	37%	28%	37%	33%	28%	23%			
Governance/compliance	12	12	12	14	14	13	13	14	10	10	124	29%	18
	28%	28%	28%	33%	33%	30%	30%	33%	23%	23%			
Measures of success	7	10	20	24	23	13	13	22	17	14	163	38%	28
	16%	23%	47%	56%	53%	30%	30%	51%	40%	33%			

- 7.9 Most deficiencies were found in measures of success; in 38 per cent of plans across all protective services these were inadequately described. Twenty-eight forces had not adequately described the means by which they are going to monitor or review their plans. The next most underdeveloped element of planning was resource allocation; 22 forces were unable to describe adequately how plans were going to be resourced or funded. Likewise, 22 forces were unable to demonstrate fully how they were prioritising – in particular, how they would hold individuals to account for delivery against a set timescale.
- 7.10 The third test compared need – derived from the assessment phase – with provision, as seen in the results of tests 1 and 2. Table 6 shows the overall percentage scoring across all forces by protective service area ('threat' and 'need' are self-defined and 'provision' is according to sufficiency of planning as shown in tests 1 and 2).

Table 6: Need versus provision by protective service area within forces' planning product (local policing plan/PSIP)

Protective service area	Serious and organised crime	Major crime	Civil contingencies	Critical incidents	Public order	Roads policing	Domestic abuse	Missing persons	Child abuse	Sexual/violent offender management
Threat	91%	45%	17%	28%	29%	49%	55%	29%	47%	52%
Need	87%	73%	50%	54%	44%	57%	57%	44%	62%	61%
Provision	72%	66%	63%	58%	59%	66%	60%	56%	63%	64%

- 7.11 There is a clear disparity in the way forces are addressing planning in relation to the threat in general and need in particular. Threat and provision was perfectly aligned in only 13 forces (30 per cent), but in four forces there was a directly contrary relationship (i.e. high threat – no planning). Likewise, in relation to need, threat and need was not correlated in nine forces' assessment. This means that those forces are potentially misapplying resources in relation to the threat.
- 7.12 For 15 forces (34 per cent), planning appeared to be carried out directly in accordance with identified need – in other words, the most comprehensive, compliant plans were in the areas where they were needed most. However, in four different forces there was evidence of identified high need and no provision, which runs counter to logic.
- 7.13 In general, forces were not always applying resources in direct relation to the self-identified areas of need in a number of protective service areas. There was a disparity in a number of cases in the way in which forces were addressing planning in relation to need. For instance, the sufficiency of planning (provision scored as a percentage of maximum inclusion of the criteria) ranged from 72 per cent in serious and organised crime to 56 per cent for missing persons.

- 7.14 However, need was identified as a generator of planning in 87 per cent and 44 per cent respectively of force assessments in those protective service categories. These findings indicate that some forces are making decisions on provision that will not achieve optimum benefit in terms of risk coverage. They further suggest that decisions about planning, choices and prioritisation of certain protective services are being influenced by other factors – such as immediate imperatives for action, perhaps to meet the expectations of strategic stakeholders – rather than on the basis of need.

Recommendation 4

In light of the pressing need for forces to address the highest areas of need by 2009, in addition to receiving detailed individual and confidential HMIC feedback on the review of their plans, those whose plans fall short of expectations should be offered the opportunity to receive additional feedback from HMIC and targeted support from the National Policing Improvement Agency to assist in addressing shortfalls in plans.



