

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary



HMIC Inspection Report

Gwent Police
Major Crime

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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

Gwent Police is responsible for policing the south-east corner of Wales, an area with a resident population of just over 550,000. At the end of March 2007, the force consisted of 1,493 police officers and 934 police staff members.

The force covers over 600 square miles (155,600 hectares), comprising valley communities as well as a number of larger towns, including Monmouth, Caerphilly, Blackwood, Cwmbran, Pontypool, Ebbw Vale and the city of Newport. The force area also covers a significant rural area, primarily in the Monmouthshire unitary authority, where farming, tourism around the Usk and Wye valleys, and Forestry Commission activities are the primary commercial activities.

Demographic profile of force area

Newport experiences policing problems unlike those anywhere else in the force because of both its multi-ethnic community and its vibrant social scene. The area's economy, once reliant on heavy industry and mining, has suffered considerably in recent years as these industries have declined or ceased.

Within the force area are high levels of deprivation: the county borough councils of Caerphilly, Torfaen and Blaenau Gwent fall within the West Wales and Valleys Objective 1 area (which gives access to special grants from the European Community (EC) that are available for areas where, per capita, the gross domestic product is less than 75% of the EC average). In addition, all the wards in Newport City Council and 31 of the 36 wards in Monmouthshire County Council contain areas where communities suffer economic hardship and qualify for funding under either Objective 2 or transitional programmes to support the economic and social conversion of these areas.

Strategic priorities

The force is fully committed to the national key priorities included in the National Community Safety Plan 2006–09, and these form the backdrop for the force strategic priorities, as set out below:

- 1 Reduce overall crime by 15% by 2007/08 and more in high crime areas.** The force target for 2006/07 was to reduce crime by a further 6% after a 10.9% reduction in 2005/06.
- 2 Bring more offences to justice in line with the Government's public service agreement.** As a stepping stone towards this, the force target for 2006/07 was to increase the overall sanction detection rate to 30%.
- 3 Provide every area in England and Wales with dedicated, visible, accessible and responsive neighbourhood policing teams; and reduce the public perception of anti-social behaviour.** Gwent has already established neighbourhood policing teams across the force area.
- 4 Tackle serious and organised crime, including through improved intelligence and information sharing between partners.** During 2007 the force expects to see increasing investigative activity in respect of organised crime and the development of effective links with the new Serious Organised Crime Agency (SOCA) at force and regional level. Service level agreements are being developed to ensure a two-way intelligence flow for level 1, 2 and 3 criminality.

- 5 Protect the country from both terrorism and domestic extremism.** The force community cohesion group will be further developed during 2006/07, with a continuation of seminars and awareness-raising activities within the community on the subjects of terrorism and domestic extremism.

Structural description of force, including changes in chief officer posts

The force headquarters (HQ) is in the town of Cwmbran, and there are three basic command units (BCUs), known locally as divisions. These are Newport, with a population of 138,800 Torfaen and Monmouthshire, with a population of 175,900; and Caerphilly and Blaenau Gwent, with a population of 239,600. Each BCU is coterminous with one or more unitary authority and community safety partnership (CSP). Two other divisions, namely uniformed operational support and citizen-focused policing, sit alongside force-wide departments, including criminal justice, information services, finance, the criminal investigation department (CID), professional standards, corporate communications and the force solicitors.

The chief officer team is based at HQ and comprises the Chief Constable, deputy chief constable (DCC), assistant chief constable (ACC) and director of finance and administration. The current command team has been in place since May 2005. Chief officers' portfolios have been designed to place the force in the optimum position to deliver a citizen-focused neighbourhood policing style. The DCC has responsibility for policing activities that directly deliver this style of policing (area policing, call handling, criminal justice, community safety and strategic planning). The ACC is responsible for those areas of the organisation that enable and support this delivery (specialist operational support, information services, human resources (HR), diversity and professional standards). The chair of the police authority has established an open and constructive working relationship with the Chief Constable.

Major Crime

GRADE	Meets the standard
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Context

This element of the inspection report details Gwent Police's capacity and capability to identify and assess the risks from major crime, as well as the force's response in preventing and investigating these crime types, prioritising those that pose the greatest threat to individuals or communities.

	2006	2007	Change	MSF** group mean
Life-threatening and gun crime per 1,000 population	0.808	0.772	-4.46%	0.515
Number of abductions per 10,000 population	0.000	0.000	0.00%	0.002
% of abduction crimes detected/convicted	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable
Number of attempted murders per 10,000 population	0.198	0.036	-81.82%	0.070
% of attempted murder crimes detected/convicted	63.64%	100.00%	36.36pp*	86.13%
Number of blackmail offences per 10,000 population	0.180	0.108	-40.00%	0.135
% of blackmail offences detected/convicted	20.00%	33.33%	+13.33pp*	38.99%
Number of kidnappings per 10,000 population	0.378	0.378	0.00%	0.304
% of kidnapping crimes detected/convicted	66.67%	47.62%	-19.05pp*	53.75%
Number of manslaughter per 10,000 population	-0.018	0.018	200.00%	0.016

July 2008

% of manslaughter crimes detected/convicted	-100.00%	0.00%	Not applicable	Not applicable
Number of murders per 10,000 population	0.126	0.108	-14.29%	0.104
% of murders detected/convicted	85.71%	83.33%	-2.38pp*	103.03%
Number of rapes per 10,000 population	2.481	2.966	+19.55%	2.278
% of rapes detected/convicted	31.88%	24.85%	-7.03pp*	29.02%

*pp' is percentage points.

***Most similar forces (MSFs) for Gwent are: Durham, Hertfordshire, Humberside, Kent, Lancashire, Northamptonshire and South Wales.*

From the statutory performance indicator (SPI) data contained in the table above it can be seen that the crime types of life-threatening and gun crime, kidnapping and rape pose potential threats to Gwent Police. The rate of offences for rape in particular is a threat; there was an increase in 2007 and the force is above the MSF average and among the higher rates in England and Wales. The rates of offences for life-threatening and gun crime and kidnapping are above the MSF average.

The SPI data also indicates that major crime investigation in Gwent is less effective than in the MSF group. Gwent is performing at a level below the MSF average for all crime types with the exception of attempted murder, for which the force has a 100% sanction detection rate for 2007. However, sanction detections for kidnapping, murder and rape all fell in 2007.

The National Protective Services Analysis Tool (NPSAT) published in September 2007 indicated that Gwent was facing either a low or medium demand with regard to homicide, rape and kidnapping offences and therefore no NPSAT charts have been included in this report.

While organised crime group (OCG) mapping is in its infancy as a technique nationally, Gwent Police has made reasonable inroads, working with the regional intelligence unit (RIU) and neighbouring forces to develop its effectiveness.

The force strategic assessment (FSA) demonstrates a clear understanding of the historical, current, predicted and emerging trends in major crime and the interventions required to tackle these.

The force has identified serious OCGs, protecting vulnerable people and serious alcohol-fuelled violence as its major crime and serious and organised

crime priorities within the force control strategy, although this would appear to omit blackmail. The force strategic intelligence requirement has a clear focus on the continuous search for information on terrorism and extremism, distraction burglary, Class A drugs (problematic and recreational), protecting vulnerable people, serious alcohol-fuelled violence, exploitation of migrants, criminality involving firearms, and road safety and denying criminals the use of the roads.

In this overall documentation, the issues have broadly been identified and addressed.

The force has invested suitable resources in the interventions needed to maximise harm reduction, to minimise risks to the public and to inhibit major crime.

This inspection assessment reveals that the force demonstrates maturing processes in its approach to managing major crime. In making this judgement, collaborative arrangements with South Wales Police, Dyfed-Powys Police and Operation Tarian (regional resources) are recognised.

Intelligence

Summary – The force has sufficient dedicated analytical resources to meet the identified demands from major crime and to supply dynamic intelligence products that drive the energies of the force. The force has fully committed to major crime investigation with the requisite staff, accommodation, equipment and funding.

Strengths

- In January 2008, the Home Office published the statistical bulletin *Homicides, Firearm Offences and Intimate Violence 2006/07*; this reports that, during 2006/07, Gwent had 12.5 murders per million population compared with a UK average of 13.7.
- Crime analysis in Gwent is undertaken at two levels: BCU (level 1) and force (level 2). At level 1, analysis concentrates on volume crime, anti-social behaviour and other crime and criminals impacting at local level. At level 2, the force intelligence bureau (FIB) analyses crime and criminals that cross BCU and force boundaries and impact on more than one BCU.
- Over the past three years, the force has increased its analytical capacity. The level 2 analytical capacity comprises one principal analyst, four analysts and two researchers. Each of the three divisions has three analysts and at least two researchers, and the roads policing unit has one analyst and one researcher. There is currently only one analyst vacancy, in the Caerphilly and Blaenau Gwent BCU.
- The operational support department has one analyst and one researcher, and each division has three analysts and at least two researchers. The researcher posts represent a growth of ten posts, filled during the last six to nine months, which has significantly increased the force's analytical capacity.
- The level 2 analysts' work is themed in line with the strategic priorities. One has major crime oversight, providing a focus throughout the year on this strategic priority for the development of National Intelligence Model (NIM) tactical and strategic intelligence products.
- The BCU on which a homicide occurs is responsible for the provision of analytical support to the investigation; an advantage of this approach is the local knowledge brought to the investigation. BCUs have sufficient resilience to ensure that provision of analytical support to major crime does not adversely impact on day-to-day work.
- Each BCU has two analysts and two researchers; based on the usual demand profile, this provides sufficient resilience to cover absences without adversely affecting the BCU, and affords the capacity to produce the complete range of NIM products.
- Operation Compass was established to investigate the murder of a male of south-east Asian origin. The analytical support for this murder investigation led to the identification of an entire OCG of south-east Asian origin.
- The force analytical capacity at levels 1 and 2 is sufficient to enable it to create the full range of NIM tactical and strategic products.

