

**HM Inspectorate of Constabulary
Central Region**

**Inspection of East Lincs BCU
Lincolnshire Police**

Geoff Feavour
Chief Superintendent
HMIC (Central Region)



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1 Executive Summary

- 1.1 Basic command units (BCUs) are a fundamental building block in the delivery of policing services. Following a five-year rolling programme of BCU inspections, HMIC has moved to a more intelligence-led approach whereby only a small number of BCUs are selected for inspection, following an examination of their relative performance within their Most Similar BCU (MSBCU) group. (The inspection itself includes review of performance data, a comprehensive self-assessment process and leadership audit, followed by a structured on-site inspection.)
- 1.2 East Lincs BCU is centred on Skegness and serves two local authority areas – East Lindsey District and Boston Borough Councils. The BCU has a total population of 186,000 in 79,500 households, centred on the main towns or urban areas of Skegness, Louth, Mablethorpe, Horncastle and Boston; the BCU also contains the rural farmland of the Lincolnshire Wolds stretching from north to south and a large area of fenland predominantly given to agriculture. Although poorly served by major roads or alternative transport infrastructure, the area boasts over 350,000 caravans and is a major summer holiday destination. The farming industry, traditionally attracting migrant workers, has seen both Portuguese and Eastern European communities establish in the area, particularly around Boston.
- 1.3 The BCU operates in a challenging environment. Lincolnshire Police faces a significant challenge based on a history of poor funding when compared with forces of a similar size, and the issue of resourcing is naturally passed to its constituent BCUs. When added to the large rural areas policed by the BCU, there is a significant premium on the placement and deployment of resources. The BCU has recently rolled out its Neighbourhood Policing programme, establishing mixed teams of police officers and PCSOs for every neighbourhood in its area. Against this background, in many areas the BCU performs below the average for its MSBCU family. Performance challenges include the volume of residential burglary, vehicle and violent crime and robbery and, to a lesser extent, the sanction detection rate for these types of crime – this despite some significant gains in the detection of residential burglary and vehicle crime over time.
- 1.4 The leadership audit, consistently reinforced by other elements of the inspection, gave particularly strong indications of an accommodating and inclusive workforce, and of a positive culture within the BCU. Some staff expressed concerns about what they saw as an increasing emphasis on statistical performance. The roll-out of Neighbourhood Policing has drawn significant support both internally and from partners, with the impact of neighbourhood-based PCSOs consistently described in a very positive light. The senior management team has a generally high profile within the BCU, and the BCU Commander in particular is well-known and seen to be approachable. Staff have confidence in their leaders to deliver effective management and solve problems.
- 1.5 Any searching inspection process is likely to highlight areas for improvement. In East Lincs, gains can arguably be made through work to reduce demand, including examination of the mix and deployment of available resources, to better understand the profile and detail of seasonal changes in incidents and

crime, and to improve communication within the BCU. Taken together, these do not represent serious concerns about the management of the BCU and are more than offset by strengths such as the positive working environment/culture, the screening in of low priority crime, the use of CCTV, collaboration with the Drugs Action Team and the widespread use of video conferencing. The approach of the force and the BCU senior management team to the inspection process and self improvement, taken together with the implementation of recommendations in this inspection report, suggest further gains and improvements for the future of this BCU.

Recommendations and Good Practice

1.6 The inspection team has made the following recommendations that should contribute to a drive for continuous improvement. There are also various suggestions that the SMT may wish to consider contained within the '*What We Found*' section of the report, mainly from data gathered by the inspection team or from BCU staff participating in focus groups or interviews.

Recommendation (1): Demand-Reduction Strategy

It is clear that the provision of sufficient resource to meet policing needs is the major task facing Lincolnshire Police in the immediate and longer-term future. In support of this, it is inevitable that BCUs will be required to make additional efficiencies.

HMIC recommends that the BCU develops a demand-reduction strategy, with an emphasis both on seeking to reduce workload and increase the availability or flexibility of resource in place to meet it. Although not an exclusive or mandatory list, this may include:

- work with the FCCC through operations command to rationalise the grading of calls for assistance in line with national guidance;
- a review of all non-frontline posts to identify opportunities for rationalisation and realignment;
- the allocation, usage and maintenance of vehicles; and
- the alignment of the current 2/2/2 shift pattern with known demand.

Recommendation (2): Demand Profile

HMIC recommends that the BCU would benefit from the development of a comprehensive crime problem profile based on 3-5 year data. As a minimum this profile should seek to identify significant peaks in particular priority crime types, vulnerable locations and develop offender profiles to direct opportunities for a cycle of campaigns and policing operations bespoke to the BCU, and in particular incorporating specific actions aimed at seasonal peaks.

Recommendation (3): Communication

The BCU has an asset in its communications officer. There are a number of avenues for communication, with some well-thought out approaches including a fortnightly BCU newsletter, and notice boards displaying performance and other information. Nevertheless, significant numbers of staff felt under-informed about force/BCU performance and priorities. The BCU should consider a communications audit to identify opportunities in this area.

As part of such an audit, the BCU should look to include resource tasking and intelligence. In particular this should examine whether primary and secondary tasking is sufficiently specific to direct and inform officer actions, and the means by which priority issues are highlighted during briefing and its environment.

1.7 The inspection team also acknowledges the following areas of good practice:

Culture: HMIC recognises that one of the very real assets for the BCU is confidence in the senior management team, and a culture of inclusion supported by mutual respect and a single team approach. Working under some real resource issues, HMIC found a body of staff working together to deliver a level of service, including the emergence of a wholly positive Neighbourhood Policing approach with some promise for the future.

Screening in of low priority crime: The BCU has fairly recently taken the decision to allocate crime to NPTs that would previously have been screened out for non-attendance. All victims receive a visit, with most completed by PCSOs who can offer reassurance and crime prevention advice. Additional enquiries in the immediate area raise awareness while ensuring that high-profile activity is directed to areas suffering recent crime. Importantly, although to a lesser extent, these enquiries offer additional intelligence gathering and detection opportunities. HM Inspectors would agree with the SMT view that this measure appears at the heart of a recent step-change in public satisfaction levels. It would be interesting to see further analysis of the effect on the volume of crime in affected areas and any directly attributable increase in sanction detections.

East Lindsey CCTV: HM Inspectors were shown a particularly impressive CCTV suite at Skegness Police Station, recently bringing together different individual local authority schemes into a modern, purpose-built environment. It was encouraging to see a CCTV initiative subject to long-term planning and investment to support upgrading and improvement. The scheme includes ANPR capability with recent funding from EMDA to cover all major routes in the East Lindsey area. Of particular interest, the CCTV suite takes full responsibility for recording and retaining the CCTV and audio product from Skegness custody suite, introducing a welcome element of independence into this process.

DAT mobile unit: There is considerable joint working with the drugs action team (DAT), with good interaction with both police officers and PCSOs at more remote locations. The DAT operates a mobile service to communities where access to prescribing and treatment may otherwise have been limited because of accessibility.

Video conferencing: The BCU makes best use of a video conferencing system for meetings and briefings, currently under expansion. Officers familiarity with and use of this system is very good and can be seen as best practice.

2 Introduction and Methodology

- 2.1** BCUs are a fundamental building block in the delivery of policing services. Aligned to communities, BCUs represent the local interface with the public and are therefore highly influential in the police service's aims to reduce crime and disorder, and to increase community confidence. BCUs vary in size and composition but all share responsibility for the delivery of the national community safety plan as it affects them and, with crime and disorder reduction partnership (CDRP) colleagues, the delivery of the local community safety strategy priorities. As such, individual BCUs will remain to be subject to scrutiny of performance from both Government and local communities.
- 2.2** The range in performance outcomes between BCUs presents an opportunity for weak performers to improve and for all to share the learning of 'what works'. A key ingredient of successful BCUs remains focus - the most successful demonstrate a sharp focus through effective leadership at every level. They will also have a performance management framework that strikes the right balance between holding individuals to account, and providing support for those in most need. The NIM is fully embedded and mainstreamed throughout the BCU, driving all types of proactive intervention through the systematic and skilled interpretation of intelligence. Successful BCUs will also have a thorough appreciation and desire to meet the needs, wishes and expectations of their primary customer - the communities they police.
- 2.3** Following a five-year rolling programme of BCU inspections, HMIC has now moved to a risk-based approach whereby only a small number of BCUs are identified as needing inspection. This identification is based upon an examination of performance as compared with the MSBCU group. In most cases, a self-assessment carried out by the BCU highlights the areas which the inspection process needs to concentrate upon. Shorter visits will also be made by HMIC to high-performing BCUs to learn from and share the good practice that underpins their achievement. The overall objectives of inspection are summarized below (Box A).

Box A – Aims of BCU Inspections

Promoting effective leadership

Disseminating good practice

Identifying inefficiencies

Providing pointers to enhance performance

Strengthening the capacity for self-improvement

Leaving behind a BCU management team that has learnt about itself and is even more committed to self-improvement

Methodology

2.4 The inspection of East Lincs BCU consisted of the following core stages:



2.5 The GL3 inspection of East Lincs BCU was conducted between 19 and 23 March 2007. During the inspection, 20 structured interviews and focus groups were conducted involving some 78 individuals. Partnership agency representatives were also contacted and there were visits to various workplace settings; the inspection team spent time on an operational shift with officers from Boston prior to the main inspection. Representatives from the Boston and East Lindsey Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships and the independent advisory group (IAG) were consulted in the course of the inspection.

3 The Force and BCU Context

- 3.1** Lincolnshire is a mainly rural county bordering the North Sea and the Wash. The force area encompasses small villages, market towns and one city, with a population of 665,000 people in 282,000 households. The rural and sometimes isolated eastern coastal areas have a high influx of tourists in the summer. Geographically, Lincolnshire is twice the size of any other county in the East Midlands region. Overall transport infrastructure in the county is poor, with only 65 kilometres of dual carriageway out of a total road network of 8,553 kilometres.
- 3.2** The great majority of the population is classed as white British, but Lincolnshire has seen a significant increase in the number of minority ethnic groups either working temporarily or settling in agricultural areas. Much employment is seasonal and relatively poorly paid. Employment rates in some areas of the county are 5% below the national average. In the 2000 index of multiple deprivation, 25 Lincolnshire wards were in the 20% most deprived areas nationally. The East Midlands, as a region, is behind the rest of the UK in workforce skills, and Lincolnshire has the lowest level of skills within the region.
- 3.3** To address the needs of its communities, Lincolnshire Police delivers its services from three basic command units (BCUs), each led by a chief superintendent. The BCUs are, in turn, divided into a total of 15 sectors (shown below). The sectors are inspector-led and are responsible for providing immediate response as well as dealing with community-based policing issues.



