



HMIC Inspection Report

Norfolk Constabulary

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Norfolk Constabulary – HMIC Inspection Report

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Introduction to HMIC Inspections

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

HMIs are appointed by the Crown on the recommendation of the Home Secretary and report to HM Chief Inspector of Constabulary, who is the Home Secretary's principal professional policing adviser and is independent both of the Home Office and of 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 has 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 then 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 fewer but more probing inspections. 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 will be gathered, verified and then assessed against an agreed set of national standards, in the form of specific grading criteria (SGC). 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.

Programmed frameworks

This report contains assessments of the first three key areas of policing to be inspected under HMIC's new programme of work:

1. Neighbourhood Policing;
2. performance management; and
3. protecting vulnerable people.

Neighbourhood Policing has been inspected not only because it is a key government priority but also, and more importantly, because it addresses a fundamental need for a style of policing that is rooted in and responds to local concerns. The police service must, of course, offer protection from high-level threats such as terrorism and organised criminality, but it

also has a key role in tackling the unacceptable behaviour of the minority of people who threaten the quality of life of law-abiding citizens.

Performance management is an activity largely hidden from public view, although members of the public are directly affected by poor performance on the part of their local force. This inspection has focused on the need for forces to maximise the opportunities for performance improvement. It also posed questions as to whether forces have an accurate picture of how they are doing and the capability to respond to changing priorities. This area was selected for inspection because it is a key factor in delivering good performance across the board.

Protecting vulnerable people covers four related areas – child abuse, domestic violence, public protection and missing persons – that address the critically important role of the police in protecting the public from potentially serious harm. In the 2006 baseline assessment this was the worst performing area and raised the most serious concerns for HMIC and others. As a result, this area was prioritised for scrutiny in 2007.

Risk-based frameworks

In addition to its programmed inspection work, HMIC continues to monitor performance across a range of policing activity, notably those areas listed in the table below.

HMIC risk-based frameworks
Fairness and equality in service delivery
Volume crime reduction
Volume crime investigation
Improving forensic performance
Criminal justice processes
Reducing anti-social behaviour
Contact management
Training, development and organisational learning

While these activities will not be subject to routine inspection, evidence of a significant decline in performance would prompt consideration of inspection. For 150 years, HMIC has maintained an ongoing relationship with every force. This allows it to identify and support forces when specific issues of concern arise. On a more formal basis, HMIC participates in the Home Office Police Performance Steering Group and Joint Performance Review Group, which have a role in monitoring and supporting police performance in crime reduction, crime investigation and public confidence.

HMIC conducts inspections of basic command units (BCUs), also on a risk-assessed basis, using the Going Local 3 methodology. Combining these various strands of inspection evidence allows HMIC to form a comprehensive picture of both individual force performance and the wider national picture.

The grading process

Grades awarded by HMIC are a reflection of the performance delivered by the force over the assessment period April 2006 to July 2007. One of four grades can be awarded, according to performance assessed against the SGC (for the full list of SGC, see <http://inspectors.homeoffice.gov.uk/hmic/methodologies/baseline-introduction/ba-methodology-06/?version=1>).

Excellent

This grade describes the highest level of performance in service delivery and achieving full compliance with codes of practice or national guidance. It is expected that few forces will achieve this very high standard for a given activity. To achieve Excellent, forces are expected to meet **all** of the criteria set out in the Fair SGC and the vast majority of those set out in Good. In addition, two other factors will attract consideration of an Excellent grade:

- The force should be recognised, or be able to act, as a 'beacon' to others, and be accepted within the service as a source of leading-edge practice. Evidence that other forces have successfully imported practices would demonstrate this.
- HMIC is committed to supporting innovation and we would expect Excellent forces to have introduced and evaluated new ways of delivering or improving performance.

Good

Good is defined in the Collins English Dictionary as 'of a high quality or level' and denotes performance above the minimum standard. To reach this level, forces have to meet in full the criteria set out in Fair and most of the criteria set out in Good.

Fair

Fair is the delivery of an acceptable level of service, which meets national threshold standards where these exist. To achieve a Fair grading, forces must meet all of the significant criteria set out in the Fair SGC. HMIC would expect that, across most activities, the largest number of grades will be awarded at this level.

Poor

A Poor grade represents an unacceptably low level of service. To attract this very critical grade, a force will have fallen well short of a significant number of criteria set out in the SGC for Fair. In some cases, failure to achieve a single critical criterion may alone warrant a Poor grade. Such dominant criteria will always be flagged in the SGC but may also reflect a degree of professional judgement on the level of risk being carried by the force.

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 as a strength in the body of the report. In addition, each force is given the opportunity to submit examples of its good practice. HMIC has selected three or more of these examples to publish in this 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.