- The force has produced recent problem profiles in relation to rape, gun crime and homicide in order to better understand the level of threat posed by these major crimes. Consequently, it has updated its gun crime strategy and has produced rape and homicide reduction strategies.
- Over the past two years the FSA has developed into a meaningful product in which the level of threat and risk is now scored; this enables decision makers to better evaluate the threats posed by each crime type.
- The RIU is housed in Operation Tarian (Welsh for shield). It has a strategic and tactical analyst who is complemented by three analysts dedicated to developing intelligence on specific OCGs and supporting live operations conducted by the regional task force (RTF). Additionally, there is a dedicated distraction burglary analyst.
- The RIU produces the annual Wales strategic assessment and quarterly tactical assessments, as well as market and problem profiles as and when tasked by either the regional intelligence group (RIG – at monthly meetings), the regional tactical tasking and co-ordination group (TTCG) (quarterly meetings) or the regional strategic tasking and co-ordination group (annual meetings).
- The RIU has completed the following profiles in the last 12 months:
 - a problem profile on the facilitation and exploitation of migrants;
 - a problem profile on criminal networks and firearms;
 - a problem profile on intellectual property crime; and
 - a criminal business profile on cannabis cultivation in Wales.
- The RIU is driving the OCG mapping process for Wales, which forms part of the regional strategic and tactical assessments.

Work in progress

- The major crime analyst has completed a problem profile following a significant increase in reports of rape, to inform the formulation of a rape reduction strategy.
- The force recently produced a homicide reduction strategy, which contains embryonic analysis to be built on to gain a fuller understanding of the current homicide threat.
- The major investigation team (MIT) was formed in December 2007. As part of an ongoing review process, the force will consider whether dedicated operational analytical support offers greater efficiency and effectiveness than the current arrangements.

Area(s) for improvement

- The force does not have the analytical capacity to cover offenders managed by multi-agency public protection arrangements (MAPPA), missing persons or other associated risk areas that would identify emerging and potential threats.
- In common with most UK forces, people coming to police attention are processed in isolation in respect of a particular incident or offence, due to lack of links between different information technology (IT) systems. The force systems and processes that are currently in place are unable to review people coming to police notice holistically, to identify potentially dangerous offenders (PDOs) recorded on police systems or to identify potentially dangerous people at an early stage of offending.

Summary – The force seeks and shares intelligence about level 2 and level 3 major crime types through partnerships. This work is assessed to be embryonic. The force's community impact assessments to evaluate risk following major crime are adequate.

Strengths

- Community impact assessments are routinely undertaken following the incidence of major crime, in line with force policy. The BCU commander is responsible for completing and updating the assessment with the senior investigating officer (SIO) over the course of the investigation.
- The force has completed a strategic assessment of protective services, which has informed the second all-Wales (protective services) strategic assessment and national strategic assessment.
- The force seeks and shares intelligence from individual partners and agencies in relation to major crime, notably HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC), the UK Border Agency, the Vehicle and Operator Services Agency and Trading Standards.
- The relationship between the FIB and the RIU is well established and works effectively in practice.
- At a regional level, partners and other agencies are fully engaged and information sharing works well in practice.
- The force has developed strong strategic and tactical intelligence-sharing partnerships at BCU level; these are working effectively. Intelligence is routinely shared through MAPPA, the multi-agency risk assessment conferences (MARACs) in respect of domestic abuse victims, CSPs and community meetings taking place at neighbourhood level.
- The force has recently reviewed its information-sharing agreements to ensure that they are compliant with management of police information (MoPI) and in line with best practice. Around 60 such agreements are published on the force intranet, together with associated guidance for staff to facilitate information sharing with partners and agencies.

Work in progress

- The ACPO Wales regional strategic assessment dated September 2007 was drafted prior to any FSA being completed, due to competing priorities around OCG mapping. The RIU is fully aware of this and is working with forces to ensure that future force strategic products will be produced at a time to inform future regional assessments fully.
- A number of agencies that actively engage at regional level are reluctant to engage further at force level and expect the information exchanged at the regional forum to be disseminated to forces. The RIU and three forces are establishing a process that facilitates the free flow of intelligence.

Area(s) for improvement

- At force level, the development of relationships with partners and other agencies would benefit from a more complete strategic intelligence picture in respect of major crime, near misses and precursor incidents.

- There are no documented terms of reference for the RIU, with a consequent lack of clarity over roles and responsibilities. Examples of problems following on from this include the inadequate sharing of information about OCGs from outside southern Wales that operate in the region; the question of whether the single point of contact (SPOC) for dissemination is the main force concerned or the RIU; and the role (if any) that the RIU has in relation to major crime.
- Health services in Wales are somewhat fragmented and organisationally complex; they are not coterminous with police boundaries. This means that developing partnerships is more problematic and there is little liaison to develop homicide prevention work. Overcoming these barriers would benefit the force's violent crime prevention strategies, with the addition of intelligence concerning 'near-miss' homicide and incidents that may be precursors but are not reported to the police. The benefit to the health services would be the long-term reduction of patients presenting with serious injury.

Summary – The FSA has analysed the trends in relation to major crime sufficiently. Consequently, the force control strategy is similarly adequate. Problem profiles for homicide, firearms and bladed weapons are limited but developing, with links to force and BCU-level plans. There is sufficient evidence that the force understands the threat posed by other life-threatening issues.

Strengths

- The FSA takes account of the UK threat assessment control strategy priorities, national policing priorities and regional control strategy priorities, as well as the community safety strategies of partner agencies.
- The strategic tasking and co-ordination group formally considers the FSA. The adoption or otherwise of control strategy priorities is documented in the minutes of the group's meetings. This group reviews the control strategy every six months.
- Based on the combination of the threat scores and the risk assessment included in the November 2007 FSA, those crime areas emerging as high priority are determined as force control strategy priorities, namely:
 - serious OCGs – covering the priority areas of terrorism and extremism, problematic Class A drugs and distraction burglary;
 - protecting vulnerable people – covering the priority areas of domestic violence (including rape and homicide), child protection, abuse of vulnerable adults (including distraction burglary), vulnerable missing persons, sex and dangerous offenders and hate crime; and
 - serious alcohol-fuelled violence – covering the priority areas of non-domestic homicide, non-domestic rape and life-threatening violence (precursor to homicide).
- A range of intelligence products has been included to inform the FSA and to consider future impacts, including:
 - the NPSAT;
 - crime pattern analysis of offences and incidents involving firearms and bladed weapons;
 - a criminal business profile regarding Vietnamese organised crime; and
 - the national community tension team overview of race, faith and homophobic crime.
- Each control strategy priority and associated prevention, intelligence and enforcement (PIE) action plan is allocated a lead officer at superintendent level.
- The principal analyst has designed a number of screensavers that are automatically loaded onto force computers. The screensavers present graphical reminders of the control strategy priorities and intelligence gaps.
- The second all-Wales (protective services) strategic assessment covering major crime (homicide) and serious, organised and cross-border crime was completed in September 2007. For Gwent Police, the threat/risk assessment for major crime and serious, organised and cross-border crime was high and medium respectively.
- The regional strategic assessment reviews the principal threats to Wales from serious, organised and cross-border criminality. It takes account of the UK threat assessment, relevant sections of the all-Wales (protective services) strategic assessment, and

intelligence directly sourced from the four Welsh forces, open sources, the national OCG mapping process and external agencies such as SOCA and the BIA.

- Each crime area in the regional strategic assessment has been scored against a pre-set threat/risk matrix, used as part of the OCG mapping process, to determine high-, medium- or low-priority gradings in order to establish future actions to be taken in the region.
- Those crime areas in the regional strategic assessment emerging as high priority – namely terrorism, domestic extremism and Class A drugs – are nominated as regional control strategy priorities. The medium-priority areas – facilitation, trafficking and exploitation of migrants, cannabis cultivation, firearms and distraction burglary – generate regional intelligence requirements; each has a documented intelligence requirement and delivery plan. The low-priority areas of kidnap and extortion, intellectual property crime and fraud are areas in which the region needs to maintain awareness.

Work in progress

- The force has identified serious alcohol-fuelled violence as a priority, and it now features as a control strategy priority. The force is developing an alcohol harm reduction strategy.
- Analysis produced for the January 2008 force TTCG shows Gwent Police to have the third highest number of serious wounding offences per 1,000 residences in the UK; a problem profile has been tasked.
- In January 2008, the force commenced a process at the force TTCG of holding control strategy owners to account for delivery against the PIE action plan. This will be a developing process as the force learns lessons over the months to come.

Area(s) for improvement

- The force currently has no systems or processes in place to ensure analysis of precursor events and offences, near misses or other life-threatening offences and issues; this means that the threat faced by the force in relation to major crime could be underestimated.
- The homicide problem profile would benefit from more in-depth analysis of potentially related factors, including consumption of alcohol, the use of prescription and controlled drugs by victims and suspects, and issues concerning the mental health of victims and suspects.
- The homicide problem profile does not identify the percentage of suspects who were previously known to the police in some capacity. However, 32% of offenders – a significant proportion – had more than one Police National Computer (PNC) warning marker, which might assist the force to identify – at an early stage in their offending pattern – those who have the potential to kill or cause serious harm.
- The force sets intelligence requirements in order to action the collection of intelligence to reduce knowledge gaps. It does not prioritise the requirements or provide an indication of the level of existing knowledge in order to provide a priority-based focus for officers and staff collecting intelligence.