- 3.4** The force faces a very difficult budgetary situation and continues to lobby for an improved financial settlement from the Home Office. It has put in place a number of actions to address the shortfall in finance but any suggestions for change need to be placed in this specific financial context.
- 3.5** East Lincs BCU, centred on Skegness, operates to the east of Lincoln and covers the entire eastern region of Lincolnshire, including the coastline sweeping down from the Humber to the Wash. Its boundaries are coterminous with the local authority areas of East Lindsey District and Boston Borough Councils. According to 2001 Census data, the BCU serves a population of 186,000, residing in some 79,500 households. There are five main towns or urban areas within the BCU. Skegness, Louth, Mablethorpe and Horncastle are all within the East Lindsey district council area, and Boston in that borough council area. The Lincolnshire Wolds stretch from north to south along the west side of the BCU, around 200 square miles of undulating hills and rural farmland. To the south, the area is predominantly fenland, given over to agriculture.
- 3.6** The east coast is renowned as a summer holiday destination, with large concentrations of static caravan parks and sites for mobile caravans and transient summertime visitors. With over 350,000 caravans sited in the area, it has the largest concentration in Europe, and worldwide is second only to Florida. Holiday attractions include the Butlins Holiday Centre at Skegness and the Fantasy Island theme park at Ingoldmells, which attracts in the region of 50,000 visitors a week during high season.
- 3.7** The farming industry has traditionally attracted migrant and temporary workers into the area, and this continues to be the case for the area's large agricultural sector. Fairly recently Portuguese and Eastern European communities have become established in the Boston area. Although the population remains predominantly white British, between the 1991 and 2001 Censuses, Lincolnshire saw a large increase in its minority ethnic population - still low compared to national averages. However, in 2005/6, 7,760 new National Insurance numbers were issued to overseas nationals, an increase of 57% on the previous year, and potentially confirming an increasing scale of overseas migration into the area.
- 3.8** At 39.9% of the population, Boston has the second highest proportion of people with no academic qualifications in the East Midlands, and the thirteenth in the country; 38.4% of the population in East Lindsey have no qualifications. Many people move to the east coast to retire, with East Lindsey in the top 5% of local authority areas nationally for the proportion of retired people – 23.2% of the population are aged 65 or over.
- 3.9** The lack of travel infrastructure in such a large and predominantly rural area means that residents are largely dependent on private transport. Just 2.1% of people in Boston use public transport to get to work, compared to 14.5% in England and Wales.

Diversity

Minority Ethnic Groups in East Lincs

3.10 The following table shows the distribution of ethnic groups within East Lincs BCU identified from the 2001 Census.

Percentage of resident population in ethnic groups	East Lincs	E. Lincs %	England %
White: British	181,501	97.75	86.99
White: Irish	823	0.44	1.27
White: Other	1,673	0.90	2.66
Mixed: White & Black Caribbean	316	0.17	0.47
Mixed: White & Black African	86	0.05	0.16
Mixed: White & Asian	218	0.12	0.37
Mixed: Other	203	0.11	0.31
Asian or Asian British: Indian	336	0.18	2.09
Asian or Asian British: Pakistani	178	0.10	1.44
Asian or Asian British: Bangladeshi	71	0.04	0.56
Asian or Asian British: Other	65	0.03	0.48
Black or Black British: Caribbean	75	0.04	1.14
Black or Black British: African	161	0.09	0.97
Black or Black British: Other Black	23	0.01	0.19
Chinese/other ethnic group: Chinese	294	0.16	0.45
Chinese/other ethnic group: Other	174	0.09	0.44

4 The Leadership Audit

- 4.1** A critical attribute of successful BCUs is effective leadership. Leadership styles vary – some are highly transformational while others veer more towards transactional approaches. There is no ‘correct’ style because circumstances vary too, and good leaders attune their approaches to fit these circumstances. To try and explore the components of leadership and their relative impact on performance, HMIC has developed a leadership audit tool, the findings from which inform the fieldwork stage of the inspection to validate key themes. This is a developing tool that will become increasingly powerful as benchmarks are created from BCUs against which results can be evaluated.
- 4.2** The leadership audit is a ‘soft’ tool in that it invites perceptions from staff which are then validated or not during interviews and staff focus groups. The validation process includes interviews with the BCU commander and members of the SMT so as to provide a management context to the survey findings, together with triangulated evidence obtained during the wider fieldwork visit and overall BCU performance. Emerging strengths and areas for improvement from the audit offer insights to the leadership style and its impact but it is not a scientific exercise and so some caution is needed in interpreting the findings.
- 4.3** The audit process comprised three elements: a questionnaire, circulated to a statistically significant cross-section of all BCU staff and returned in confidence directly to HMIC; focus groups of representative officers and staff; and one-to-one interviews with the BCU commander, operations superintendent/chief inspectors and the business manager. The audit also included an interview with the relevant chief officer who line manages the BCU commander, in which their working relationship is explored.

The Leadership Context for East Lincs BCU

- 4.4** East Lincs BCU has its headquarters at Skegness Police Station. The BCU commander is a chief superintendent, supported by an operations superintendent and two chief inspectors who cover crime and community issues respectively. The command team also includes a head of administration and a human resources manager. The BCU is policed from four sectors, based at Skegness, Boston, Louth and Horncastle, each led by an inspector with responsibility for locally-based response teams, CID and Neighbourhood Policing teams. The agreed establishment is 260 police officers, 56 police staff and 44 PCSOs, with a current complement of 37 special constables.

Force priorities for 2006/7 are:

- to reduce burglary dwelling below the rate for 2005/6;
- to reduce serious violent crime below the rate for 2005/6;
- to increase sanction detections;
- to reduce road casualties below the rate for 2005/6;
- to achieve an overall satisfaction level of 80%; and
- to introduce dedicated, identifiable, accessible and responsive community policing teams.

- 4.5** Against this background, for the year to the end of January 2007 the BCU has built on successive burglary, vehicle crime, and robbery reductions. Despite this, levels of these offences in this BCU remain above the MSBCU average. Violent crime has increased, and remains towards the bottom of the MSBCU family, and it is noted that in this area, although the sanction detection rate for the year to date is improved, comparative MSBCU performance has deteriorated. Other than for violent crime, the BCU has made considerable gains in sanction detections in these priority areas, with significant movement compared to MSBCU performance. It is apparent that the wide seasonal fluctuation in demand for the BCU brings about unique performance management issues.
- 4.6** In conjunction with comments made in section 3 of this report (The Force and BCU Context), the inspection team acknowledges the report 'A Performance Assessment of East Lincolnshire BCU: An Application of Data Envelopment Analysis' by Dr Richard Simper of Loughborough University Department of Economics. This report examines the use of inputs to combat crime relative to its BCU family and demonstrates as part of its findings a considerable increase in efficiency between 2003/4 and 2005/6.

Leadership Audit Findings

- 4.7** The Leadership Audit findings are set out below under the headings and specific questions for which responses were sought from East Lincs BCU officers and police staff.

Q1. The BCU commander receives appropriate support from the chief officer line manager.

The BCU Commander has 23 years service, all with Lincolnshire Police, and was appointed to this post in September 2005. He has worked in all three force BCUs mainly in operational roles, and has a significant connection with East Lincs BCU, being both a resident and having worked there previously.

Personal contact between the BCU commander and his line manager, the assistant chief constable, is good. He is supported from force headquarters through a clear and inclusive meeting structure, sharing good practice and highlighting common issues. Performance focus is testing without being overbearing. Chief officers strive to maintain team balance and continuity on BCUs, although it is acknowledged that succession planning is not easy.

Roles and accountability within the BCU command team are very clear, in an environment where BCU commanders can develop and are encouraged to innovate.

Q2. The BCU has an appropriate structure which is aligned to the force strategy.

(a) *My role is clearly defined and contributes to the BCU and force strategy.*

Some 90.63% of respondents gave a positive response, 7.81% were negative and 1.56% “don’t know”. This positive response was confirmed by feedback from most focus groups. The inspectors/sergeants group was also positive, but felt that while there was good understanding from individuals and teams about their own role, there was less understanding about the role of others in the BCU. Notably, the PCSO focus group was less positive, citing a lack of understanding on the part of the communications centre about their role and capabilities as the chief issue.

(b) *I am set objectives which are clearly relevant to my role and experience.*

Some 90.63% of respondents gave a positive response, with 7.81% negative and 1.56% “don’t know”. Again, a positive response in focus groups. Some PCSOs referred to the previous statement suggesting that their objectives were sometimes unclear, but that there had been some improvements in their direction working to their community beat managers.

(c) *Lines of accountability and responsibility within the BCU are clearly defined.*

A total of 81.25% of respondents gave a positive response, with 12.50% negative and 6.25% “don’t know”. The positive response was reinforced throughout all focus groups. Although there are clear overlaps between the responsibilities of sector and response inspectors, it was noted that officers felt these arrangements worked well, with considerable collaboration and mutual support.

(d) *Resources are effectively managed in the BCU, including specific issues of demand and deployment.*

Some 62.50% of respondents gave a positive response, with 32.81% negative and 4.69% “don’t know”. In focus groups concerns were mainly directed to perceptions of low patrol strength and isolation, with the impact of ‘off BCU’ abstractions keenly felt in some CID sections.

(e) *Throughout the BCU, teams are balanced in terms of skills, experience and diversity.*

Some 64.06% of respondents gave a positive response, with 25% negative and 10.94% “don’t know”. Middle and senior managers expressed concerns about the level and balance of experience among operational officers. Constables felt that they were sometimes asked to work outside the terms of driving authorities (response training), and identified a shortage of qualified van drivers – with the force requiring potential drivers to first obtain their own civil qualification before being reimbursed acting as a significant disincentive.

(f) *The health and safety procedures on the BCU are effective and make me feel safe in my workplace.*

Some 78.13% of respondents gave a positive response, with 17.19% negative and 4.69% “don’t know”. The PCSO group referred to previous comments about the availability of urgent support and the adequacy of their personal protective equipment.

Q3. The BCU has a performance culture with integrity.

(a) *My manager demonstrates an interest in my performance and development.*

A total of 71.88% of respondents gave a positive response, with 28.13% negative. The negative level of response was not repeated in focus groups.

(b) *I receive the development I need to perform my role.*

A positive response was given by 59.38% of respondents, with 40.62% negative. A significant negative response was reinforced through a number of focus groups. While there was reference to the driving authority issues mentioned above, there was also broad agreement that a shortage of resources often prevented development attachments, and that few officers were able to attend developmental courses. By contrast, special constables generally gave a positive response. Concerns were expressed about the quality of training for successive legislative changes in respect of SOCAP and the recent Fraud Act.

(c) *Within the BCU, good performance is recognised and rewarded.*

Some 45.31% of respondents gave a positive response, with 54.69% negative. In this area, there was a significant gap between the views of senior managers and the results of the internet-based survey. Focus groups generally reflected the initial survey results, suggesting that staff and first-line managers could do more to routinely thank and reward good work. Senior managers clearly feel they invest heavily in recognising good performance, but it appears that their message is not wholly received at ground level. In contrast, Special Constables felt both recognised and appreciated.

(d) *Innovation is promoted and supported on the BCU.*

Some 57.81% of respondents gave a positive response, with 34.38% negative and 7.81% “don’t know”. Focus group responses were generally more positive, with little evidence of any organisational problems.

Q4. The BCU makes effective use of the National Intelligence Model, especially in respect of resources/tasking/co-ordination.

A total of 73.44% of respondents agreed with this view, while 12.50% were negative and 14.06% were in the “don’t know” category. This generally positive response was supported across focus groups.

(a) *BCU managers ensure that maintaining our integrity is more important than achieving good performance.*

Some 50.00% of respondents gave a positive response, with 31.25% negative and 18.75% “don’t know”. This amounted to a significant negative response in this area, which was followed up with focus groups. Concerns were voiced almost entirely by police constables. Rather than any issues of unethical behaviour, officers expressed some concerns that a sanction detection culture was eroding their discretion, and sometimes defeating common sense solutions. To a degree, these comments were reinforced in the police staff group, who commented on the high profile of statistical performance. Other groups recognised that a recent problem in respect of stop/talk, now resolved, may have had an impact on the response in this area.