Future HMIC inspection activity

Although HMIC will continue to maintain a watching brief on all performance areas, its future inspection activity (see provisional timescales below) will be determined by a risk assessment process. Protective services will be at the core of inspection programmes, tailored to capacity, capability and the likelihood of exposure to threats from organised criminality, terrorism and so on. Until its full implementation in April 2008, Neighbourhood Policing will also demand attention. Conversely, those areas (such as volume crime) where performance is captured by statutory performance indicators (SPIs), iQuanta and other objective evidence will receive scrutiny only where performance is deteriorating, as described above.

The Government has announced that, in real terms, there will be little or no growth in police authority/force budgets over the next three years. Forces will therefore have to maintain, and in some areas improve, performance without additional central support or funding. This in itself creates a risk to police delivery and HMIC has therefore included a strategic resource management assessment for all forces in its future inspection programme.

Planned Inspection areas
Serious and organised crime
Major crime
Neighbourhood Policing
Strategic resource management
Customer service and accessibility
Critical incident management
Professional standards
Public order
Civil contingencies
Information management
Strategic roads policing
Leadership

Force Overview and Context

The force's headquarters is located at Wymondham, and is the operations and communications centre (OCC) for the force. Specialist departments, such as the major investigation team and the roads policing support branch, are located at the OCC. There are three basic command units (BCUs) in Norfolk, Central, Western and Eastern, with area headquarters at Norwich, King's Lynn and Great Yarmouth respectively.

The chief officer group (COG) comprises the Chief Constable, the acting deputy chief constable (DCC), the acting assistant chief constable, the assistant chief officer (resources) and the acting assistant chief officer (human resources (HR)).

Exceptional policing demands arise from Norwich International Airport, the royal residence at Sandringham and Norwich City Football Club. The force is also responsible for offshore emergency plans, which include the key economic site of Bacton Gas Terminal; terrestrial policing extends out 12 miles into territorial waters.

Geographical description of force area

Norfolk Constabulary is responsible for policing the county of Norfolk, an area of some 2,068 square miles. It has a coastline of 90 miles with ports at Great Yarmouth, King's Lynn and Wells, 249 miles of waterways (of which 124 miles are navigable), and 6,331 miles of roads.

Demographic profile of force area

Norfolk is a sparsely populated, largely rural county with a resident population of some 824,240 and 356,267 households. Around 38% of the population live in the three major urban areas of Norwich, Great Yarmouth and King's Lynn, and a further 18% in various market towns. There are an estimated 4.7 million visitors to the county annually.

Strategic priorities

Norfolk Constabulary's current priority is the roll-out of Neighbourhood Policing across the county, with Eastern Area as the pathfinder BCU.

In working towards its overarching strategic aim of Building Confidence in Policing, the force has four strategic objectives as outlined in the 2007/08 annual policing plan, namely:

- engage with local communities;
- tackle criminality;
- provide a quality service; and
- increase efficiency and effectiveness.

Force developments since 2006

In the 2006 baseline assessment, the force received one grading of Poor, for Neighbourhood Policing. Assessment of the work undertaken by the force since that time has been incorporated into this Phase 1 inspection activity, conducted in spring 2007, and summarised in this report.

Findings

National summary of judgements

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Neighbourhood Policing				
Neighbourhood Policing	6	14	21	2
Performance management				
Performance management	6	29	8	0
Protecting vulnerable people				
Child abuse	3	17	21	2
Domestic violence	1	13	27	2
Public protection	2	16	23	2
Missing persons	1	21	21	0

Force summary of judgements

Neighbourhood Policing	Grade
Neighbourhood Policing	Fair
Performance management	Grade
Performance management	Good
Protecting vulnerable people	Grade
Child abuse	Good
Domestic violence	Fair
Public protection	Good
Missing persons	Fair

Neighbourhood Policing

GRADE	FAIR
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National grade distribution

Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
6	14	21	2

National contextual factors

The national Neighbourhood Policing programme was launched by ACPO in April 2005 to support the Government's vision of a policing service which is both accessible and responsive to the needs of local people. It was anticipated that, by April 2007, every area across England and Wales would have a Neighbourhood Policing presence appropriate to local needs, with all Neighbourhood Policing teams in place by April 2008. For local communities this means:

- increased numbers of police community support officers (PCSOs) patrolling their streets, addressing anti-social behaviour (ASB) and building relationships with local people;
- access both to information about policing in their local area and to a point of contact in their Neighbourhood Policing team; and
- having the opportunity to tell the police about the issues that are causing them concern and helping to shape the response to those issues (Home Office, May 2006).