- No processes or systems are in place to review or monitor collection against the force or regional intelligence requirements, and there was little knowledge of intelligence requirements at level 1.
- For every homicide investigation, an SIO is required to complete the CRIMSEC 7A form and submit it to the Home Office; the form contains information that is useful for the analysis of homicide. However, analysts were unaware of this form and the force should ensure that it is routed through the strategic major crime analyst.
- No specific intelligence requirements have been set to close intelligence gaps in relation to homicide, including offences that may be precursors to homicide and near-miss incidents.
- Threats to life resulting in the issue of an Osman warning are not routinely analysed, although this would serve as a building block to complete the picture of threats posed by major crime.
- The regional strategic assessment comprehensively considers the threat posed to the region by serious and organised crime, but there is no analysis or assessment of the threat posed regionally by major crime activity.

Summary – Trend analysis and problem profiles are only recently being shared with partners and BCUs. There is an emerging trigger plan for ‘hot briefing’ whenever a significant change in either the major crime threat or the nature of the analysis demands a fast-time response. Information-sharing protocols with key partners, such as MAPPA and MARACs, are effective. The force can demonstrate that it is on track to reach full MoPI compliance by 2010.

Strengths

- Good use is made of national databases – for example Genesis and National Centre for Applied Learning Technologies (NCALT) – in order to inform practitioners of current best practice.
- The force is represented on the national homicide working group and arranges senior detective officer conferences to share issues and good practice.
- A database has been created that captures officer and staff language skills; however, the force has not yet considered extending this to include life skills that may assist SIOs or others when confronted with unusual scenarios.
- The force works effectively with multi-agency partners such as MAPPA and MARACs.
- A well-established, dynamic and responsive governance structure is in place through an IMPACT programme board, with key business and organisational representatives in attendance. It has a dedicated project manager and project support staff financed until the end of 2010 to support implementation of the MoPI force action plan in accordance with national timescales.
- BCU commanders attend the force TTCG, which provides them the opportunity to make direct bids for level 2 resources and gives them an awareness of level 2 problem profiles, other NIM products and the tasking of level 2 resources.
- The RIU has developed *Appendix A*, through which partners and agencies share information on a monthly basis at the RIG meeting on active and developing target nominals and operations, both to inform all agencies and to ensure a joined-up approach where appropriate. The following are the contributors to *Appendix A*:
 - the four Welsh police forces;
 - British Transport Police;
 - BIA;
 - all regional teams (the RTF, the RIU, the regional asset recovery team and the special branch);
 - Trading Standards;
 - the UK Intellectual Property Office;
 - SOCA; and
 - HMRC.

Work in progress

- The force is working through areas for development identified by the National Policing Improvement Agency (NPIA) IMPACT programme MoPI peer review, conducted in November 2007. These include planning for the implementation of the review, retention and disposal process, which is reported as being dependent on some key decisions by

the project board on the identification and redeployment of existing resources, in particular the role of a records manager.

- The force has undertaken an audit and identified 50 stand-alone databases containing personal information; these are subject to an action plan established by the MoPI project manager and the head of IT to ensure that these systems are compliant with national guidance.

Area(s) for improvement

- The force has no systematic means of updating front-line officers and staff on issues that emerge from senior detective officer conferences. An example of this is an expert speaker who gave a presentation on honour-based violence; the learning for front-line officers and front-counter staff in terms of recognising a potential threat to life, even though no overt threat may have been made or other offence committed, has not been appropriately disseminated.
- Apart from sharing arrangements with MAPPA and MARACs, there is little evidence of routine innovative intelligence sharing with partners regarding major crime, precursor or near-miss incidents and offences.

Summary – In respect of major crime, the force profiling of vulnerable locations and communities is developing, with evidence that the impact of OCG activity is only partially understood. As a result, future risks and threats across the force area are not identified sufficiently early.

Strengths

- Based on the combination of the threat scores and the risk assessment detailed in the winter 2007 FSA, the force has established PIE priorities as the basis for tackling the threats posed to vulnerable people, covering areas such as domestic violence, child protection, sex and dangerous offenders, abuse of vulnerable adults, missing persons and hate crime. There is a separate control strategy plan for serious alcohol-fuelled violence. The recent rape problem profile considered a vulnerable section of the community – ie women, predominantly aged 16–25, consuming alcohol in a specific geographical area.
- The BCU-level strategic assessments, two of which are now partnership strategic assessments, use community data that has been gathered from ‘police and communities together’ meetings and public surveys, and by the activity of partners such as the children and young people’s partnership and the health, social care and well-being partnership. Together with data obtained from the Welsh Office through the vulnerable localities index, this information is used to identify communities in their widest sense that are at risk.
- The BCUs are currently developing an action plan to manage the risks and threats from organised criminality and major crime across its control strategy, following the delivery of their strategic assessments.
- The mapping of crime and anti-social behaviour has been used for some time in Gwent, and, in conjunction with census data, has formed part of strategic analytical work to highlight communities with a higher risk of victimisation. In the CSPs, social–geographic mapping of areas is used by the partners to identify, analyse and action activity in those communities and neighbourhoods that are shown to be most at risk by the data.

Work in progress

- Two of the three BCUs are working towards the first joint level 1 strategic assessment, which will take account of ward profiles and will include a profile of communities at neighbourhood level.
- The force is in the process of enhancing its ability to identify vulnerable neighbourhoods by applying the vulnerable localities index methodology created by the Jill Dando Institute of Crime Science, University College London.
- The force has recently purchased the Experian Mosaic public sector neighbourhood classification system, which contains geo-demographic lifestyle datasets that provide a detailed breakdown of the lifestyles and behaviours of the population. This will enhance understanding of identified vulnerable communities.
- Neighbourhood officers are proactively engaged in updating their local profiles on the neighbourhood management database.

- Overlaying the Mosaic analysis with neighbourhood management database information provided by the community via the neighbourhood policing teams (eg ward priorities and profiles) will further enhance the picture of the concerns of communities in each area.

Area(s) for improvement

- The force has not considered the role that neighbourhood teams can play in the gathering of strategic community intelligence by undertaking community audits. This would enable the force to build a full picture of the communities it polices in order to understand potential threats and vulnerabilities better.
- The winter 2007 FSA does not include community profiles and the force has yet to develop neighbourhood profiles to feed NIM processes from BCU level.
- The force has not taken appropriate steps to identify and understand new and emerging communities and vulnerable groups resident in, and transient through, Gwent; this would facilitate greater understanding of the impact and threat of organised crime in those communities and groups.

Summary – Regarding elements of intelligence and prevention, the force strategic risk register is reviewed every two months by the DCC, who oversees the force risk group. Each identified risk for major crime has a current and effective action plan.

Strengths

- The force has not identified any current strategic risks concerning major crime prevention.
- The strategic risk management process has been in place for over two years and is fully embedded at force level.
- The DCC chairs the strategic risk management group, which meets every two months. The group includes a rotating BCU commander representative.
- The strategic risk management group reviews all existing risks as necessary, and considers any new risks that have been submitted.
- Any member of staff in Gwent can complete and submit to the strategic risk management group an intranet-based form outlining details of a perceived risk for consideration and adoption as a strategic risk.
- Each risk adopted by the strategic risk management group has an identified strategic and operational owner, who is tasked to undertake any necessary work to reduce, mitigate or control the risk and to provide a regular update to the meeting as required.

Work in progress

- The strategic risk management process implemented at force level is being piloted on one BCU prior to full roll-out to other divisions and departments.

Area(s) for improvement

- A recent report from the Office of Surveillance Commissioners, although largely complimentary, is critical of the force's failure to introduce systems to ensure that sources of intelligence are properly recorded, with full details of the true identity of the source of information. Due to the nature of this issue, HMIC would have expected to see it included in the force risk register.

Summary – The force is fully collaborating with all other forces in its region to provide the same level of access and interrogation of intelligence systems across the region. Some of the operational databases are searchable from the region and from other Welsh forces. The recommendations from the Richard Inquiry have been partially implemented.

Strengths

- The MIT has no dedicated intelligence capacity, a deliberate decision in order to retain locality of intelligence in an investigation. The relevant BCU intelligence cell is responsible for ensuring that relevant intelligence on the Home Office Large Major Enquiry System (HOLMES) is copied onto the force intelligence system.
- The force is working in collaboration with the other three Welsh forces to share information more effectively. Each of the four Welsh forces has access to each other's intelligence systems through their FIB. The RIU has access to all four force intelligence systems.
- In order to overcome longstanding problems of access to other agency and partner databases, Operation Tarian actively encourages agencies and partners to base a member of staff, with access to their relevant IT systems, in the RIU.
- The force has invested in an ANPR capability conducive to the level of threat faced. The future development of systems is to be on an all-Wales basis to enhance interoperability and to maximise the effectiveness of their use across Wales.
- In order to address the interoperability of systems, the force has in place a search engine (POLIS) that currently trawls 13 police computer systems in a single search. HOLMES is not included in this search engine, but the force is seeking to create a single repository for all HOLMES nominals created on all HOLMES accounts.
- Since March 2008, HOLMES version 12 has been in use. There was a collaborative venture with Gwent and Dyfed-Powys forces to purchase joint servers for the upgrade.

Work in progress

- The force will continually review whether the dedicated MIT would be better served by the addition of dedicated analytical resources, balanced against the efficiency and effectiveness achieved with the current set-up.
- Intelligence sharing remains a work in progress, as the ACPO regional lead intends to develop live information sharing both at force level and on a cross-regional basis.
- The position of the static ANPR sites and their further development is an all-Wales project to ensure consistency of approach and the widest possible cover without duplication.