(b) *The BCU delivers an effective service to the community.*

Some 78.13% of respondents gave a positive response, with 14.06% negative and 7.81% “don’t know”. Focus groups reflected a fairly positive response, reflecting the geography of the BCU as a limiting factor. It was widely acknowledged that the introduction of PCSOs has had a significant and positive impact.

Diversity

Q5. Diversity is embedded within the BCU, specifically in terms of personal values and all areas of business including selection and appointment of staff.

For this overarching question, 78.13% of respondents gave a positive response, with 7.81% negative and 14.06% “don’t know”; this pattern of responses was reinforced throughout all focus groups.

(a) *Fairness at work procedures (eg, grievance or appeals) can be confidently used by staff on the BCU without fear of recriminations from managers.*

A total of 67.19% of respondents agreed, with 15.62% negative and 17.19% “don’t know”. A generally positive response was reinforced throughout focus groups, although inspectors and sergeants felt that processes had little credibility.

(b) *My manager’s decisions in respect of operational issues are consistent.*

Some 82.81% of respondents gave a positive response, with 9.38% negative and 7.81% “don’t know”.

(c) *My manager's decisions in respect of disciplinary issues are consistent.*

A total of 70.31% of respondents gave a positive response, with 10.94% negative and 18.75% "don't know".

(d) *Staff have confidence in managers to solve problems effectively.*

Some 78.13% of respondents gave a positive response, with 14.06% negative and 7.81% "don't know".

(e) *My manager inspires me with confidence.*

A total of 75% of respondents gave a positive response, with 25% negative.

(f) *Sickness and welfare are effectively managed within the BCU.*

Some 70.31% of respondents gave a positive response, with 23.44% negative and 6.25% "don't know". In focus groups inspectors and sergeants were more likely to reinforce the negative view, citing the loss of a divisional personnel assistant and lack of comprehensive training on the duty management system which has led to confusion over process and responsibility.

(g) *Managers deal effectively with bullying.*

Some 51.56% of respondents gave a positive response, with 9.38% negative and 39.06% "don't know". Focus groups returned an even higher "don't know" response, with general agreement that bullying is not an issue on the BCU, and thus people cannot speak from experience.

(h) *Abstractions from duty – other than sickness – are effectively managed within the BCU.*

Some 57.81% of respondents gave a positive response, with 26.56% negative and 15.63% "don't know". Operational staff generally expressed concerns around the resilience of teams and the potential for even minor abstractions to have a significant effect on operational strength.

(i) *There is a commitment within the BCU to staff retention.*

Some 51.56% of respondents gave a positive response, with 31.25% negative and 17.19% "don't know". Some CID officers felt that the lack of recognition through SPP and the likelihood of working in isolation cause problems in attracting staff. An apparent practice of appointing or transferring staff who live a significant distance from the BCU location does not assist in keeping officers in place over the longer term.

Q6. Personnel Management

(a) *I have regular and meaningful contact with my line manager.*

Some 71.88% of respondents gave a positive response, with 28.12% negative. Clearly, issues of geography and distance make personal contact more difficult; nevertheless, staff recognise this issue and focus groups generally reflected a good level of contact with their first-line manager.

(b) *My manager demonstrates a genuine interest in me.*

In total, 70.31% of respondents gave a positive response, with 29.69% negative. This negative response was not endorsed by focus groups.

(c) *I feel that my contributions are welcomed and valued.*

Some 65.63% of respondents gave a positive response, with 34.37% negative.

(d) *My manager makes me feel proud of the service we deliver.*

Some 67.19% of respondents gave a positive response, with 32.81% negative. Focus group responses were entirely more positive, with a very strong response from special constables and PCSOs, and positive comments from other groups about the impact of neighbourhood policing generally. Where negative views were expressed, these tended to be in terms of the ability to provide a good service with limited resources, and issues outside individual control such as courts' sentencing.

(e) *My manager makes me feel trusted, valued and included.*

A total of 65.63% of respondents gave a positive response, with 34.27% negative. Where negative views were expressed, these appear to have strong links to the response to 3(c) above 'Within the BCU, good performance is recognised and rewarded'.

(f) *Training and development is allocated on the BCU according to need.*

52.65% of respondents gave a positive response, with 40.62% negative and 3.13% "don't know".

(g) *I am encouraged to learn by my manager.*

65.63% of respondents gave a positive response, with 31.24% negative and 3.13% "don't know".

(h) *I feel prepared for future changes.*

Some 59.38% of respondents gave a positive response, with 32.81% negative and 7.81% "don't know".

(i) *Coaching and mentoring is available to me if I need it.*

56.25% of respondents gave a positive response, with 32.81% negative and 10.94% “don’t know”.

(j) *Personnel issues are dealt with by my manager in a relevant and timely manner.*

Some 79.69% of respondents gave a positive response, with 15.62% negative and 4.69% “don’t know”. In focus groups, managers were more likely to express concerns about slow systems and inefficient processes.

Q7. Communication

(a) *The BCU commander and senior management team has a high profile within BCU.*

A total of 70.31% of respondents gave a positive response, with 18.75% negative. Where negative views were expressed it appears that the visibility of the senior management team has not always been consistent. Recent staffing changes and the completion of work that had been taking managers away from the BCU offer a new opportunity to address these issues.

(b) *My manager communicates relevant information to me.*

71.88% of respondents gave a positive response, with 28.13% negative. Focus groups were generally more positive, but police staff managers felt that some information from senior managers “only reached so far down”.

(c) *I feel that, where it is appropriate, I am consulted on matters of policy and strategy.*

56.25% of respondents gave a positive response, with 39.06% negative and 4.69% “don’t know”. While acknowledging the difficulties of consulting on all issues, there was a strength of feeling among first and second line managers that significant change was sometimes introduced without adequate consultation or staff preparation.

(d) *My manager is available when I need to talk to him/her.*

84.38% of respondents gave a positive response, with 15.62% negative; there was a strong response from all focus groups.

(e) *The BCU commander and the rest of the senior management team are available to staff at appropriate times.*

57.81% of respondents gave a positive response, with 28.13% negative and 14.06% “don’t know”.

(f) *The BCU commander and SMT respond in a positive way to feedback from staff.*

50.00% of respondents gave a positive response, with 29.69% negative and 20.31% “don’t know”. The BCU commander was described as “very approachable”.

(g) *My manager responds in a positive way to feedback from staff.*

73.44% of respondents gave a positive response, with 18.75% negative and 7.81% “don’t know”.

Audit Conclusions

- 4.8** The Leadership Audit process has two elements, with an initial paper-based survey followed up with focus group meetings, allowing further exploration of issues and themes that arise. From this process it is possible to say that BCU staff feel that they operate in clearly defined roles, contributing to objectives with a good understanding of internal structure and accountability.
- 4.9** Where concerns were expressed they focused on the availability and management of scarce resources – something acknowledged to be largely outside the control of the BCU, compounded by the lower skill levels of less experienced officers, and staff retention problems. To a lesser degree, some staff were concerned about what they saw as an increasing emphasis on statistical performance. It is acknowledged that recent problems with ‘stop/talk’ recording may have had a negative impact on responses.
- 4.10** There were particularly strong indications of an accommodating and inclusive workforce. While acknowledging the requirements of different roles and specialisms, staff display a high mutual regard for each other. There was consistent evidence of a positive culture within the BCU. Staff were unanimously positive about the impact of neighbourhood policing, and particularly the role played by PCSOs. While it is to be expected that staff directly involved are likely to place a high value on new neighbourhood activity, inspectors were impressed by the degree to which police officers and staff from other sections and areas had recognised and embraced its implementation.
- 4.11** The senior management team has a high profile within the BCU, are well known and seen to be approachable. Staff have confidence in their leaders to deliver effective management and solve problems. This was balanced by what may be a weakness in respect of effective communication – particularly in the area of reward and recognition – where the BCU will undoubtedly wish to review its approach.

5 BCU Performance

- 5.1** BCU objectives should reflect both national priorities - as set out in the National Policing Plan and reflected quantitatively in the public service agreement (PSA) targets - and local needs. In inspecting BCUs, HMIC covers both achievement of locally set targets and, more specifically, the delivery against national objectives – target crime reduction and sanction detections in particular. Considerable attention is paid to the MSBCU group positioning and direction of travel, both against the BCU's past performance and relative to its MSBCU group.
- 5.2** This is illustrated numerically in the following tables, and graphically using iQuanta comparisons (Appendix C) which illustrate performance against national priorities over the short (12 month) and medium (3 years) term against the MSBCU average.

Residential Burglary

2002/03 Crimes	2005/06 Crimes	Percentage Change
1271	737	-42.01%
2005/06 YTD Crimes	2006/07 YTD Crimes	Percentage Change
657	601	-8.52%
Crimes per 1,000 Households – 2005/06	Crimes per 1,000 Households–06/7 YTD ¹	
8.735	7.123	
MSBCU Group Position – Crimes for 2005/06	MSBCU Group – Crimes for YTD 2006/07	
Group mean = 6.388 Rank = 15 th	Group mean = 5.231 Rank = 14 th	

2002/03 – 2005/06 SD Rate	2006/07 YTD SD Rate
15.97% - 8.68%	16.97%
MSBCU Group – SD Rate for 2005/06	MSBCU Group – SD Rate for PYTD
Group mean = 19.44% Rank = 15 th	Group mean = 19.68% Rank = 10 th

Vehicle Crime

2002/03 Crimes	2005/06 Crimes	Percentage Change
2472	1589	-35.72%
2005/06 YTD Crimes	2006/07 YTD Crimes	Percentage Change
1395	1287	-7.74%
Crimes per 1,000 Population – 2005/06	Crimes per 1,000 Population - YTD	
8.133	6.587	
MSBCU Group Position – Crimes for 2005/06	MSBCU Group – Crimes for YTD	
Group mean = 7.405 Rank = 11 th	Group mean = 5.805 Rank = 13 th	

2002/03 – 2005/06 SD Rate	2006/07 YTD SD Rate
6.11% - 6.80%	11.11%
MSBCU Group – SD Rate for 2005/06	MSBCU Group – SD Rate for YTD
Group mean = 11.27% Rank = 15 th	Group mean = 15.41% Rank = 9 th

¹ YTD = April 2006 to January 2007

Violent Crime

2002/03 Crimes	2005/06 Crimes	Percentage Change
2953	3520	+19.20%
2005/06 PYTD Crimes	2006/07 YTD Crimes	Percentage Change
3022	3047	+0.83%
Crimes per 1,000 Population – 2005/06	Crimes per 1,000 Population - YTD	
18.016	15.595	
MSBCU Group Position – Crimes for 2005/06	MSBCU Group – Crimes for YTD	
Group mean = 14.348 Rank = 14 th	Group mean = 12.635 Rank = 14 th	

2002/03 – 2005/06 SD Rate	2006/07 YTD SD Rate
40.81% - 53.15%	50.51%
MSBCU Group – SD Rate for 2005/06	MSBCU Group – SD Rate for YTD
Group mean = 50.44% Rank = 6 th	Group mean = 53.87% Rank = 10 th

Robbery

2002/03 Crimes	2005/06 Crimes	Percentage Change
85	82	-3.53%
2005/06 YTD Crimes	2006/07 YTD Crimes	Percentage Change
63	60	-4.76%
Crimes per 1,000 Population – 2005/06	Crimes per 1,000 Population - YTD	
0.420	0.307	
MSBCU Group Position – Crimes for 2005/06	MSBCU Group – Crimes for YTD	
Group mean = 0.255 Rank = 14 th	Group mean = 0.236 Rank = 14 th	