8. Reshaping protective services – looking inwards and outwards

- 8.1 HMIC expected to see a mixture of internal improvement and cross-force engagement. The majority (27 forces, or 63 per cent) were striking a balance between internal and external opportunities. However, eight forces (18.5 per cent) were primarily internally focused and a further eight were almost exclusively reliant on external solutions, or at least internal planning focus was not clear from the evidence provided.
- 8.2 These findings suggest an imbalance in the planning processes of those forces. The eight forces that are almost exclusively focused internally have looked to achieve improvement through changes in structure, policy or process. There is little by way of collaboration in these areas, although the consequences of operating in isolation may be increased risk, reduced capacity to respond and diminished ability to secure assistance from neighbouring forces at times of increased demand.
- 8.3 The internal focus has led to some changes in structure; the changes are different in each force and there is no one-size fits all. Forces will adapt to requirements in a way that best meets their individual circumstances and existing expectations and arrangements. However, eight forces have restructured all or most of their protective services under a single command, which simplifies the command structure, sharpens decision making and brings clearer accountability. This may not be a suitable approach for many others, particularly for large forces. The majority continue to manage each protective service area as a discrete entity, underlining once again the importance of strategic force-level oversight.
- 8.4 Collaboration has been very strongly encouraged by the Government. Again, no one size will fit all. But, undoubtedly, collaboration and cross-force arrangements contribute a major seam of opportunity to the menu of improvement. There has been progress in terms of collaboration since 2005 and there are a variety of models of collaboration that can be adopted.
- 8.5 A core issue in the 2005 HMIC report, *Closing the Gap*, was the notion of exposure to risk. A force that has well trained officers and staff who are experienced in tracking drug gangs, or in investigating complex or Category A (serious) homicides, will be well placed to deliver those protective services.
- 8.6 However, how do the forces that face those threats or incidents on a less frequent basis develop and maintain that expertise? Keeping a 'standing army' is one option but it is expensive, and inefficient. It may provide standing capacity but would not necessarily ensure up-to-date capability. Adequate expertise and resources may exist within a region and the buying in of that expertise or the secondment of staff from other forces may be positive alternative approaches.
- 8.7 If collaboration is assessed as a way of significantly improving protective services in a force, then HMIC would expect to see proposed collaborative measures spelled out in the planning of both the force seeking the help, and the force providing it. In practice, a force should have plans in place that allow it to reach out for external assistance as smoothly as it would do so internally. A 'threat to life' case, or a kidnap or armed siege, leaves no time for negotiation on resources; these arrangements need to be anticipated, planned for, agreed and exercised before the need arises.

- 8.8 Conversely, evidence that some forces are almost exclusively focused on external collaboration to deal with their high needs raises the questions of whether they are making best use of their in-house resources and whether they might be missing an opportunity to contribute to regional joint working.
- 8.9 The selection of protective services suitable for collaboration must be based on a clear rationale around identified needs and gaps, rather than merely what is 'achievable'. Because, for instance, it is possible for forces to 'buy and sell' roads policing expertise within a region does not make it efficient if the threat and demand in that region do not justify the aggregation of resources.
- 8.10 Most forces though are collaborating or considering collaboration on the major issues, and all regions are considering a range of collaborative arrangements – although, inevitably, some regions are more advanced than others. This is a broadly positive note. However, if collaboration is the perceived solution to an area of high need, then the forces involved must pick up the pace of this work.
- 8.11 Selection of the right partner for collaboration is vital. The lack of a 'cultural fit' or the existence of distinct incompatibilities may mean that prospective partners will have to travel further and compromise to reach an acceptable consensus. They may, in fact, be deterred if they perceive themselves as being on a different trajectory to their prospective partners. Collaboration must mutually enhance efficiency and productivity and achieve common, or at least mutually understood, goals. It must be discussed in a common language.
- 8.12 In the Welsh and East Midlands regions, forces have established a joint, dedicated co-ordinating function for all activity related to collaboration. Such co-ordination is good practice and indicates significant commitment to partnership. However, while it may be suitable for some clusters of forces, it may be less suitable for other regions, particularly those with diverse profiles of threat, need and approach.

Recommendation 5

Opportunities should be exploited to extend collaborative arrangements that promise greater efficiency and productivity – by, for instance, streamlining intelligence and cutting back unnecessary bureaucracy – and that allow sharper targeting of the sources of threats within a region. Police authorities and forces should adopt effective and transparent performance frameworks that capture these benefits.