Area(s) for improvement

- The major incident room standardised administrative procedures (MIRSAP) manual states: "From the outset of the investigation, and in line with the National Intelligence Model (NIM), there should be an ongoing process to review the accrued covert material;

this should be in consultation with the covert policing cell manager, with a view to further dissemination and sanitisation. This information can then be placed in force intelligence systems in a timely manner. Recommendation 8, The Bichard Inquiry 2004.” Gwent Police has not established systematic processes to ensure that this happens on all occasions.

- ANPR data is not routinely analysed; when further developing ANPR, the force should consider how it will analyse the increasing intelligence product obtained.

Summary – The force has a case review policy that is always applied, ensuring that current major crime cases are reviewed in accordance with ACPO guidance; the policy is efficient. (*This refers to organisational learning.*)

Context

The force has a single detective inspector who acts as the co-ordination point for all reviews conducted in the force and, in addition, undertakes some review work himself. Either South Wales Police or Dyfed-Powys Police conducts progress reviews of homicides unsolved after 28 days. This is a formal collaborative agreement that has worked effectively for all the forces over a number of years.

Strengths

- Major crime reviews (unsolved, progress, thematic, domestic homicide and cases involving re-trial for serious offences) are commissioned by the ACC, who is the ACPO lead for major crime and chairs the major crime development board.
- The force does not have a dedicated major crime review team but has not had a homicide unsolved after 28 days since 2003. In order to comply with national guidelines, the force has a documented memorandum of understanding with South Wales and Dyfed-Powys forces to provide 28-day unsolved reviews where necessary. This arrangement is clearly satisfactory, based on the level of demand.
- The force has in place a comprehensive policy for the review of homicide, serious crime and road death investigations, setting out expectations, roles and responsibilities for such reviews.
- Stranger rapes unsolved after 28 days are subject to independent review through a collaborative agreement with South Wales and Dyfed-Powys forces. However, the force cannot recall an unsolved stranger rape after 28 days. Based on the level of requirement, this arrangement is clearly satisfactory.
- The force has one detective inspector post in the major crime support unit. This detective inspector maintains a list of all homicide and relevant rape offences in the force area, including historical and undetected offences. The document contains trigger dates for the relevant review processes to be undertaken, details of those already undertaken, and the identity of the SIO. The detective inspector also undertakes the following reviews:
 - serious cases (child death);
 - progress of road death investigations;
 - detected road death investigations;
 - concluding road death investigations;
 - cold case road deaths; and
 - management of high-risk sex offenders.
- The force has one cold case homicide, which occurred in 1972, and this is subject to periodic review triggered by advances in forensic science.

Work in progress

- Currently, an SIO conducts a 'tick-box' self-inspection review between seven and 28 days into a homicide investigation where the homicide remains undetected at that time. The force will continue to commission reviews at these points in time, but recognises

that, in order to add value and free up the SIO at this critical point in an investigation, they will become peer reviews undertaken by an independent SIO.

Area(s) for improvement

- With the exception of 28-day unsolved reviews, the force does not conduct formal reviews of HOLMES arrangements, independent of the SIO, to reassure the ACPO team about the level of compliance with MIRSAP.
- Force policy requires that unsolved stranger rape investigations are reviewed by way of SIO self-inspection review seven days into the investigation. The inspection found that the review of stranger rape investigations is sporadic at best. There is no formal review or system to monitor the quality of review in accordance with recommendation 5 of the HMIC thematic inspection of rape investigation and prosecution (*Without Consent*, published in January 2007).
- The force does not undertake any reviews of non-stranger rape to elicit good practice and learn lessons, in accordance with recommendation 5 of *Without Consent*.
- The force has not considered whether any historical unsolved rapes may be suitable for cold case review.
- Review of road death investigation is currently not taking place, despite force policy, which sets out clear expectations.
- The inspection found no evidence of the learning and best practice from any form of review being disseminated to front-line officers and staff, either crime or uniform, to enhance their performance in relation to the 'golden hour' principles.

Summary – The force tasking and co-ordination process operates satisfactorily to deliver suitable responses to manage major crime threats. Documentation examined reveals a sound understanding of historical, current and predicted demand.

Strengths

- The ACC chairs the major crime development board, which is a minuted meeting involving the head of crime, all force SIOs currently engaged in reactive major crime investigation, the detective superintendent (major crime) and BCU commanders. The purpose of this meeting is to enable the ACPO lead to have oversight of all ongoing investigations in order to discharge his responsibilities in line with the 2006 ACPO *Murder Investigation Manual*.
- The force tasking and co-ordination policy provides guidance to TTCGs and strategic tasking and co-ordination groups at both level 1 and level 2, in line with ACPO guidance on NIM 2005.
- The DCC chairs the monthly force TTCG, which is attended by BCU commanders and senior managers responsible for specialist resources. The police authority and SOCA are also represented at the meeting. This meeting has oversight of proactive major crime issues that fall outside current reactive investigations.
- There are clear processes in place for hot intelligence to be tasked immediately with the authority of a detective superintendent and brought into force processes in working hours.
- Each control strategy priority and associated PIE action plan is allocated a lead officer at superintendent level.

Work in progress

- In January 2008, the force commenced a process at the force TTCG for holding control strategy owners to account for delivery against the PIE action plan; this will be a developing process as the force learns lessons over the months to come.
- The force recently commissioned a rape problem profile, following an increase in the incidence of reported rape allegations. In January 2008, the force TTCG raised a number of specific tasks and actions based on the analysis, which included:
 - an innovative education/prevention campaign known as the 'pink handbag'. Advice was circulated on eye-catching pink handbag-shaped cards and distributed to reach the target victim profile; and
 - enforcement actions in relation to a suspect premises and person.
- In December 2007, the force TTCG commissioned a homicide problem profile, which has informed the production of a homicide prevention strategy. Due to a short timescale, the problem profile was a surface look at the problem and will be complemented by further work leading up to spring 2008.
- The force is introducing a NIM business tasking meeting, chaired by the DCC. The intended purpose of this meeting is to align the support functions to the NIM crime processes already in place.

Area(s) for improvement

- The strategic assessment acknowledges that domestic violence remains a significant issue, with an increase in reported incidents of 54% on the previous year. Domestic homicide accounts for a large proportion of the homicide figures and is included in the control strategy priorities under a general PIE plan for protecting vulnerable people. The force has in place multi-agency processes to minimise the risk of harm to victims; however, repeat offenders are not presented at NIM tasking meetings to enable consideration of appropriate proactive tasking. This is a key plank of homicide prevention.
- Analysis produced for the January 2008 force TTCG shows that Gwent has the third highest number of serious wounding offences per 1,000 residences in the UK. However, repeat and prolific violent offenders are not routinely presented at NIM tasking meetings to enable consideration of appropriate proactive tasking.
- The force TTCG ought to set documented objectives or success criteria for every sanctioned level 2 operation. This would ensure that all officers, staff and line managers involved in level 2 operations have clearly defined and tightly focused parameters in which to work. Any change in direction requires further authority from the force TTCG, should operational developments dictate the necessity, enabling the force TTCG to control the deployments of such resources fully.
- The force has no process to prioritise collection against the regional intelligence requirements. The regional intelligence requirements were unknown when tested at all levels in the force.
- The force has established a documented intelligence requirement but has not appointed lead officers accountable for overseeing progress against each of the identified six subjects: Class A drugs, protecting vulnerable people, serious alcohol-fuelled violence, exploitation of migrants, criminality involving firearms, and road safety and denying criminals the use of the roads.
- There are no formal processes or systems in place to review or monitor collection against the intelligence requirement at the force TTCG, and there was little knowledge at level 1 of the force intelligence requirement.

Summary – Due to appropriate and comprehensive training, the force's awareness of diverse community needs during major crime investigations is consistent.

Strengths

- Generic diversity training has been provided to all officers and staff, and the force also ensures that diversity is a golden thread running through SIO training.
- The force organises regular senior detective officer conferences, selecting expert speakers from the UK and elsewhere to provide SIOs and deputies with valuable insights from outside Gwent. A recent example that addressed diverse community needs during major crime investigations was a session on honour-based violence and homicide.
- Where a major crime investigation requires knowledge of a particular community or diversity strand, the force ensures that bespoke briefings are provided to the investigating team. A recent example of this followed the establishment of Operation Compass to investigate the murder of a male of south-east Asian origin. Presentations were arranged for the investigation team by a number of people from around the UK with previous experience or expertise in south-east Asian culture.
- The force has created a database that captures officer and staff language skills; however, it has not yet considered extending this to include life skills that may assist SIOs or others when confronted with unusual scenarios.
- Partners are increasingly involved in training, an example being joint interview training with social service partners for vulnerable adults and children.

Work in progress

- Difficulty was encountered in tailoring specific training concerning south-east Asian communities during the Operation Compass inquiry. The force has taken note of this learning in the development of its ongoing diversity training programme.

Prevention

Summary – The force has an independent advisory group (IAG) and key individual networks (KINs) and these are always used to maximise the contribution of partners in the management of major crime investigations.