2002/03 – 2005/06 SD Rate	2006/07 YTD SD Rate
28.24% - 17.07%	23.33%
MSBCU Group – SD Rate for 2005/06	MSBCU Group – SD Rate for YTD
Group mean = 26.77% Rank = 14 th	Group mean = 25.02% Rank = 9 th

Total Notifiable Offences (TNOs)

2002/03 Crimes	2005/06 Crimes	Percentage Change
18452	17,333	-6.06%
2005/06 YTD Crimes	2006/07 YTD Crimes	Percentage Change
15044	14,327	-4.77%
Crimes per 1,000 Population – 2005/06	Crimes per 1,000 Population - YTD	
88.713	73.328	
MSBCU Group Position – Crimes for 2005/06	MSBCU Group – Crimes for YTD	
Group mean = 70.176 Rank = 14 th	Group mean = 58.926 Rank = 14 th	

2002/03 – 2005/06 SD Rate	2006/07 YTD SD Rate
20.99% - 25.82%	27.59%
MSBCU Group – SD Rate for 2005/06	MSBCU Group – SD Rate for YTD
Group mean = 26.69% Rank = 8 th	Group mean = 28.81% Rank = 10 th

6 What We Found

6.1 Following a review of the BCU's performance, the Going Local 3 (GL3) self-assessment, the findings from the leadership audit and other key documentation, HMIC conducted fieldwork in East Lincs BCU. The inspection team sought to validate acceptable practice and further investigate/evidence both potential good practice and any areas for improvement. This report does not, therefore, reiterate what is and should be happening on a BCU in terms of its core functional activities, given that these are detailed within the GL3 self-assessment process. Instead, it highlights areas that are particular strengths or opportunities for improvement.

LEADERSHIP AND DIRECTION

6.2 Leadership

Strengths

- (a) The BCU commander receives appropriate support from chief officers through a series of formal and informal links, including monthly meetings chaired by the Chief Constable. He has the full confidence of his ACPO line manager and is granted appropriate freedoms to manage the BCU without unnecessary interference. It is clear that the mutual relationship is one of trust, and that the he feels supported without being over-managed.
- (b) The BCU commander has a supportive and positive relationship with link members of the Police Authority who are able to provide feedback on service delivery and developments such as the introduction of Neighbourhood Policing. Regular meetings have become more formalised of late and are viewed as a positive step forward.
- (c) Throughout the inspection process, it was readily apparent that the BCU Commander and his senior management team (SMT) enjoy the respect and confidence of his police officers and staff. He is well known, having served in the BCU in a number of roles. His genuine identification with the area and staff supports their view of him as approachable, credible and having their best interests at heart.
- (d) Stability within the SMT has helped to create a competent, complementary and effective team where individual roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and understood. Regular SMT meetings are structured through the use of a risk register which ensures a business focus without becoming overly bureaucratic. There is a positive relationship with staff associations, whose representatives view the SMT as approachable and responsive.
- (e) With relatively small numbers of police officers and staff working together in a close environment, a culture of mutual respect has developed within the BCU, with no division on the basis of rank or role. A healthy attitude to diversity is evident, in respect of both colleagues and the public.

Areas for Improvement

- (f) Although most staff are positive about the visibility of senior officers, there are pockets where this is not the case, and the SMT may wish to consider a more formal plan for visits and visibility.
- (g) There are a number of avenues for communication, with some well-thought-out approaches including a fortnightly BCU newsletter, and notice boards displaying performance and other information, but significant numbers of staff felt poorly informed about force/BCU performance and priorities. A communications audit, to identify opportunities in this area, could be helpful.
- (h) Reinforcing feedback from the leadership audit, a number of officers expressed concern around the pressure to obtain sanction detections. While acknowledging the need to respond to Government priorities, the SMT should review certain working practices and re-state force principles in this area.

6.3 Performance Management and Continuous Improvement

Strengths

- (a) The BCU SMT meeting includes an item called 'Performance Matters', ably led by the BCU performance officer, demonstrating a good understanding of headline performance issues and highlighting risk areas. The BCU has had some considerable success, with end-of-year figures likely to show a reduction in Total Notifiable Offences, improved sanction detections and a more recent step-change in customer satisfaction. The BCU performance framework operates in layers and can be interrogated to show performance at BCU, sector, beats and individual officer level in a simple and easy to read format. Performance targets for 2006/07 have recently been agreed with HQ and have been aligned with CDRP targets.
- (b) Sector inspectors hold regular meetings involving response teams, Neighbourhood Policing Teams (NPTs) and CID officers to discuss performance and priorities. Area inspectors are aligned to response shifts, but operate from different sector bases in support of sector inspectors. Despite the potential for confusion, there is clear ownership of staffing and function, with good mutual support for ongoing management issues such as PDR. Video conferencing aids good communication with BCU sergeants.
- (c) The BCU has developed a workload allocation database (WAD), significantly improving the supervision of enquiries carried by individual officers. The system has been adapted from a neighbouring force with only implementation costs, and is proving an asset to good supervision.

Areas for Improvement

- (d) Special Constables are outside the PDR process once they complete their initial training and have independent patrol status. While some members felt that the process should be voluntary, there is benefit in acknowledging an officer's contribution, identifying development needs and focusing on future priorities for individuals, to make best use of this valuable resource.
- (e) While acknowledging the good use of notice boards to promote performance achievements, the most visually impactful element of the notices use internal

force BCU comparison when it may be more appropriate to use either performance against target or most similar BCU comparison to inform staff of relative performance.

CITIZEN FOCUS

6.4 Fairness and Equality – Service Delivery

Strength

- (a) The inspection team was able to observe at first hand the effective use of an independent advisory group, in the management of a suspicious death which occurred in the immediate run-up to the inspection.

6.5 Neighbourhood Policing and Problem Solving

Strengths

- (a) Community beat managers (CBMs) have been allocated to neighbourhoods and supported by teams of PCSOs, some of whom are funded by local authorities. There is evidence that CBMs have been through a testing selection process, and that on appointment they are left in place with minimal abstractions, supervising teams of PCSOs and ensuring local engagement with communities. It is clear that NPTs are well integrated with wider policing operations and are regarded highly by their colleagues. The BCU has embraced the concept of Neighbourhood Policing and this area can be regarded as a real strength.
- (b) Partner agencies are fully involved in neighbourhood management, and have used the multi-deprivation indices to direct action to specific localities. Although in its early stages, it was encouraging to see one local authority beginning to assess how it might align services along a neighbourhood model. There is recognition that neighbourhood boundaries may need to be reviewed later.
- (c) County and district partners have committed to three-year financial support for PCSOs, but there is a pragmatic and collaborative approach to the ring-fencing of these posts allowing the BCU commander some realistic operational flexibility. It is clear that there is a level of mutual trust and support between partners and the BCU that operates as an enabler in this area.
- (d) There are four joint action groups (JAGs) set up to engage in low level problem solving. Where appropriate, issues are raised at strategic level and this process is beginning to work well. A significant example given included addressing a number of complex anti-social issues focused on an area of waste land, through complete regeneration as opposed to repeated one-off measures likely to offer only temporary respite.
- (e) Extensive joint working with the drugs action team (DAT) includes good interaction with both police officers and PCSOs at more remote locations. The DAT operates a mobile service to those communities where access to prescribing and treatment may otherwise be limited because of accessibility.
- (f) The BCU has taken the decision to allocate crime to NPTs that would previously have been screened out for non-attendance. All victims receive a

visit, with most completed by PCSOs who can offer reassurance and crime prevention advice. Additional enquiries in the immediate area raise awareness while ensuring that high profile activity is directed to areas suffering recent crime. Importantly these enquiries also offer additional intelligence-gathering and detection opportunities. HMIC concurs with the SMT view that this measure is central to the recent step-change in public satisfaction levels. It would be interesting to see further analysis of the effect on the volume of crime in affected areas and any directly attributable increase in sanction detections.

Areas for Improvement

- (g) It was noted that CBMs are excluded from eligibility for special priority payment. Also, given the seasonal nature of much BCU business, it appears that CBMs and PCSOs are not required to work on summer bank holidays. Acknowledging the financial implications both for the force and BCU, these may be areas for further consideration.
- (h) Although some officers and PCSOs have received problem-solving training, either during initial training or elsewhere, formal training has been limited and the force should examine the potential to raise awareness and understanding of this important tactic, particularly among NPTs.
- (i) The PCSO shift pattern is not popular among managers or those required to work it. This area is under review and the review should include a re-examination of core starting and finishing times to ensure that these are not operationally limiting (particularly earlier mandatory finishing times at weekends).
- (j) As other agencies grasp the concept of neighbourhood management through aligning local services, the BCU should explore opportunities to share premises and assets, to widen integration into the community.

6.6 Customer Service and Accessibility

Strength

- (a) An articulate and enthusiastic communications manager has been able to engage with the significant number of independent media outlets operating in the BCU. Numerous examples of the promotion of initiatives and key messages are evident; high quality leaflets/posters identifying and advertising NPTs are on display in town enquiry offices. These leaflets include individual mobile telephone numbers for both police officer and PCSO members of each team, offering a personal element and an alternative means of contacting the police.

Area for Improvement

- (b) On visits to town enquiry offices it was not immediately apparent whether offices were open or closed; opening hours were not displayed. As the main front-of-house face of its main stations, the general appearance of town enquiry offices would benefit from greater corporacy and regularly refreshing notices and displays.

REDUCING CRIME

6.7 Volume Crime Reduction

Strength

- (a) The BCU benefits from a particularly impressive CCTV suite at Skegness Police Station, recently bringing together different individual local authority schemes in a modern, purpose-built environment. It was encouraging to see a CCTV initiative subject to long-term planning and investment to support upgrading and improvement. The scheme includes ANPR capability with recent funding from the East Midlands Development Agency, to cover all major routes in the East Lindsey area. Of particular interest, the CCTV suite takes full responsibility for recording and retaining the CCTV and audio product from Skegness custody suite, introducing a welcome element of independence into this process.

Area for Improvement

- (b) Although there was some understanding of crime trends and locations, it is noted that the BCU is particularly vulnerable to seasonal crime related to its holiday population. The BCU would benefit from a comprehensive crime-problem profile based on data covering at least three years. As a minimum this profile should seek to identify significant peaks in particular priority crime types and vulnerable locations, and develop offender profiles to direct opportunities for a cycle of campaigns and policing operations bespoke to the BCU. Dependent on the clear identification of need, the BCU may consider lobbying for the policing on the busiest Bank Holiday weekends to be run as a force-wide operation, with appropriate resources and command and control arrangements.

INVESTIGATING CRIME

6.8 Managing Critical Incidents and Major Crime

Area for Improvement

- (a) The BCU is particularly vulnerable to the loss of specialist CID officers (and particularly supervisors) to force major enquiries.

6.9 Tackling Serious and Organised Criminality

Strength

- (a) The BCU receives appropriate support from HQ squads including ANPR and, subject to the comments above, the major crime unit. One serial of the force operational support unit (OSU) has been relocated to local bases on each BCU and this additional capacity (when not abstracted to force commitments) has been welcomed.

Area for Improvement

- (b) Both the OSU serial and the BCU proactive team lack critical mass, making the operational effectiveness vulnerable to fairly minor abstractions. It is apparent that its role and function reflects the skills often found in single teams elsewhere. The force and BCU may wish to consider brigading this function to enhance its overall proactive capability.