9. The longer term –
meeting minimum
standards by 2011
and sustaining
improvement in
the years ahead


- 9.1 While the 2009 deadline is pressing, the longer-term aim of all forces achieving minimum national standards in all protective service areas by 2011 is also important. It raises questions about the sustained 'management' of improvement. As discussed in previous chapters, forces are generally less clear about how they judge and build on success, learn from failings and use learning to refine their tactical and strategic choices.
- 9.2 HMIC is assisting those forces most in need of extra support to put in place appropriate planning structures and mechanisms to achieve the 2011 target. In working towards this goal, they have utilised the latest version of the ACPO protective service minimum standards.
- 9.3 The Service, though, will not be able to satisfy itself for some time that standards have been met. The review took an overview of forces' planning for mechanisms to measure success; most PSIPs were too vague in this respect.
- 9.4 At present there are too many variables outside the planning process for the relationship between planning and successful outcomes to be assessed with much confidence. However, planning has a crucial place in all policing, and particularly in this area.
- 9.5 Well constructed planning which is clearly communicated in a common language reassures stakeholders and communities of the willingness of the Service to be accountable and allows forces and authorities to negotiate influence. This will be critical in helping to deliver increased public confidence and customer satisfaction expectations as the service moves towards a single confidence measure.
- 9.6 Evidence of planning and the continuous review of capability and capacity against demand and threat, within each of the protective services, is indicative of a robust and reflective improvement culture.
- 9.7 The NPJA is currently developing guidance – 'doctrine' – for forces in the broad area of 'business change'. Many of the principles could translate into guidance on documenting the progress of PSIPs.
- 9.8 The Service needs to build in quality assurance and a governance structure that provides robust monitoring, oversight and direction.

Recommendation 6

In relation to the requirement to meet the national minimum standards by 2011, all forces and authorities should be encouraged to review their existing assessment processes and products and governance arrangements, particularly in light of publication of the latest version of the Association of Chief Police Officers standards.

Recommendation 7

The Protective Services Steering Group should consider defining mechanisms for 'intensive support' or engagement for forces and authorities that consistently fail to meet the requirement to improve protective services.



Appendix A: Structure of the HMIC Protective Services Review

- 1 In early 2008 the Minister for Policing asked HMIC for its view of the overall progress on the programme of work undertaken nationally and on whether forces are succeeding in closing the so-called 'protective service gap'. Progress on this work is being monitored and reviewed by the PSSG, which is a subcommittee of the National Policing Board and whose membership includes all the tripartite members; – ACPO is represented by Chief Constable Sir Norman Bettison, Chief Constable Martin Baker and National Co-ordinator Jon Murphy. Terms of reference for the review were agreed with the PSSG and, following a period of consultation with forces and stakeholders, work commenced in May. The first phase was a review of documentation; and the second phase involved a number of validation visits, which were intended to be the process of improvement.
- 2 **Terms of reference**

 - To review each force's policing plans to assess whether the force's view of demand and its planned response are sufficient to address identified risks and the potential for harm in each of the protective service areas.
 - To prepare a view of overall progress and whether each force's programme of work is succeeding in closing the protective service gap.
- 3 **Consultation**

On 14 February 2007, the Minister for Policing wrote to all chief officers and chairs of police authorities to outline his vision that responsibility for producing adequate plans to address protective service gaps would rest on individual forces and authorities. The emphasis of this letter was to ensure that forces prioritised action in areas of highest need in order to build protective service standards against a two-phase requirement to significantly reduce risk within defined protective service areas. This letter additionally laid out the basis of a needs-based approach and the extent of support that would be offered to authorities and forces, including support for demonstrator sites for collaboration, an assisted implementation framework from the NPIA and an evaluation of plans by HMIC.

On 2 January 2008, the Minister wrote again to outline the requirement for each force/authority to produce PSIPs and described the legislation that would facilitate this. The Policing Plans Regulations 2008 were enacted on 6 February 2008. On 14 March 2008, the Home Office published guidance to the Police Plans Regulations. This formed the basis of the requirement and subsequent terms of reference for the HMIC review of PSIPs.

To that end, the Policing Plan Regulations 2008 and associated guidance were drafted to ensure that the appropriate elements were contained within policing plans. There was a recognition that some elements might not be appropriate to include in a public document and that such elements should be included in a separate PSIP and referenced to the principal document. Any potential misunderstanding around expectations on forces and authorities was further clarified by Sir Norman Bettison in May when it was iterated that what was intended to be included in a policing plan is a 'read-across to the protective services prioritised by forces'. Each force is required to produce PSIPs detailing elements contained within regulations, either within local policing plans or separately.