Strengths

- The role of an IAG in major crime investigation is to review the investigative strategy and advise the SIO on relevant diversity issues that may impact on or be affected by the crime itself and subsequent police action. They may in some instances act as a conduit to the community to prevent rumour and misinformation. Gwent Police has an IAG and KINs in place; people from each group act as independent advisers to SIOs or to gold groups when this is considered beneficial from a community or investigative perspective.
- When independent advice is sought by an SIO, all meetings are minuted. On all occasions, the SIO will feed back to the adviser any instances where the advice was not followed for a particular reason.
- The force neighbourhood teams have established KINs. A KIN involves local community members who together represent a broad cross-section of the community, and is used to gain public opinion and to identify tensions and problems in the community that may impact on policing. The KIN is also a conduit for local police to feed back information to the community, where appropriate.
- Following an occurrence of major crime, BCU commanders consult KIN individuals where necessary as part of the community impact assessment and ongoing community strategy.
- The investigating team for the murder of a south-east Asian male (Operation Compass) was not aware of south-east Asian customs, beliefs and issues that might impact on the investigation or the community. Consequently, the SIO consulted the diversity officers at HQ and met with members of the local Chinese/Vietnamese community in Newport. The Metropolitan Police gave advice and guidance on Vietnamese communities and the SIO met with Vietnamese police officers and members of the Vietnamese Ministry of Public Security, both here and in Vietnam. Furthermore, the SIO consulted the Ambassador at the Vietnamese Embassy in London and the Vietnamese Attaché to the British Embassy in Hanoi with regard to the Vietnamese community in both Newport and the UK.
- A partnership forum of the largest and busiest nightspots in Gwent has been organised to harness good practice, promote safer environments and maximise the opportunities presented by partnership working. One outcome is the agreement of the premises to use polycarbonate glasses in place of traditional glass; this has contributed to a reduction in serious assault of 75%.

Work in progress

- The policy for the deployment of independent advice to SIOs during major crime investigations or critical incidents is currently being refreshed, and is expected to be published in March 2008.

Summary – Embryonic contingency plans are in place to minimise the impact of any escalation of a major crime incident. The inspection teams found that ‘golden hour’ principles were fully understood and tested by call management staff and first responders.

Strengths

- Golden hour crime and critical incident awareness training is delivered to all student officers as part of their initial training programme, and to officers on promotion training courses.
- Control room staff actions are determined by the Action and Information Management System (AIMS) packages, which provide a dropdown menu to support correct actions. AIMS packages are in place for all deaths notified to the police, including baby/infant deaths and major incidents.
- The force has disaster recovery plans in respect of HOLMES – a secondary server in an alternative secure location supports the main server.
- There are clear call-out procedures for the SIO. The SIO determines the level of investigative support required at that time and the control room has access to call-out lists and the skills database.
- The force has the capability to establish a major incident room (MIR) out of hours; with the inception of the newly formed major crime team, this has become routine and presents no difficulty.
- Out of hours, a detective sergeant and constable are posted as the force initial CID response to major crime; this ensures CID attendance during the golden hour to oversee the early management of serious and major crime investigations. This CID response is available every day throughout the year.

Work in progress

- Contingency and business continuity planning has been undertaken to cover staff shortages (for whatever reason they might occur) regarding public order and critical incident situations. This work is comprehensive and is being developed to cover an escalation of major crime beyond the force and regional support capabilities.
- In March 2008, the force will introduce a three-day management of major incidents course for inspectors and sergeants in order to equip front-line supervisors with the necessary skills and knowledge to manage the initial steps following major crime and incidents. The course includes the initial response to mass fatality incidents and the various aspects of the follow-on response, such as a casualty bureau, victim recovery, family liaison, coroners and public inquiries.

Area(s) for improvement

- Golden hour crime and critical incident training has not been delivered to constables, many of whom are now of middle-length service and did not receive it as part of their initial training programme.

- The force has no systematic means of updating front-line officers and staff on good practice or lessons learnt from force reviews or from national forums on initial actions during the golden hour of a major crime investigation, to maximise evidential potential and minimise the incidence of omissions or errors.
- There is no written guidance provided to first responders to major crime on golden hour investigative steps to consider, incorporating lessons learnt, best practice and useful powers, such as establishing and maintaining cordons.

Summary – The threats from precursors to major crime offending are analysed adequately.

Strengths

- The force has produced a homicide problem profile for the period April 1997 to November 2007, taking into account the 66 homicides that occurred during this period. On average, six homicides per year are committed in Gwent.
- Intelligence products comply with the ACPO guidance on NIM 2005.
- The force has invested in a risk assessment tool for domestic abuse victims which is intended to minimise the risk of repeat violence; those victims at high risk are referred to MARACs.
- Serious alcohol-related violence is recognised in the FSA as an important issue for the force to tackle and features as a control strategy priority with PIE strands and intelligence requirements.
- The prevention plans to reduce serious alcohol-related violence include:
 - the development and implementation of a rape reduction strategy;
 - the development of an alcohol harm reduction strategy;
 - neighbourhood teams to carry out regular high-visibility visits to licensed premises and develop relationships with licensees;
 - maintaining local media campaigns throughout the year to raise awareness of the link between alcohol consumption and the increased risk of sexual assault; and
 - visits to higher education institutions to deliver prevention advice to the key age groups involved in alcohol-fuelled and rape offences.
- A partnership forum of the largest and busiest nightspots in Gwent has been organised to harness good practice, promote safer environments and maximise the opportunities presented by partnership working. One outcome is the agreement of the premises to use polycarbonate glasses in place of traditional glass; this has contributed to a reduction in serious assault of 75%.
- Following Operation Demon, the force updated its gun crime strategy; this strategy is clear and concise and in a format that is easily readable by front-line officers and staff. It sets out the force vision and clearly details seven aims:
 - prevention;
 - intelligence;
 - education;
 - marketing and communication;
 - partnerships;
 - firearms control; and
 - gun crime and gangs.Each aim includes methods, a menu of tactics and focused success criteria.

Work in progress

- The first draft homicide reduction strategy was produced in January 2007, together with an action plan.

Area(s) for improvement

- In common with most UK forces, people coming to police attention are processed for a particular incident in isolation. There are no systems or processes in place that identify the overall threat posed by any individual coming to police notice where information is found on separate databases. This would assist the force in identifying PDOs who are recorded on police systems but not recognised as such. The force should consider processes to assess and risk manage such individuals who do not fall within MAPPA criteria.
- There is no method for promulgating lessons learnt that might prevent homicide. Examples include front-line officers and staff facing situations that might be a precursor to homicide where they are not in possession of knowledge that would assist their dynamic risk assessment. For example:
 - people with mental health issues coming to police notice and who are involved in threats, violence or not taking medication;
 - the investigation of certain categories of harassment; and
 - people coming to police notice who believe they may have dishonoured their family.
- The national confidential inquiry into suicide and homicide by people with mental illness reveals that, over the five-year period examined, people with schizophrenia committed 5% of all homicides in England and Wales. The 66 homicides researched by Gwent Police demonstrated that seven (10.6%) had mental health markers on the PNC; there is no information concerning those suspects with mental illness unknown to the police. The homicide prevention strategy therefore ought to include the development of relationships with mental health practitioners to jointly identify, assess and manage people with mental illness, whether already known to the police or not, who have the potential to kill or cause serious harm.
- The force recognises in the strategic assessment that domestic violence remains a significant problem, with an increase of 54% in reported incidents on the previous year. Domestic homicide accounts for a large proportion of the homicide figures and is included in the control strategy priorities under a general PIE plan for protecting vulnerable people. Despite the scale of this crime issue, the force does not have an overarching domestic violence strategy, led by a force domestic violence champion. This would serve to highlight the significance of this type of crime and provide an umbrella document, setting out the strands and strand leaders.
- Given that Gwent has the third highest number of serious wounding offences per 1,000 residences in the UK, the control strategy PIE plan lacks breadth, particularly in relation to enforcement, long-term prevention and partnership working. The problem profile has been completed and the force should consider the introduction of a violent crime strategy with clear strand leads, a comprehensive menu of tactical options and delivery milestones in order to grasp this problem firmly, since it is likely to impact on homicide prevention work.

Summary – The policy covering threats to life is fully accessible to staff and reasonably understood and implemented. Examples of joint, regional and cross-border or multi-agency operations are evident.

Strengths

- The force has a threat-to-life policy, which has been in existence for around two years and was reasonably understood by a wide range of staff. Serving an Osman warning requires the authority of an ACPO officer or at least a detective superintendent out of hours. During 2007, the force issued four Osman warnings.
- During the summer of 2006, intelligence revealed that around 70 known drug and gang nominals from the West Midlands area were frequenting and/or becoming resident in Newport, with several believed to have access to firearms. This was declared a force critical incident, an SIO was appointed, an ACPO-chaired gold group was established and Operation Demon was launched, to disrupt and dismantle the illegal activities of this group in Gwent. A combination of disruption tactics was deployed, using a wide range of force resources. All but three of the nominals no longer frequent Newport, and this success was achieved without the occurrence of any serious incident. This is an excellent example of a force grasping a potentially critical situation at an early stage and successfully disrupting and dismantling criminal activities. The force has submitted this as developing practice.
- Following Operation Demon, the force updated its gun crime strategy; this strategy is clear and concise and in a format that is easily readable by front-line officers and staff. It sets out the force vision and clearly details seven aims:
 - prevention;
 - intelligence;
 - education;
 - marketing and communication;
 - partnerships;
 - firearms control; and
 - gun crime and gangs.

Each aim includes methods, a menu of tactics and focused success criteria.

- Gwent Police has set an intelligence requirement to fill the gaps in corporate knowledge concerning the criminal use of firearms. The intelligence requirement covers the range of people involved in the criminal use of firearms, from suppliers, converters and distributors through to individuals with access to firearms.
- The threat-to-life policy is contained on the force intranet and is readily accessible to staff – a number of people interviewed were able to view it within minutes of searching the system.
- MAPPA nominals are brought to tasking at an appropriate level and the force regularly deploys overt and covert tasking where appropriate. Additionally, the force surveillance team has, at any one time, a number of MAPPA nominals whom it is able to monitor during unscheduled downtime from other tasking. This maximises the efficiency of the surveillance unit and provides support to MAPPA.
- The force is regularly engaged in co-ordinated joint high-visibility ANPR operations with neighbouring forces and partners to prevent and deter major crime.