6.10 Volume Crime Investigation

Strengths

- (a) Adoption of the workload allocation database (WAD), mentioned above, has offered the opportunity for the BCU actively to manage outstanding crime enquiries. An initiative completed when the WAD was adopted in October 2006 saw the number of outstanding investigations carried by officers reduce from 4,500 to 1,500 through the careful weeding of completed or unproductive enquiries. Allocation processes for minor crime have seen NPTs taking significant workload from their reactive colleagues. The WAD allows searching for suspects not circulated on PNC, enhancing opportunities for dealing efficiently with individuals who are suspected for more than one offence.
- (b) All officers are issued with a volume crime aide memoire setting out minimum standards of crime investigation for most routine offences. This can be supported entries on the WAD by supervisors, who are encouraged to be specific in directing the action taken by investigating officers.

Area for Improvement

- (a) Some crime allocation falls to members of staff who do not usually work weekends. Consequently, and particularly over bank holiday weekends, unallocated crime can build up with the potential of missing series crime and/or detection opportunities.

6.11 Improving Forensic Performance

Strengths

- (a) HMIC staff met an impressive and committed SOCO manager who was able to account for performance of individuals under his leadership. He supplements a range of performance data with call-backs to victims to assess quality of service.
- (b) The 'Socrates' forensic system is well regarded by operators, offering the real-time submission of crime scene marks; in one case, a fingerprint identification allowed the arrest of an offender and recovery of property within 40 minutes of SOCO attendance at the scene of a burglary.
- (c) Forensic identifications feature routinely as an element of daily tasking with an aspiration to turn around any hits within 48 hours of receipt.
- (d) Officers have worked in conjunction with the drugs action team, using trace

testing machines, to build a picture of drug use in licensed premises and public areas. This has been particularly useful both in requiring pubs and nightclubs to action concerns, and to confirm or negate perception and rumour around the use of controlled substances in particular locations.

Areas for Improvement

- (e) It is clear that the BCU faces significant challenges due to its size and geography, with officers and SOCOs required to travel significant distances to attend crime scenes. On this basis, the BCU may wish to consider the potential for SOCO sole attendance at certain crime categories, reducing the requirement for double-visiting. Additionally, it is noted that police officers trained in minor crime-scene investigation are no longer deployed because they do not have access to the Socrates forensic evidence system. An alternative means of entering crime-scene product into Socrates could potentially reduce the requirement for dedicated SOCO resources to travel long distances for fairly minor crimes.
- (f) Some domestic burglary scenes remain unvisited because SOCOs are not notified by the force control room, or because officers at the scene direct that there is no requirement for SOCO attendance – despite guidance that *all* domestic burglary should be attended.
- (g) There is potential for greater use of SOCOs to advise on forensic recovery from suspects in custody.
- (h) Although the Socrates system is widely seen as an asset, there are concerns about system capacity and memory capability. Frequent breakdowns cause considerable frustration.
- (i) Detectives felt that significant effort is spent taking statements, elimination prints and DNA outside the force area when visiting victims and witnesses have returned to their home county. Consideration could be given to the product initially obtained from victims and witnesses on first report.

6.12 Criminal Justice Processes

Strengths

- (a) Each custody suite operates a small crime management unit which can process volume or persistent offenders, reducing abstractions from core shifts. The units consist of one full-time detective and one full-time uniformed constable, supported by short-term attachments which allow officers to improve their investigation and interview skills.
- (b) The system for identifying and progression action against prolific and priority offenders (PPOs) is well developed, involving partner agencies. When PPOs are arrested there is good liaison between the officer in the case, the PPO officer and probation services. PPOs are not bailed before the case is reviewed by the operations inspector.
- (c) Initiatives run under the banner of Clean Slate 2 have improved the number of offences brought to justice from TICs. The BCU has attempted to overcome resistance through personal briefing of defence lawyers. Officers report a

generally good and productive relationship with CPS lawyers under the charging initiative. There are regular prosecution team performance meetings where CJ issues can be raised and progressed.

- (d) The BCU commander has identified a problem with the progression of CPS requests and file upgrades, and has appointed an additional file manager outside the headquarters-owned CJU.

Areas for Improvement

- (e) The management of suspects granted S.47(3) bail to return to the police station deserves greater prominence in performance and tasking meetings.
- (f) It is of concern that there is no CPS presence in either of the two main BCU custody suites. Additionally, the lack of an effective appointments system at Lincoln can be a significant frustration to officers who are required to wait for advice. It is accepted that such arrangements rely on agreement at force level with the Crown Prosecution Service, and may fall outside the ability of the BCU to resolve.

PROMOTING SAFETY

6.13 Reducing Anti-Social Behaviour

Strength

- (a) The BCU was able to provide evidence of a number of collaborative partnerships including watch schemes covering pubs, retail and farming communities. There is a good relationship with security officers on the larger caravan and holiday parks. A recent collaboration with door staff has been put forward for a national security industry award.

Area for Improvement

- (b) There is significant evidence that one of the major problems confronting officers during the summer period is disorder connected with the night-time economy. Despite this, there appears to be limited use of ASB legislation (dispersal and street drinking zones) within the BCU.

6.14 Protecting Vulnerable People

Strengths

- (a) The BCU vulnerable victims officer is located close to the detective chief inspector, enabling ready access and interaction to effect proper supervision. All unresolved hate crime enquiries are reviewed at assistant chief constable level after 14 days.
- (b) Her Majesty's Prison North Sea Camp is located in the BCU area and has a dedicated prison liaison officer (PLO) working to the force intelligence bureau. A recent high-profile absconder tested the BCU response and evidenced a

good working relationship between the BCU and PLO.

PROVIDING ASSISTANCE

6.15 Contact Management

Area for Improvement

- (a) Pre-inspection documentation provided to HMIC indicates that a high proportion of calls for assistance are given a priority grading. Patrol activity on the BCU indicates that a significant proportion of calls graded as 'priority' would have been suitable for a scheduled response. Such over-grading has the potential to push stretched resources towards a fire-brigade style of policing. Additionally, it appeared that officers place an over-reliance on the grading of the call to direct the urgency of their response and use of emergency equipment, increasing the danger of accidents while en route.

RESOURCE USE

6.16 Human Resource Management

Strengths

- (a) It is readily apparent that most officers and staff feel a strong attachment to the BCU and demonstrate a pride and ownership of the area. In particular there is a strong identification with the BCU among police officers (both uniformed and CID), police staff (and in particular PCSOs) and the Special Constabulary working as a team, as opposed to working in individual groups defined by role.
- (b) Attendance management is good with low levels of absence through sickness. This is supported through a bi-monthly HR report reviewing absences, sickness, forecasting and establishment.
- (c) The majority of staff interviewed said they had a current PDR, and that it was subject to at least quarterly review. The BCU completion rate is 96%, with staff performing restricted duties or on maternity comprising most of the remainder.
- (d) Staff who wished to work reduced hours or alternative duties felt that such requests are viewed favourably and given proper consideration.
- (e) As part of a force-wide scheme, the BCU runs a junior cadet programme, with considerable success in recruiting to the regular ranks and Special Constabulary.

Areas for Improvement

- (f) The BCU has been reliant on the appointment of police officers from outside its geographic area to maintain officer numbers. Given the significant distances involved, this can create welfare problems. A minority of officers from outside the area engage in the active pursuit of a transfer almost on appointment. A recent local recruiting initiative has identified a greater number

of local potential recruits, but this process is currently in abeyance pending the resolution of budgetary issues at force level. The problem remains and the BCU is encouraged to liaise with the force HR department to ensure that:

- when recruiting restrictions are lifted, applicants living locally are prioritised for appropriate postings unless there are significant business reasons for an alternative approach in individual circumstances;
 - future recruiting activity maintains an emphasis on candidates local to individual BCUs, dependent on need; and
 - posting decisions avoid instances of recruits who do not intend to relocate travelling excessive distances daily.
- (g) In a number of areas, staff felt that succession planning was poor, leading to delays in recruitment and carrying of vacancies in key posts. Delivery in this area is reliant on the force HR function, at the centre, and these comments should be brought to the attention of the HR director.
- (h) The results of the Leadership Audit point to a gap between the intentions of the SMT and the frequency with which staff feel they are thanked and rewarded for good work. There appears to be the potential to celebrate good work (falling short of commendation) informally but in a more public arena.

6.17 Training, Development and Organisational Learning

Strength

- (a) A training strategy group meets quarterly to consider BCU training needs. The video- conferencing facility has been used for specific elements of training without abstracting resources from across the BCU to attend the training unit. There are plans to increase the use of this equipment for training purposes. The force is developing a core leadership programme, currently a pilot, with formal qualifications for first-line managers (certificate for sergeants and a diploma for inspectors).

Areas for Improvement

- (b) The BCU is reliant on the mobility of its staff to service calls from rural communities as the BCU covers over 1,000 square miles. Operational supervisors have raised concerns that a significant proportion of junior front-line staff are not authorised for response driving, and that a lack of officers with van authorities compromises their ability to fully utilise the fleet. In the latter case in particular, the force requires officers to obtain the D1 category on their DVLA driving licences before it will consider van training. Although officers are then reimbursed for their initial expenditure, this appears to offer little encouragement to individuals to help solve an organisational problem.
- (c) Increasingly police officers are being required to undertake supervisory roles for police staff. It is acknowledged on both sides that there is little understanding of the differences between Police Regulations and police staff

conditions of service.

6.18 Race and Diversity - Internal Organisation

Strengths

- (a) Awareness of race and diversity issues on the BCU is generally good, with officers and staff displaying a good understanding of the BCU's demographics and related issues. It is clear that a number of 'beacon' officers (diversity champions) recognise their role in encouraging members of incoming or newer communities to consider taking voluntary or paid roles in the BCU.
- (b) Evidence indicates that the culture of BCU staff is accommodating and inclusive.

6.19 Managing Financial and Physical Resources

Strengths

- (a) CBMs, sector inspectors and partners were complimentary about the management and availability of BCU funding to support community initiatives.
- (b) Good use is made of officers on restricted duties in posts such as CCTV, ANPR and the crime management unit.
- (c) Feedback on duty management suggests that shift changes and alterations are kept to a minimum, and there is a general satisfaction that these are administered fairly between teams and individuals.

Areas for Improvement

- (d) It is recognised that the force and BCU operates under significant financial constraints, and that additional resources are at a premium. Nevertheless, there is some opportunity to review the current provision of non-front-line resources, with the potential either for savings or the release of resource to the front line. Possible areas for examination include:
 - vehicle usage, and in particular the mix and allocation of vehicles, the designation of task and purpose by specific marking rather than generic use, and servicing at traditional intervals rather than manufacturer's schedule. Force policy in respect of the transport of prisoners is viewed as encouraging officers to breach rules in order to "make the job work".
 - The employment of a police staff driver at each sector.
 - The provision of support to custody sergeants for 24-hours each day.
 - Policy in relation to the supervision of 'at risk' detainees and the use of additional resources.
 - The use of volunteers.

Additionally, it is suggested that without wholesale alteration to the 2/2/2 shift pattern currently in operation, solutions to the 3 am weekend street presence/resource imbalance should be sought which do not rely on the ad hoc extension of shifts and payment of overtime. It is acknowledged that any deviation from agreed working hours may require corporate development in conjunction with staff associations.