4 Scope of the review

The review commenced in May 2008 and took evidence of planning up to a deadline for submission of evidence of planning from forces to HMIC of 20 June. At the time of the commission, the term 'protective services' was defined by the Home Office (PSSG) as consisting of ten areas: major crime, serious and organised crime, civil contingencies, critical incidents, public order, roads policing, domestic abuse, missing persons, child abuse, and sexual and violent offender management. Counter-terrorism is being progressed through a different workstream. Since that time, ACPO and the NPIA (through the assisted implementation framework) have included firearms as a separate protective service and work has commenced in rationalising some of these definitions still further (ie the development of protecting vulnerable persons). The review therefore considered only the ten initial protective service areas as agreed by the PSSG in the terms of reference. Progress made in planning processes and products achieved after this point is not part of this assessment.

5 The review criteria

The review is based on a requirement in legislation (Police Plan Regulations 2008) which states that each force/authority should produce plans and that these should be documented. This is therefore not an assessment of regional arrangements, and, while collaboration is seen as one possible solution to closing the gap, the primary focus has been on internal mechanisms within each force that drive the business improvement process. This is seen as absolutely key to achieving the very challenging efficiency and productivity gains expected as we go forward.

The regulations require that every police authority shall issue a policing plan before the beginning of each financial year, commencing April 2008, setting out the police authority's policing objectives during that year and proposed arrangements for policing over a three-year period.

Policing plans should include improvement plans for protective services, including (rearranged in a more logical order):

1. local assessments of levels of threat and capability (identified gaps);
2. details of plans to support existing regional and national initiatives (existing work);
3. an outline of collaborative relationships with other forces (collaboration);
4. plans to address protective services, including prioritisation (prioritisation);
5. resources allocated to deliver each plan, identifying new and existing resources and shared assets within clearly identified efficiency and productivity targets (resource allocation);
6. an indication of how plans are to be delivered, including governance arrangements and details of any memoranda of understanding and service level agreements (governance and compliance); and
7. identified measures used to review plans and ensure that they are sufficient to make improvements in high need areas by 2009 and meet national standards by 2011 (measures of success).

There is a clear expectation that plans for improvement in each protective service area will be documented and available for scrutiny.

6 Structure of the review

Phase I of the review was confined to the assessment of three elements of force planning:

- the analysis of force/authority local policing plans and PSIPs, where these appear separately;
- the assessment of local policing plans/PSIPs against the force/authority's assessment of need and identified high threat/risk/demand areas within its force strategic assessments or corporate risk register in order to identify and map specific areas of self-defined need for protective service improvement (ie gaps in capability and capacity); and
- an assessment of the baseline levels of need for which a series of proxy indicators were taken from the *Closing the Gap* assessment (2005), findings of the HMIC thematic inspection process, national organised crime group mapping data and APACS data in a single key proxy crime/incident category used to inform the National Protective Services Analysis Toolkit (NPSAT).

Phase II sought additional supporting evidence, not available within the submitted formal plans, that each force meets an acceptable standard in addressing the threat in high need protective service areas. An initial assessment was made based on the sufficiency of evidence to make a judgement; this identified that insufficient evidence had been supplied across a range of protective service areas by seven forces. A number of forces were visited and additional information was gained that provided the review team with a richer picture to assess whether forces' plans are likely to succeed in closing the protective services gap.

7 Interface

The review is unlike an inspection process in that it was not seeking to make judgements but rather to comment on how planning is being used to drive improvements in policing. This is an overview of plans, not an assessment of capability or capacity. The HMIC inspection programme as agreed with Ministers will progressively provide a picture of protective services across the country. Good planning is indicative rather than predictive of outcome. This report should be read alongside individual inspection findings before a judgement is made as to whether the gap has been closed or not. Its findings must be considered in the light of both internal review and external inspection.

8 Product of the review

A matrix was used to record the assessment of each force against common categories of assessment. The gradings represent an assessment of the essential element of planning based on the seven elements for protective service areas within the Policing Plan Regulations. As an evidence based review the findings are as accurate and reliable as the evidence submitted by forces/authorities to HMIC.

Narrative feedback is provided to forces and authorities with specific commentary around the 'what to look for' statements that highlight particular strengths, work in progress and areas for improvement. Notable practice is also highlighted and will be referred to within the report to Ministers for consideration for inclusion within professional guidance. This forms the basis of a final overall judgement of sufficiency, robustness and sustainability of planning.

The report to the Minister for Policing provides HMIC's findings and an indication of which force/authority's plans for improvement in protective services appear sufficient, robust and sustainable.