Area(s) for improvement

- Osman warnings should be recorded on a searchable intelligence system to enable analysis and to inform future decision makers if the same person is threatened at a later date.
- Regional officers dealing with threat-to-life issues currently have to work through different policies in relation to threats to life across the three southern Welsh forces. South Wales and Dyfed-Powys policies are still in draft format, and the forces might like to consider the adoption of a common threat-to-life policy.

Summary – The force has a witness protection capability, supported by dedicated but insufficient covert resources. The force operates according to a policy that is promulgated to and understood by all staff. The force is wholly collaborating with other forces and partners.

Strengths

- The force has a witness protection SPOC with capacity to provide the full range of witness protection. This has been tested during the last 12 months with Operation Compass, the investigation into the murder of a south-east Asian male, where a number of witnesses required protection to varying degrees.
- The witness protection SPOC raises awareness of witness protection issues, by personal briefings at all levels and use of the force intranet system to disseminate learning points and national good practice. A recent example is a PowerPoint presentation delivered to senior management teams to highlight the implications of the case of Van Colle v Chief Constable of Hertfordshire 2006.
- At all levels, the force demonstrated a general awareness of the continuum of witness protection measures available and how to access them.
- The force demonstrates sufficient awareness of measures to protect specialist covert tactics.

Work in progress

- An all-Wales group is led by ACC York (South Wales Police) to consider the provision of witness protection for Wales; a paper has been completed and is with the Welsh chiefs and chairs group for consideration. If approved, this is likely to provide a cost-effective and efficient service for Wales.
- Since inspection, the MIT detective chief inspector has been selected to attend the national witness protection training course to provide resilience.

Summary – The force has a limited system to monitor the impact of preventative and enforcement activity. There is evidence that the broad range of community policing assets is partially used to help understand levels of harm in the community.

Strengths

- BCUs have processes in place to monitor signal crimes as fluctuations outside the normal range may indicate an underlying or emerging problem.
- Each BCU has developed its KINs and local officers regularly consult members to gain an insight into localised community confidence.
- Public confidence and satisfaction are gauged through formal surveys and local community intelligence, combined with neighbourhood-level surgeries, meetings and contacts.

Area(s) for improvement

- Results analysis at levels 1 and 2 is not undertaken. Continual results analysis will help the force to build a picture of tactics that appear to work best from a police perspective, those that have the greatest impact on community confidence and satisfaction, as well as those that reduce crime levels over the short to longer term.
- The force does not have in place indicators to monitor the effects of preventative or enforcement activity.
- Community engagement is a crucial aspect of enabling the police service to understand the harm caused by crime within specific communities. Neighbourhood policing teams, specifically tasked, could be employed to assess and measure a baseline and changes from the baseline, over time and on specific occasions. Such tasking would need to be linked to NIM processes in order to apply it dynamically and to ensure that it informs further tactical and strategic tasking.
- Formal community impact assessments, before and after operations, would inform the results analysis as above.
- The development of partnership working, particularly around sanitised information sharing with partners – eg health – would add major crime data (such as unreported assaults) to the overall intelligence picture and would help gauge the effectiveness of activities such as violent crime initiatives.
- Neighbourhood teams are not part of the response to level 2 crime and the force ought to consider the role that neighbourhood teams can play, and how meaningful neighbourhood profiles linked to NIM systems can enrich the intelligence picture.

Summary – The inspection found evidence that the force always considers relevant professional standards issues in the operational planning for major crime work. There is a comprehensive security policy in use to ensure that staff are appropriately vetted, commensurate with exposure.

Strengths

- The PSD liaises closely with the detective inspectors acting as investigating officers, to ensure that they are fully briefed at regular intervals.
- The force introduced Safecall in May 2007, a confidential reporting line for staff to report wrongdoing or misconduct anonymously. Additionally, the force has retained its own internal integrity line.
- The force has a lawful business monitoring policy, which provides clear guidance that the force will monitor and/or record communications as a means of ensuring that staff and officers comply with force policy and expected standards of behaviour.
- The force has a service confidence policy that promotes positive action to protect its staff assets and members from risk. The policy comes into effect when there is insufficient evidence to discipline or prosecute an officer or member of staff but sufficient intelligence exists to erode confidence in the integrity of a post-holder, who may be removed to a post where the level of risk presented is minimised.
- Vetting of staff in the police service helps to provide a safe working environment for staff and to protect members of the public and police information; it is a cornerstone of achieving an ethical, honest police service free from corruption. Gwent Police established a vetting unit in July 2007, comprising one vetting manager and an administrative assistant.
- The vetting policy and procedures outline designated posts that require the post-holder to be security vetted to particular levels.
- On an annual basis, security-vetted officers and staff are required to complete a reassessment form, inviting them to amend details and certify that the details recorded are up to date and correct.
- All officers and staff working in the major crime unit are security vetted to security check (SC) level.

Work in progress

- An 'inappropriate association' policy is being drafted to introduce a framework for reporting associations that have the potential to compromise either an individual or the organisation.

Area(s) for improvement

- Management vetting is intended to enhance basic security vetting, examining aspects such as financial vulnerability, inappropriate behaviour, personal integrity, vulnerability to improper pressure or influence and vulnerability through health or welfare conditions. The

force is not currently undertaking management vetting, as it is awaiting new national standards due to be published in spring 2008.

- Some key support roles associated with investigations, for example family liaison officers (FLOs) outside the MIT, are not currently vetted. Security vetting of all key role-holders and enhanced management vetting of a small number of individuals would minimise the risk of embarrassment to the force during a high-profile investigation.

Enforcement

Summary – Governance arrangements for major crime investigations are wholly effective, with appropriate use made of IAGs and community membership of gold command support groups.

Strengths

- The Gwent ACPO team comprises the Chief Constable, the DCC and one ACC; the ACC is the lead for major crime investigation.
- The police authority has assigned a lead member for major crime and serious and organised crime. The lead is security vetted to developed vetting (DV) level and regularly attends the force TTCGs and strategic tasking and co-ordination groups and the senior intelligence managers' meeting.
- Assisted by the proactive role played by the police authority major crime lead, the authority is well sighted and fully understands the complexities and issues of major crime investigation. This awareness was critical in the decision to invest £600,000 annually in the MIT.
- The police authority is regularly briefed on issues of major crime in terms of performance and cost; it will be monitoring the newly formed MIT to ensure that it is an efficient and effective investment.
- The police authority lead sits on gold groups when he feels it appropriate to do so; recently, he was a member of the gold group assembled to advise the SIO in the case of Operation Demon.
- The ACPO lead considers setting up gold support groups when appropriate in all circumstances; in the near past the force has had gold groups for Operation Jasmine (ongoing), Operation Compass and Operation Demon.
- Whenever the force establishes a gold support group, independent and community membership is always considered. On those occasions when it may not be appropriate to form a gold support group but either the investigation or the community would benefit from community input, this is provided by direct independent advice to the SIO.
- The Police Authority for Wales (PAW) is now established as a legal entity and early in 2008 will have employer status. PAW members will be security vetted to SC status. The PAW has a specific lead and oversight for major crime in Wales.

Work in progress

- The major crime development group, which has recently been formed to enable the ACC to oversee major crime investigations, has not included the police authority lead for major crime to date, but will do so from March 2008 onwards.

Summary – The ACPO lead and the head of crime are fully trained and competent in the management of linked and series crime, and these officers are supported by staff who have undergone adequate training in critical incident command, community impact assessments and policing in partnership.

Strengths

- The ACC is trained in the strategic management of critical incidents and in serious crime, intelligence, management information, technology and resources (SCIMITAR). He is also trained in the management of linked and series crime.
- The head of crime (detective chief superintendent) is trained in the management of linked and series crime and in the strategic management of critical incidents.
- Two detective superintendents have completed the management of linked and series crime course.
- All detective chief inspectors have attended a national senior investigators' course and are working towards PIP level 3 accreditation.
- In addition, all detective inspectors have undergone national SIO training.

Summary – The force’s performance in the investigation of major crime is monitored through a regime that reviews each operation in terms of outcomes, costs, inputs and outputs.

Strengths

- In November 2007, the force established a major crime development group chaired by the ACC. The meeting is convened every six weeks and is attended by:
 - detective chief superintendent (head of the CID);
 - detective superintendents (operations and intelligence);
 - detective chief inspector (MIT);
 - detective inspectors (FIB, MIT, HOLMES and investigation);
 - superintendent and chief inspector (operational support and roads policing);
 - chief inspector (operational support and roads policing);
 - HQ finance manager;
 - force senior scientific manager;
 - BCU commanders; and
 - other SIOs with live investigations or as required by the meeting.
- The purpose of this group is to:
 - manage the performance of major crime investigation;
 - monitor the progress of live investigations, including road death investigations;
 - consider and oversee resource allocations;
 - agree the allocation of investigations to the MIT in response to presentations from BCUs;
 - monitor the progress of investigations being led by BCUs that had previously been the subject of presentations for MIT resources;
 - monitor reviews being conducted or managed by the MIT into historical investigations, serious case reviews, etc;
 - consider recommendations from completed reviews and implement action plans to promote good practice identified from the review process; and
 - sanction required changes in policy or procedure following a review process.
- With the ever-increasing range of forensic techniques available to SIOs, the forensic costs of an investigation can mount quickly without full appreciation by the SIO. Forensic strategy meetings, chaired by the SIO and attended by the force senior scientific manager, are held routinely to consider the staged submission of exhibits, in order to control costs without detracting from the quality of the investigation.
- The provision of evidential-standard telecommunications packages can also spiral out of control in an investigation. SIOs in Gwent Police routinely chair telecommunications strategy meetings in order to gain a full understanding of the potential value of a particular piece of evidence or intelligence, balanced against the cost. This promotes the discipline of staged submission of telecommunications requests, spreading the workload of the force telecommunications SPOC and ensuring that costs are monitored and evaluated against intelligence or evidential potential.
- Homicide investigations run by the MIT are ‘owned’ by the SIO; the relevant BCU commander is responsible for community impact assessments, in conjunction with the SIO, and for managing community issues in both the short and long term.
- In October 2006, the force appointed a logistics officer in the major crime arena to co-ordinate all administrative and financial issues regarding staff, vehicles, accommodation,

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refreshments and equipment during major incidents and crime investigation, including the casualty bureau. This has enabled the force to keep tighter management control of logistical arrangements during major incidents by using a logistics officer as a SPOC; historically, each inquiry would have had a separate inspector deployed as the logistics officer. The newly created major crime logistics role enables each investigation to be managed cost effectively, freeing up valuable SIO time to concentrate on the investigation. The role-holder is being supported by the force to attain an accountancy qualification and has already saved the force considerably more than her salary year on year.