6.20 Information and Communication Technology Management

Strengths

- (a) As mentioned above, the Socrates forensic system is seen as a considerable advancement in scenes of crime management.
- (b) The BCU makes best use of a video-conferencing system for meetings and briefings, currently under expansion. Officers' familiarity with, and use of, this system is very good.
- (c) The WAD system is widely held to offer considerable improvements in crime and enquiry management, despite the double entry requirements this entails. Supervisors and managers operate a number of intranet-based shared drives, going some way to improve communication and knowledge of current issues and priorities.
- (d) Airwave is generally seen as a significant improvement on traditional UHF and VHF communications, although some concern was expressed about coverage in some of the more isolated areas where officers can be vulnerable through a lack of coverage.

Area for Improvement

- (e) Although not strictly a BCU issue, it is impossible not to comment on the general lack of effective and linked IT systems, particularly between crime and intelligence. Investigations are largely paper-based, with a very limited ability to search the detail of crime enquiries. The lack of accurate IT-based mapping and analytical tools is a significant barrier to planning future reduction and enforcement activity.

6.21 National Intelligence Model (NIM)

Strengths

- (a) Daily tasking is a well run and constructive meeting, with comprehensive updates to tasks and actions brought forward from the previous day. New tasks are identified as either primary or secondary. Although the meeting can be chaired by different members of the SMT on subsequent occasions, actions are entered on to the SMT shared drive to ensure an 'all-informed' approach.
- (b) The BCU has split its divisional intelligence unit function between Skegness

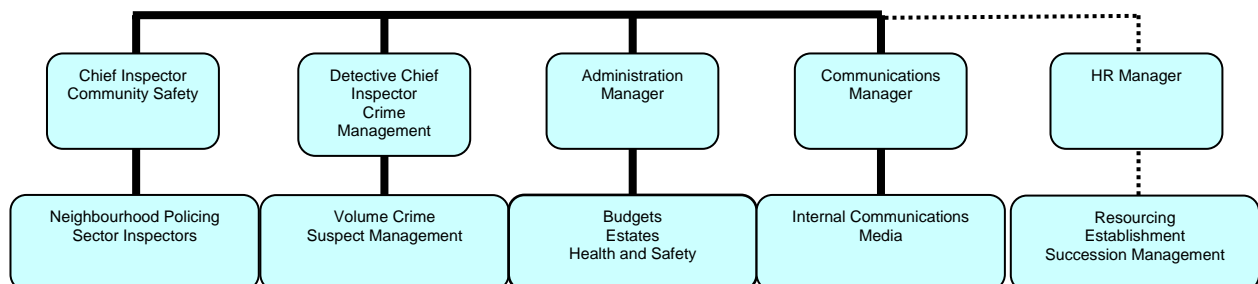
(also covering Louth) and Boston (covering Horncastle), reflecting the disparate nature of crime issues between the seasonal or more rural/agricultural elements of the areas covered. Officers at all ranks spoke positively about the activities of the sector intelligence liaison officers in raising the profile and use of intelligence in tackling priority issues.

- (c) During the SMT meeting, the superintendent operations led an item looking ahead to major and upcoming events, including local elections and potential triggers for public order. Following tension and public order difficulties in Boston during the Euro 2004 football tournament in Portugal, the BCU has considerably enhanced its ability to monitor community tensions, particularly in the migrant and permanent agricultural worker communities. The good practice is recognised by the Community Cohesion Unit in the Home Office.
- (d) Special constables stated they were well briefed before commencing duty, utilising a number of briefing sources including daily tasking sheets, the intelligence board and personal tasking through point to point with duty supervisors.
- (e) Forensic hits are reviewed by analysts to identify linked offences prior to allocation for action.

Areas for Improvement

- (f) The inspection team discussed the fortnightly tactical assessment document with the BCU commander with regard to its relevance and depth; the inclusion of large parts of the control strategy leads to a document over 30 pages long. Acknowledging that this is an area under development, this document should be in a more concise and succinct format directing specific activity over the following period.
- (g) As part of a potential communications audit, the BCU should look to include the dissemination of intelligence and tasking. In particular this should examine whether primary and secondary tasking is sufficiently specific to direct and inform officer actions, and the means by which priority issues are highlighted during briefing and its environment.

Appendix “A”: East Lincolnshire Organisational Structure



Leadership Audit - Staff Survey results

Appendix 'B'

Key to Scores:

0 = Don't Know, 1 = No - this doesn't happen

2 = This happens occasionally but there is no consistency

3 = Yes this usually happens but it could be improved

4 = Yes this is recognised as the way we do business, and we achieve real benefits

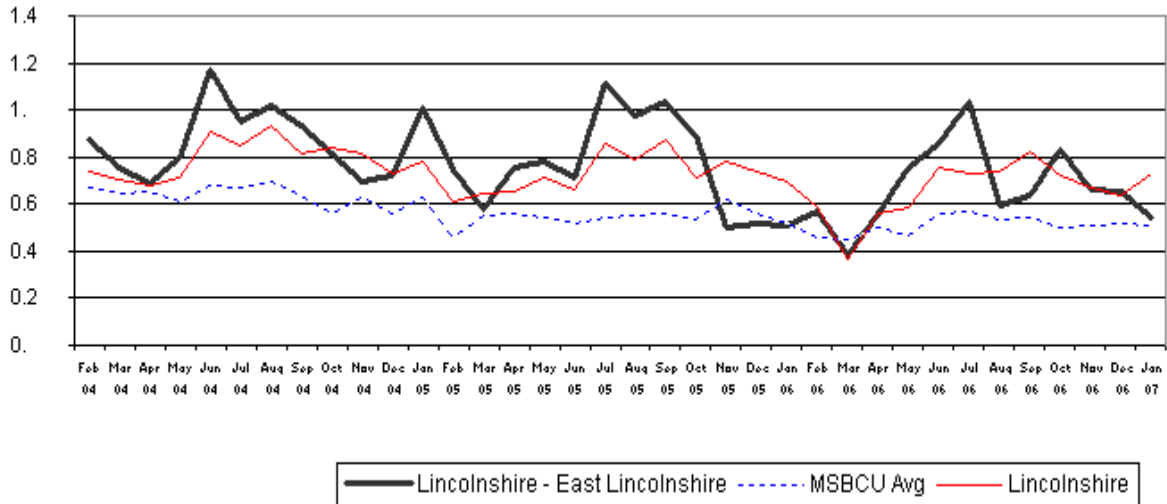
5 = This is an integral part of our culture and operation and can be regarded as best practice.

Percentage response by score

Questions		Score:	0	1	2	3	4	5
The BCU has an appropriate structure which is aligned to the force strategy								
1	My role is clearly defined and contributes to the BCU and force strategy		2	2	6	28	47	16
2	I am set objectives which are clearly relative to my role and experience		2	0	8	39	33	19
3	Lines of accountability and responsibility within the BCU are clearly defined		6	2	11	30	28	23
4	Resources are effectively managed within the BCU including specific issues of demand and deployment		5	9	23	42	17	3
5	Throughout the BCU teams are balanced in terms of skills, experience and diversity		11	11	14	36	23	5
6	The health and safety procedures on the BCU are effective and make me feel safe in my workplace		5	8	9	30	33	16
The BCU has a performance culture with integrity								
7	My manager demonstrates an interest in my performance and development		0	13	16	23	31	17
8	I receive the development I need to perform my role		0	9	31	31	23	5
9	Within the BCU, good performance is recognised and rewarded		0	19	36	20	20	5
10	Innovation is promoted and supported on the BCU		8	8	27	33	22	3
11	On the BCU there is effective use of the National Intelligence Model - resources/tasking/co-ordination		14	2	11	34	30	9
12	BCU managers ensure that maintaining our integrity is more important than achieving good performance		19	14	17	25	19	6
13	The BCU delivers an effective service to the community		8	0	14	47	27	5
Diversity								
14	Diversity is embedded within the BCU, specifically in terms of personal values and all areas of business including selection and appointment of staff		14	3	5	30	39	9
15	Fairness at work procedures (e.g. grievance or appeals) can be confidently used by staff on the BCU without fear of recriminations from managers		17	9	6	28	31	8
16	My manager's decisions in respect of operational issues are consistent		8	5	5	34	38	11
17	My manager's decisions in respect of disciplinary issues are consistent		19	5	6	25	34	11
18	I trust my manager to solve problems effectively		8	5	9	33	36	9
19	My manager inspires me with confidence		0	14	11	28	36	11
20	Sickness and welfare are effectively managed within the BCU		6	9	14	39	22	9
21	Managers deal effectively with bullying		39	8	2	19	25	8
22	Abstractions from duty - other than sickness - are effectively managed within the BCU		16	16	11	30	22	6
23	There is a commitment within the BCU to staff retention		17	16	16	22	25	5
Personnel management								
24	I have regular and meaningful contact with my line manager		0	13	16	25	28	19
25	My manager demonstrates a genuine interest in me		0	14	16	22	36	13
26	I feel that my contributions are welcomed and valued		0	6	28	30	27	9
27	My manager makes me feel proud of the service we deliver		0	9	23	25	38	5
28	My manager makes me feel trusted, valued and included		0	9	25	20	34	11
29	Training and development is allocated on the BCU according to need		3	13	28	31	22	3
30	I am encouraged to learn by my manager		3	17	14	30	33	3
31	I feel prepared for future changes		8	11	22	31	25	3
32	Coaching and mentoring is available to me if I need it		11	13	20	19	30	8
33	Personnel issues are dealt with by my manager in a relevant and timely manner		5	9	6	20	53	6
Communication								
34	The BCU commander and senior management team have a high profile within BCU		11	8	11	28	33	9
35	My manager communicates relevant information to me		0	5	23	14	48	9
36	I feel that, where it is appropriate, I am consulted on matters of policy and strategy		5	16	23	31	19	6
37	My manager is available when I need to talk to him/her		0	9	6	25	41	19
38	The BCU commander, senior management team are available to staff at appropriate times		14	6	22	22	28	8
39	The BCU commander and SMT respond in a positive way to feedback from staff		20	11	19	20	22	8
40	My manager responds in a positive way to feedback from staff		8	5	14	28	36	9

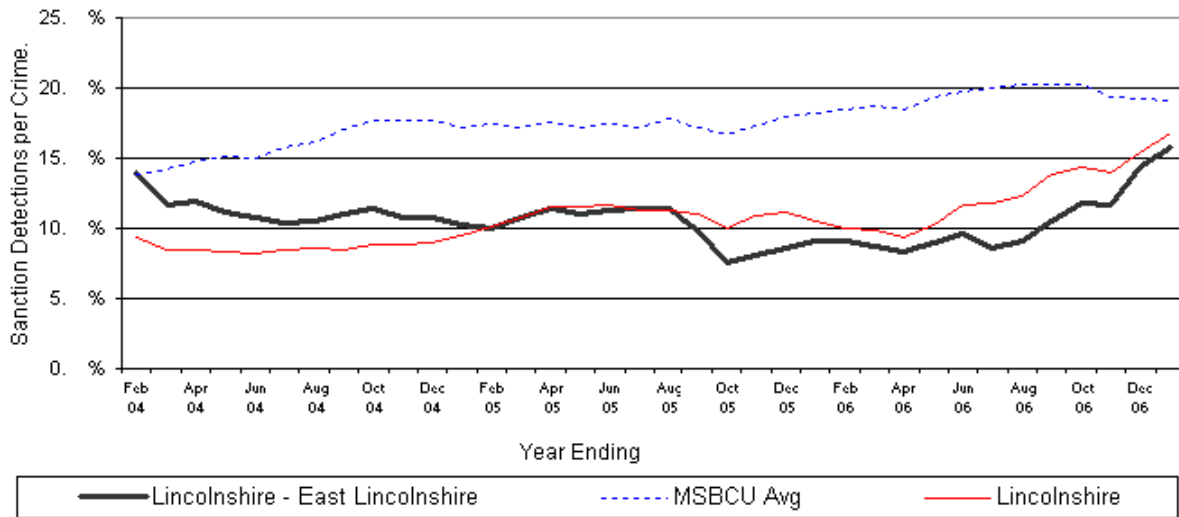
Domestic Burglary Comparison Charts:

Volume



Comparison Chart - Crimes per 1000 Households Lincolnshire - East Lincolnshire Domestic Burglary 'Most Similar' BCUs 01 Feb 2004 - 31 Jan 2007

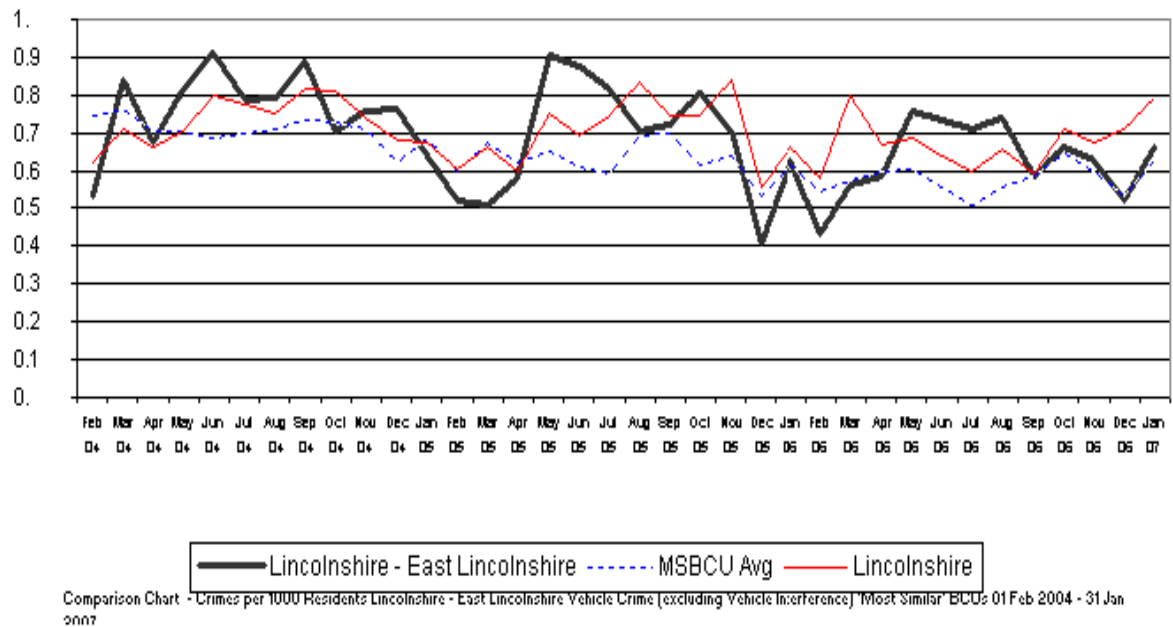
Sanction Detections



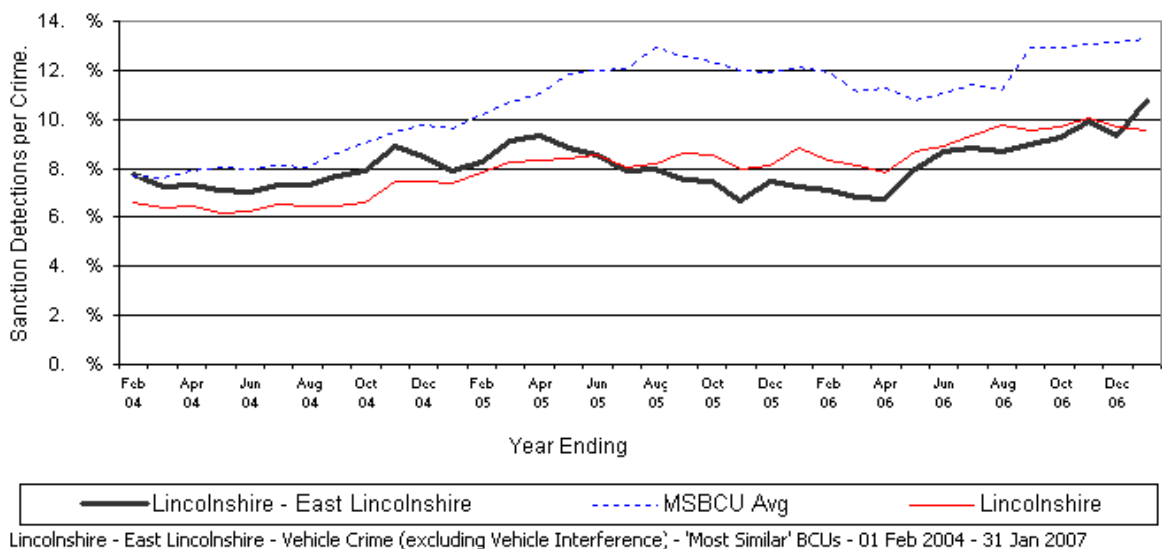
Lincolnshire - East Lincolnshire - Domestic Burglary - 'Most Similar' BCUs - 01 Feb 2004 - 31 Jan 2007

Vehicle Crime Comparison Charts:

Volume

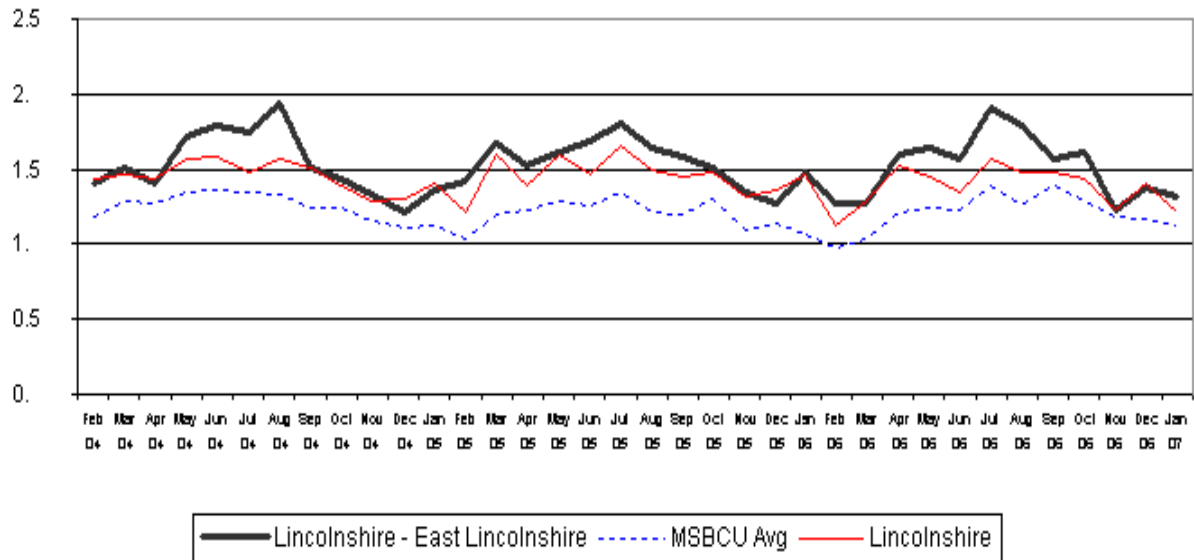


Sanction Detections



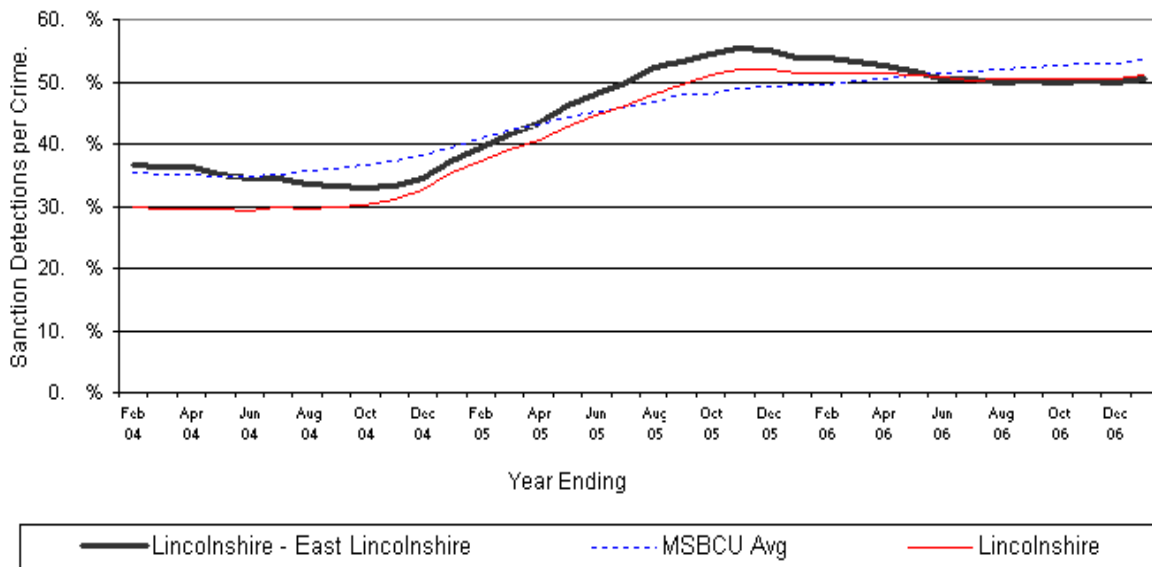
Violent Crime Comparison Charts:

Volume



Comparison Chart - Crimes per 1000 Residents Lincolnshire - East Lincolnshire Violent Crime 'Most Similar' BCUs: 01 Feb 2004 - 31 Jan 2007

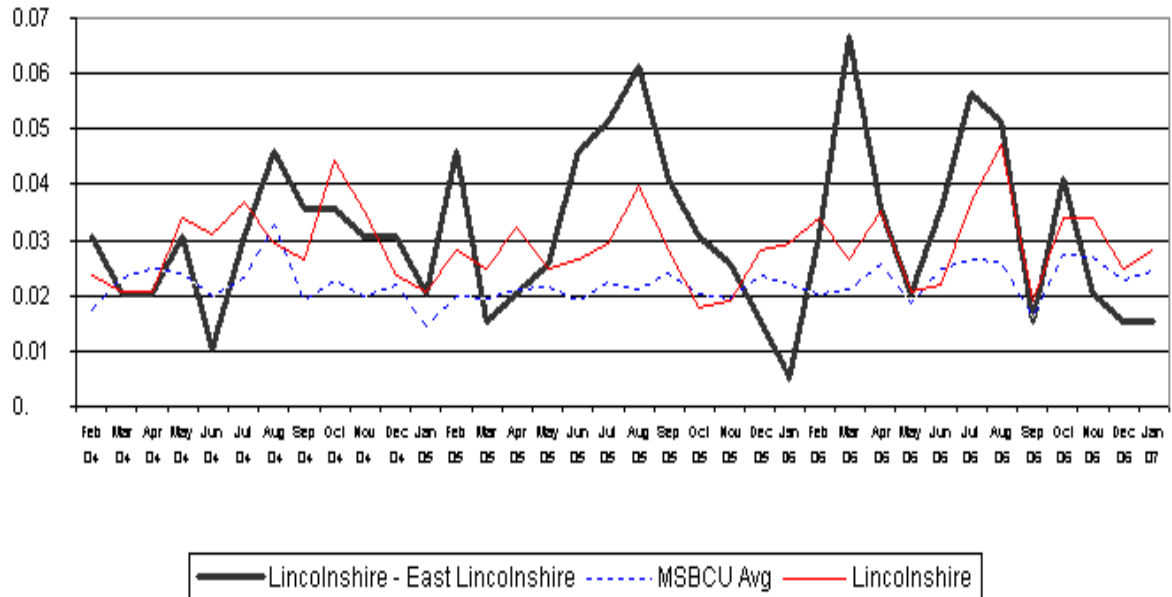
Sanction Detections



Lincolnshire - East Lincolnshire - Violent Crime - 'Most Similar' BCUs - 01 Feb 2004 - 31 Jan 2007