Appendix B: Notable practice

Derbyshire Constabulary – risk and threat matrix

Derbyshire Constabulary has developed a new process for the analysis of strategic risk and threat. This moves away from consideration of crime categories and performance indicators to take a more holistic view of issues facing the force, including cross-cutting themes that impact on a variety of different aspects of crime, disorder and community cohesion. In a similar way to the ACPO threat matrix, Derbyshire has adopted a simple and robust methodology of calculating risk (the possibility of harm occurring and the likelihood of that impact) and threat (the probability of potential harm resulting in a risk after existing ameliorative tactics have been taken into account). This assessment prefaces the force strategic assessment and provides an easy, calculable way of assigning scores based on: $\text{impact} \times \text{probability} = \text{risk}$; $\text{risk} + \text{weighting factors} = \text{comparator risk}$; $\text{comparator risk} + \text{ameliorative action (partnership and resources)} = \text{threat}$. From this, the force is able to justify prioritisation of a variety of risks, having considered a range of controlling measures and means of managing risk.

North Yorkshire Police – microanalysis

In late 2006, North Yorkshire Police (Police Advance Team) developed a specialist software-supported method of assessing areas of need (gaps in protective service coverage) called microanalysis. The core IT application was designed by RisGen, a risk analysis software specialist, that provided consultancy support in the development of the system. The methodology, but not the use of the proprietary software, has since been developed and has become widely adopted by other forces as an effective method of assessing need. The core of the system is the client page on which individual risks are described, categorised and scored on a risk matrix. The scoring matrix is used to express gaps and the risk description cross-references the relevant ACPO national standards. This generates a risk register entry on an actions page, into which a selected risk management measure (action plan) is entered. This is cross-referenced to the client page, provides a description of the identified gap, and identifies an action owner and risk manager. Action delivery dates are automatically reviewable and the system makes it possible to monitor risks in all protective service domains; identifying prioritisation of need areas. This provides a clear structure for the assessment of risk-based need and supports action planning, but it is only part of the planning process. As with any system; it is only as good as the information inputted and requires constant updating to remain accurate and relevant to the planning process. The prioritisation and ordering of tasks according to the highest risk have to be abstracted from the system to be reviewed by managers.

Cleveland Police – articulating need

The way need is articulated is also important in terms of providing clarity to what needs to be done. Cleveland Police has conducted a detailed assessment of risk, using North Yorkshire's microanalysis model to calculate the threats, gaps and risks associated with capability and capacity across all seven areas of protective services. The Operational Performance Team produced a report in March 2007 to establish a more meaningful baseline, contextualised for the needs of Cleveland Police. This identified areas that would benefit from additional resources and prepared for the national developments expected during 2007. The function is to present the microanalysis report as a very clear picture of the overall gaps in protective services, which are prioritised through comparison with threat impact, probability and risk. The report includes an asset register, a full risk assessment, and a set of gap-bridging options for each protective service area.

West Midlands Police – prioritisation of need

An initial stocktake report addressed the gaps identified by specialists within each area.

The grading methodology requires professional judgement by the lead of each area against the ACPO threshold standards, taking into account the current strategic priorities of West Midlands Police. Gaps are risk assessed, graded and given timescales for delivery such as:

- red – requires action within 3 months;
- amber – requires action within 6 months; or
- green – requires action within 12 months.

The findings of the stocktake are reviewed by the Deputy Chief Constable at the Strategic Programme Board, which then allocates action owners and initiates and governs activities to close identified gaps. Project Governance is owned by each Assistant Chief Constable with portfolio responsibility for monitoring progress and co-ordinating action through a staff officer. Action leads have been identified for each of the actions and support is provided by a project support team and the Corporate Programme Office. ACPO portfolio leads then assess the identified gaps, and make a final determination in agreeing the gap and/or mitigating the risk posed. The assessment methodology used by ACPO is outlined below:

- low – risk not considered critical to the effectiveness or organisational reputation of the force;
- high – risk considered critical to the effectiveness or organisational reputation of the force;
- satisfactory – a proportionate measure is in place to address the gap; or
- unsatisfactory – no proportionate measure is in place to address the gap.

Although not explicitly stated, West Midlands Police's high need, as distinct from identified gaps in each protective service area as identified by microanalysis, comprise high priority (red), high risk and unsatisfactory.



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