Area(s) for improvement

- No performance management information is produced that would highlight to the ACPO lead whether an MIR or outside inquiry team is working at maximum effectiveness and efficiency.
- No performance management information is produced and reviewed by any forum for:
 - rape investigation;
 - the source-handling unit;
 - the telecommunications SPOC (throughput and delays); or
 - the high-tech crime unit (throughput and delays).

Such information would facilitate ACPO oversight of each stage of the investigative process and provide an early warning where there appears to be underperformance in a particular area, to enable an early focus of attention.

Performance management and resilience

Summary – The inspection teams found a sufficient investigative capability in force to meet the predictable major crime investigation demands; however, collaborative agreements with SOCA and Operation Tarian exist and are deployed as appropriate. These are considered adequate to counter normal and extraordinary levels of need. Force procedures to manage HR provide sufficient protection for the investigative capability.

Context

On average, over the past ten years, the force has recorded six homicides per year. The vast majority have been relatively straightforward in investigative terms and the force has solved them all within 28 days. In 2006, the force declared a critical incident in respect of Operation Demon at the same time, it was investigating the murder of a south-east Asian national (Operation Compass). These two operations skewed the force resources to such an extent that volume crime performance declined. This was the catalyst that persuaded the police authority to invest in a dedicated major crime investigation team – the MIT. This team was established in mid-December 2007, which makes any meaningful assessment of its success or otherwise difficult, as the team and processes around it are still continuing to embed and develop.

Strengths

- There was clear evidence that a uniformed supervisor consistently attends all unexplained deaths.
- In November 2006, a murder inquiry commenced under the name Operation Compass, to investigate the murder of a Vietnamese citizen illegally resident in the UK. This murder occurred at a time when force resources were already stretched due to Operation Demon. Operation Compass subsequently turned out to be the largest investigation ever undertaken by Gwent Police. It led to the discovery of 34 cannabis factories in Newport, capable of generating illegal revenue in excess of £6 million annually. As the investigation progressed, the hierarchy of the Vietnamese OCG responsible for the murder and large-scale cannabis cultivation was fully uncovered. Gwent Police has worked closely throughout this investigation with other UK forces, the BIA, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, German police agencies and Vietnamese authorities. At present, 11 people stand charged with various offences and this case is believed to be the first example of the hierarchy of a Vietnamese OCG being uncovered in the UK. The NPIA has reviewed this investigation and considers it to be good practice; the force has submitted this investigation as developing practice for identifying and dismantling an OCG. This is expanded in further detail in the serious and organised crime report.
- Operation Jasmine commenced during 2006; it is still ongoing and likely to be the largest and most significant investigation into the deaths of elderly people in a care home environment in the UK. The investigation has received Home Office financial assistance and currently involves some 50 staff dedicated to it. The investigation is focusing on 32 deaths and has assembled a panel of experts to provide support and guidance to the SIO. The investigation has encountered, and is overcoming, hurdles that are likely to provide national best practice in this type of investigation. The NPIA is involved in the ongoing review of the investigation.

- In December 2007, the dedicated MIT came into being. This team undertake all HOLMES and investigative roles, assuming responsibility for the investigation of homicide and other serious crime set out in clear terms of reference. In ordinary circumstances, the only resources supplied by the relevant BCU are the intelligence cell.
- Early indications are that the MIT is making a marked, positive impact on BCU commanders and staff, who are relieved of the continual burden of making staff available to major crime inquiries.
- The force has published terms of reference that clearly define what type of investigation automatically falls within the remit of the MIT. Depending on capacity, the team will assist certain BCU investigations.
- The force benchmarked a number of other forces to gauge the appropriate size for the Gwent MIT, and early indications are that the size of the team is adequate, without being excessive; after a settling-in period, review processes will be put in place by the force and police authority to ensure that it is efficient and effective.
- The force has carefully considered the roles and responsibilities in an MIT and looked at other forces that have modernised the workforce. As a consequence, it has employed four support staff in the role of MIT support officers. These support officers are employed on a flexible contract that means they are on call with the team, and their role can be developed to cover a wider skill base as the Gwent MIT embeds. At present, they undertake simple actions, statement taking and house-to-house enquiries.
- The force has instigated night duty CID cover, which provides a fast crime response to major crimes occurring out of hours.
- All road traffic SIOs have undergone the crime SIO course, as it was felt that the national road death course was inadequate to meet the force's needs.
- In order to formalise arrangements for police officers on call, the force has taken the step of paying an allowance of £25 per night for officers on call.
- In the event of extraordinary demand, the force is able to rely on mutual assistance from its two southern Welsh neighbouring forces. This has worked in practice over a number of years and has recently been cemented with a memorandum of understanding signed by all three forces.
- All detective inspectors have completed the national senior investigators' course in order to broaden their skill base and allow them to be employed as deputy SIOs.
- The force has a sufficient number of trained FLOs, with dedicated FLOs posted permanently to the MIT to provide capacity to manage the team's workload. The BCU-based FLOs will be utilised on BCU-based investigations and act as deputy FLOs for MIT investigations in order to maintain and build their skill base. The determination of FLO capacity drew on lessons learnt over time, and the number now allows officers to use their skills without being overburdened.
- The force has an FLO co-ordinator and deputies in homicide and traffic, who ensure that good practice is shared and manage the welfare and workloads of FLOs. Occupational health referral is not mandatory, although occupational health advisers contact each FLO yearly to offer their services. An FLO database has been established to help the co-ordinators monitor the workloads of staff.

- The MIT has dedicated tier 5 interview co-ordinator and tier 3 interview trained officers, sufficient to meet normal demand.
- There are sufficient crime scene investigators across the force, split between the three BCUs, with a crime scene investigator manager on each BCU. Out of hours, either the senior scientific manager or his deputy is on call and acts as the crime scene manager. The force has never encountered any difficulty in obtaining additional crime scene investigators out of hours when necessary. The scientific support unit has sufficient resilience to meet the normal demand pattern of major crime.
- The scientific support unit has sufficient equipment, or a plan to gain access to specialist equipment out of hours, to enable it to progress the range of possible scene types in all weather conditions.
- Ahead of formal collaborative arrangements, the scientific support units of the three southern Welsh forces regularly exchange staff on a short-term basis, to improve knowledge of particular aspects of unusual crime scenes and to act as a contingency for each other in the event that one force has an extraordinary short-term level of demand. There is currently no written agreement covering such arrangements, although one is in the process of being drawn up to cover the interim period pre-amalgamation.
- The force has sufficient casualty bureau trained managers, supervisors, staff and processes for setting up and running casualty bureaux (CasWeb) and public appeals (MIRWeb).
- Force HQ has the capacity to set up a ten-terminal bureau for CasWeb or MIRWeb in one hour during office hours, or approximately one and a half hours at other times. The force regularly tests this capability.
- The newly formed MIT has moved to a single purpose-built unit, which is sufficient to meet their needs.

Work in progress

- Long-term storage of exhibits in suitable facilities is problematic, and a project team has been tasked to scope solutions.
- The force has planned to train all sexual offence liaison officers (SOLOs) in joint interviewing of vulnerable adults during 2008 to equip them to conduct video-recorded interviews of vulnerable victims.
- The force policy *The Management and Deployment of Family Liaison Officers* is currently in draft and incorporates guidance on FLO deployment – ie template documents to be included with the policy for risk assessment for the deployment of FLOs and the family liaison strategy.
- Scientific support in the three southern Welsh forces will be regionalised over the next two years. The scientific support manager from Gwent is leading a project that will provide an enhanced service than that currently provided in each force but at a lower cost. The regional scientific support manager will be in post by late April 2008. This project includes the amalgamation of technical support units.

- Consideration has been given to a collaborative southern Welsh forces major crime investigation team, and this remains an agenda item for future chiefs and chairs discussion.