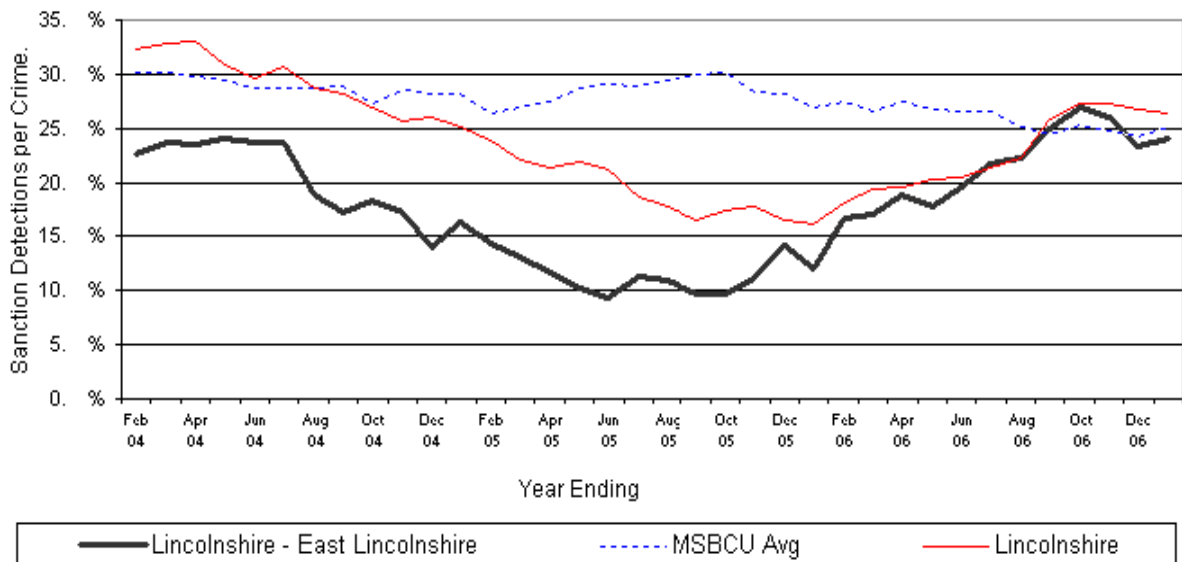
Robbery Comparison Charts:

Volume



Comparison Chart - Crimes per 1000 Residents Lincolnshire - East Lincolnshire Robbery 'Most Similar' BCUs 01 Feb 2004 - 31 Jan 2007

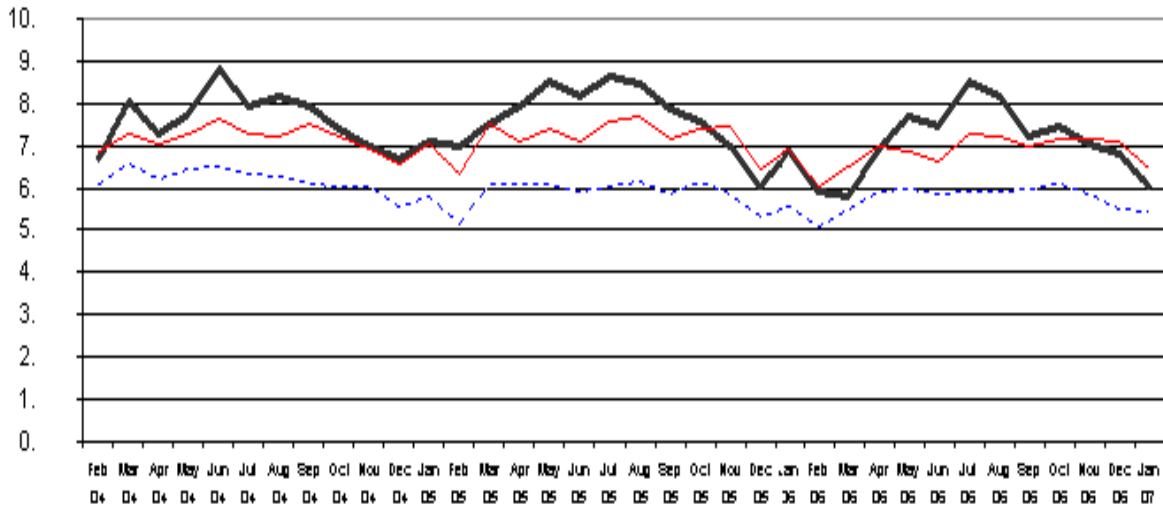
Sanction Detections



Lincolnshire - East Lincolnshire - Robbery - 'Most Similar' BCUs - 01 Feb 2004 - 31 Jan 2007

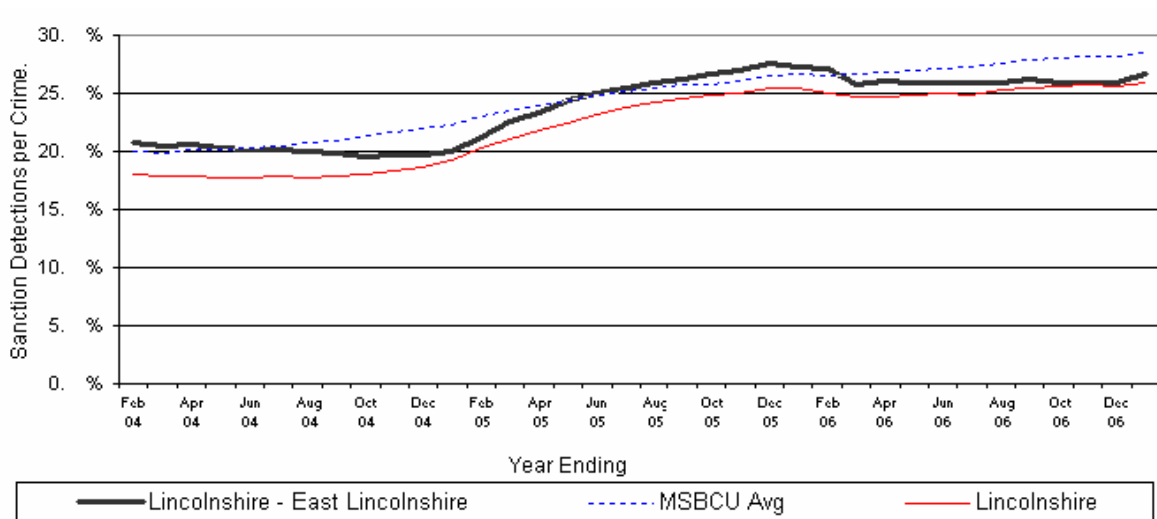
Total Crime Comparison Charts:

Volume



Comparison Chart - Crimes per 1000 Residents Lincolnshire - East Lincolnshire All Crime - 'Most Similar' BCUs - 01 Feb 2004 - 31 Jan 2007

Sanction Detections



Lincolnshire - East Lincolnshire - All Crime - 'Most Similar' BCUs - 01 Feb 2004 - 31 Jan 2007

NOTIONAL CONTRACT

Purpose

This 'notional contract' follows an HMIC inspection of East Lincs BCU, that was conducted between 19 – 23 March 2007, and sets out the action recommended to the BCU, together with the improvement outcomes required. The notional contract exists between the HMI, the BCU commander and his ACPO line manager.

Action Required

BCU inspection reports published by HMIC contain both recommendations and areas for improvement. Save for exceptional circumstances rendering the implementation of recommendations impossible or inappropriate, the implementation of recommendations is presumed to be a reasonable expectation. Areas for improvement entail more discretion, giving BCUs the option not to implement them if they can show good reason why they should not be adopted.

For East Lincs BCU, HMIC advises that the following recommendations should be implemented by March 2008:

Recommendation (1): Demand-Reduction Strategy

It is clear that the provision of sufficient resource to meet policing needs is the major task facing Lincolnshire Police in the immediate and longer-term. In support of this, it is inevitable that BCUs will be required to secure additional efficiencies.

HMIC recommends that the BCU develops a demand reduction strategy, with an emphasis both on seeking to reduce workload and increase the availability or flexibility of resource in place to meet it. Although not an exclusive or mandatory list, this may include:

- work with the FCCC through operations command to rationalise the grading of calls for assistance in line with national guidance;
- a review of all non-frontline posts to identify opportunities for rationalisation and realignment;
- the allocation, usage and maintenance of vehicles; and
- the alignment of the current 2/2/2 shift pattern with known demand.

Recommendation (2): Demand Profile

HMIC recommends that the BCU would benefit from the development of a comprehensive crime problem profile based on 3-5 year data. As a minimum

this profile should seek to identify significant peaks in particular priority crime types or vulnerable locations, and develop offender profiles to direct opportunities for a cycle of campaigns and policing operations bespoke to the BCU, and in particular incorporating specific actions to tackle seasonal peaks.

Recommendation (3): Communication

The BCU has an asset in its communications officer. There are a number of avenues for communication, with some well thought out approaches including a fortnightly BCU newsletter, and notice boards displaying performance and other information. Nevertheless, significant numbers of staff felt under-informed about force/BCU performance and priorities. The BCU should consider a communications audit to identify opportunities in this area.

As part of such an audit, the BCU should look to include resource tasking and intelligence. In particular, this should examine whether primary and secondary tasking are sufficiently specific to direct and inform officer actions, and the means by which priority issues are highlighted during briefing.

In addition, HMIC expects all 'areas for improvement' contained within the GL3 BCU inspection report to be implemented within the same timescale, save for good reasons as described above. Progress in implementation will be scrutinised in future liaison between HMIC (Central Region) and Lincolnshire Police.

Improvement Outcomes

The implementation of recommendations and areas for improvement should ultimately lead to improvement in BCU performance. In normal circumstances this notional contract would include expectations as to future performance that are firmly linked to force and BCU priorities, and referenced to MSBCU comparative performance. In the case of East Lincs, it is recognised that in some areas of performance the BCU remains towards the bottom of its MSBCU group, despite significant improvements over time. Because this is the case, HMIC does not intend to make outline expectations of specific performance improvements at this time, but to leave this as an HQ responsibility to discharge.

It is acknowledged that there will be occasions when circumstances change beyond the control of either the force or the BCU commander, whereby the implementation of certain recommendations or improvement outcomes is rendered unrealistic and void. Account will therefore be taken of these factors when HMIC scrutinises future performance.