Area(s) for improvement

- The sudden and unexplained death policy currently has several gaps:
 - It does not define 'sudden and unexplained death', which therefore means that front-line officers and staff have differing interpretations of this critical aspect of the policy.
 - No guidance is given to officers attending incidents to help them establish whether or not the death may be suspicious.
 - The attendance of a uniformed supervisor is required by the policy but uniformed supervisors have not been trained appropriately – for example in how to probe whether a seemingly non-suspicious death might actually be a homicide.
- Now that the force employs 24-hour CID cover it ought to consider the involvement of an experienced CID supervisor in all unexplained deaths, to apply expertise to the interpretation of the circumstances and to document any decisions, together with the rationale behind them.
- The availability of trained SOLOs on a 24/7 basis is ad hoc and there may or may not be a SOLO on duty in the force at any one time. (SOLOs are not formally on call.) A more robust and sustainable procedure needs to be developed to move towards a 24/7 capability so that victims are not left waiting unnecessarily.
- SOLOs and other officers are unaware of the identity of the SOLO champion, who is responsible for co-ordinating and managing the development, deployment, workload and welfare needs of SOLOs across the force. Although the force has arranged annual SOLO conferences, not all trained staff were aware of them.
- There is no system to ensure that SOLOs have a balanced workload; a number of officers are overburdened due to their willingness to volunteer while other trained officers are less busy.
- The force does not have in place any systems to promulgate good practice or lessons learnt from reviews and local and national conferences.
- The force has not delivered any form of training in respect of golden hour expectations to front-line officers or staff.

Summary – Specialist and covert investigations are resourced through a robust infrastructure that is proven to be effective. Some elements are delivered through developing collaborative agreements with neighbouring forces and Operation Tarian; these agreements are thoroughly tested. The inspection found evidence of the proactive and reactive use of these assets across a wide range of offences.

Strengths

- HMIC examined the provision of surveillance, organised crime investigation, technical support, source-handling units, financial and economic crime, hi-tech crime, forensic and other support to the investigation of major crime and found it to be appropriate.
- All staff in the high-tech crime unit are referred to occupational health on a six-monthly basis; this is mandatory and part of their contract of employment in the unit.
- The high-tech crime unit has provided a number of presentations, targeted particularly at businesses and foster carers, to educate the public and reduce the incidence of internet-based crime.

Summary – The force has an on-demand case review team that is always deployed when current and historical major crime cases are reviewed, in accordance with ACPO guidance. Case review work is in development. (Refers to impact on cases.)

Context

The force has a single detective inspector who acts as the co-ordination point for all reviews conducted in the force and, in addition, undertakes some review work himself. Either South Wales Police or Dyfed-Powys Police conducts progress reviews of homicides unsolved after 28 days. This is a formal collaborative agreement that has worked effectively for all the forces over a number of years.

Strengths

- Major crime reviews (unsolved, progress, thematic, domestic homicide and cases involving re-trial for serious offences) are commissioned by the ACC, who is the ACPO lead for major crime and chairs the major crime development board.
- The force does not have a dedicated major crime review team but has not had a homicide unsolved after 28 days since 2003. In order to comply with national guidelines, the force has a documented memorandum of understanding with South Wales and Dyfed-Powys forces to provide 28-day unsolved reviews where necessary. This arrangement is clearly satisfactory, based on the historical and predicted level of demand.
- The force has in place a comprehensive policy for the review of homicide, serious crime and road death investigations, setting out expectations, roles and responsibilities for such reviews.
- Stranger rapes unsolved after 28 days are subject to independent review through a collaborative agreement with South Wales and Dyfed-Powys forces. However, the force cannot recall an unsolved stranger rape after 28 days. Based on the level of requirement, this arrangement is satisfactory.
- The force has one detective chief inspector and two detective inspectors in the MIT. One detective inspector maintains a list of all homicide and relevant rape offences in the force area, including historical and undetected offences. The document contains trigger dates for the relevant review processes to be undertaken, details of those already undertaken, and the identity of the SIO. The detective inspector also undertakes reviews of:
 - serious cases (child death);
 - progress of road death investigations;
 - detected road death investigations;
 - concluding road death investigations;
 - cold case road deaths; and
 - management of high-risk sex offenders.
- The force has one cold case homicide, which occurred in 1972 and is subject to periodic review based on advances in forensic science.

Work in progress

- Currently, an SIO conducts a 'tick-box' self-inspection review between seven and 28 days into a homicide investigation where the homicide remains undetected at that time. The force will continue to commission reviews at these points in time, but recognises that, in order to add value and free up the SIO at this critical point in an investigation, they will become peer reviews undertaken by an independent SIO.

Area(s) for improvement

- With the exception of 28-day unsolved reviews, the force does not conduct formal reviews of HOLMES arrangements, independent of the SIO, to reassure the ACPO team about the level of compliance with MIRSAP.
- Force policy requires that unsolved stranger rape investigations are reviewed by SIO self-inspection seven days into the investigation. The inspection found that the review of stranger rape investigations is sporadic at best. There is no formal review or system to monitor the quality of review in accordance with recommendation 5 of the HMIC thematic inspection of rape investigation and prosecution (*Without Consent*, published in January 2007).
- The force does not undertake any reviews of non-stranger rape to elicit good practice and learn lessons in accordance with recommendation 5 of *Without Consent*.
- The force has not considered any historical unsolved rapes that may be suitable for cold case review.
- Review of road death investigation is currently not taking place, despite force policy, which sets out clear expectations. The inspection found no evidence of the learning and best practice from any form of review being disseminated to front-line officers and staff, either crime or uniformed, to enhance their performance in relation to the golden hour principles.

Summary – The inspection found evidence that the force is predominantly compliant with relevant ACPO standards of the Murder Investigation Manual and Major Incident Room Standardised Operating Procedures.

Strengths

- The force follows guidance contained in the *Murder Investigation Manual* and MIRSAP in terms of staffing numbers and the setting up and running of an MIR.
- In December 2007, the dedicated MIT came into being; an advantage of dedicated teams is the professionalisation of investigation and consistent delivery to a corporate standard.
- HOLMES policy is required to be documented by the SIO in accordance with MIRSAP.
- SIOs' line managers meet regularly to discuss progress with the SIO and review policy files.
- The force conducts a 'tick-box' review at around seven days after the commencement of an investigation. This covers areas of compliance with the *Murder Investigation Manual* and MIRSAP; until now it has been undertaken as an SIO's self-assessment but it will become a peer review.
- Chief officers are actively involved in major crime investigation and the ACC lead has recently established the major crime development group in order to discharge his responsibilities contained in the *Murder Investigation Manual* and MIRSAP.

Area(s) for improvement

- The MIRSAP manual states that: "From the outset of the investigation, and in line with the National Intelligence Model (NIM), there should be an ongoing process to review the accrued covert material; this should be in consultation with the covert policing cell manager, with a view to further dissemination and sanitisation. This information can then be placed in force intelligence systems in a timely manner. Recommendation 8, The Richard Inquiry 2004." Gwent Police has not established systematic processes to ensure that this happens on all occasions.
- SIOs were unaware that it is good practice and their responsibility, according to the MIRSAP manual, "to read and mark as filed all documentation generated via the MIR". In appropriate circumstances, due to extreme volumes of work, the SIO may delegate part of this function to an appointed deputy. The inspection found that in Gwent it is normal and accepted practice for this to be delegated on all occasions.
- In order to reassure itself of MIR and HOLMES compliance with MIRSAP from the early stages of an investigation, the force should consider conducting reviews independently of the investigating team, perhaps by the HOLMES administrator. This would provide the SIO with an overview at a point in the investigation when adjustments can be made to ensure compliance. Furthermore, it will provide reassurance to the ACPO lead of levels of compliance.

Appendix 1: Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations

A

ACC	assistant chief constable
ACU	anti-corruption unit
ACPO	Association of Chief Police Officers
AIMS	Action and Information Management System
ANPR	automatic number plate recognition

B

BCU	basic command unit
BTP	British Transport Police

C

CAFCASS	children and family court advisory and support service
CasWeb	A web based user interface of the HOLMES 2 Casualty Bureau application enabling forces to help each other if one force is dealing with the aftermath of a major disaster.
CHIS	covert human intelligence source
CID	criminal investigation department
CPS	Crown Prosecution Service
CROP	covert rural observation post
CSP	community safety partnership

D

DCC	deputy chief constable
DSU	dedicated source unit
DVLA	Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency

E

EC	European Community
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ECU economic crime unit

F

FIB force intelligence bureau

FLO family liaison officer

FSA force strategic assessment

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

HQ headquarters

HR human resources

HTCU high-tech crime unit

I

IAG independent advisory group

IMPACT intelligence management, prioritisation, analysis, co-ordination and tasking

IT information technology

K

KIN key individual network

M

MAPPA multi-agency public protection arrangements

MARAC multi-agency risk assessment conference

MAST mobile armed surveillance team

MIR major incident room

MIRSAP major incident room standardised administrative procedures

MIRWeb A web based user interface of the HOLMES 2 MIR application enabling forces anywhere in the UK to provide call handling and data entry facilities to assist another force.

MIT major investigation team

MoPI management of police information

MoU memorandum of understanding

MSF most similar force

N

NIM National Intelligence Model

NPIA National Policing Improvement Agency

NPSAT National Protective Services Analysis Tool

O

OCG organised crime group

P

PAW Police Authority for Wales

PDO potentially dangerous offender

PIE prevention, intelligence and enforcement

PIP professionalising the investigative process

PNC Police National Computer

POCA Proceeds of Crime Act 2002

POLSA police search adviser

PSD professional standards department

R

RART regional asset recovery team

RIG regional intelligence group

RIPA Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000

RIU regional intelligence unit

RTF regional task force

S

SAR suspicious activity report

SC security check

SCIMITAR serious crime, intelligence, management information, technology and resources

SGC specific grading criteria

SIO senior investigating officer

SOCA Serious Organised Crime Agency

SOLO sexual offence liaison officer

SPI statutory performance indicator

SPOC single point of contact

T

TTCG tactical tasking and co-ordination group

U

UKIPO UK Intellectual Property Office

V

VOSA Vehicle and Operator Services Agency