By focusing on the key areas of resources, familiarity/accessibility, problem identification and joint problem solving, this inspection has identified the extent to which Neighbourhood Policing is being implemented. It has also examined forces' capability and commitment to sustain implementation beyond April 2008.

Contextual factors

The aim of Neighbourhood Policing is to increase public satisfaction with and confidence in policing, reduce the fear of crime and resolve locally identified problems of crime and ASB. There is a national requirement (reflecting the financial support for Neighbourhood Policing from the Government) that all identified neighbourhood areas have a dedicated Neighbourhood Policing presence by April 2008. This means that every community should have:

- increased numbers of PCSOs patrolling their streets, addressing ASB issues and building relationships with local people;
- information from its local police force outlining details of the Neighbourhood Policing team and explaining how the team can be contacted by the local community; and
- the structured ability to tell the police about issues which are causing concern and making people feel unsafe, in order to shape a problem-solving response to those issues.

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Police forces should be implementing a model of Neighbourhood Policing which is most suited to their local environments and community needs. They should comply with the ten Neighbourhood Policing principles and the findings of the Neighbourhood Policing Reassurance Programme. Forces should engage with statutory and voluntary partners in order to achieve a more efficient and complete service around both crime and quality-of-life issues.

Some 52 neighbourhoods have been identified in Norfolk, with strong support and influence from partners; led by chief officers, the force has invested considerable effort into the implementation of Neighbourhood Policing. A significant proportion of this work has taken place since January 2007, and as such a number of safer neighbourhood teams (SNTs) are still comparatively new. Indeed, at the time of inspection Central Area had launched only one of its complement of 19 SNTs, but does expect to meet the April 2008 deadline.

In addition to those teams on Central Area, there are 19 teams on Eastern Area and 14 on Western Area. Each SNT consists of a varying number of police constables and PCSOs, supported by members of the Special Constabulary who are all aligned to an SNT. Sergeants have responsibility for one, two or three individual teams, while inspectors have a wider remit covering a cluster of SNTs, in addition to management of response and patrol officers.

Norfolk Police Authority has agreed to recruit 280 PCSOs, which is nearly 100 above its revised government target.

Strengths

- The force has achieved its target in respect of PCSO recruitment and at present has a total of 189 PCSOs. Prior to a government review of PCSO funding, Norfolk had planned to employ 280 PCSOs. The police authority has considered its position subsequent to the Government's decision not to fund the next tranche of PCSOs, and has decided to maintain its original target of 280, funded by an additional 2% increase in council tax. The force plans to have the additional PCSOs in place by January 2008.
- The force has produced a costed communications strategy that addresses both internal and external audiences. It has embarked upon a concerted programme of communication with its staff, which has included a series of PowerPoint presentations, personal briefings from senior officers, website usage and numerous workshops. The force has also produced a number of marketing products, including laminated fact-sheets of both general and specific natures. The latter are tailored to various functions – for example, the public enquiry office, force switchboard operations and the contact and despatch centre (CDC). The Chief Constable has delivered masterclasses in Neighbourhood Policing which have been attended by both police and partners. The force intranet system screensaver explains the concept of SNTs, while the Neighbourhood Policing project team has written articles for the force newspaper and departmental newsletters.
- Communication, both internal and external, forms one of the seven new workstreams reporting to the Neighbourhood Policing project board. The force recognised that there was insufficient capacity within existing structures to take forward this work. Accordingly, the DCC and the head of communications at Norfolk County Council agreed to engage the Government News Network (GNN) to develop a strategy for internal communications and web-based technology. The benefits of the GNN work are now being realised.

- All 52 neighbourhoods in the county now have in place a profile document containing data from a range of sources, including demographic information from the MOSAIC system. All profiles are available to force staff via the recently launched Sharepoint folder system on the force intranet. Each SNT has its own section on Sharepoint which, as well as the profiles, includes details of team members, neighbourhood priorities, problem-solving plans, community contacts, key individuals and engagement activity. MOSAIC provides demographic data from a variety of sources such as the electoral roll, lifestyle surveys, consumer credit records, council tax information and the British Crime Survey. MOSAIC groups this data into categories and can be searched to provide information on a particular area.
- Neighbourhood policing features prominently in the annual local policing plan, within the strategic priority area of 'engaging with local communities'.
- The force has invested in BlackBerry technology (hand-held terminals allowing officers to access emails and force data) for its SNTs.
- The style of BCU tactical tasking and co-ordination group (TTCG) meetings has been completely revamped so that neighbourhood priorities are the main focus of the meeting. The rationale behind this move is that if Neighbourhood Policing is delivering against local priorities, increased confidence and satisfaction will in turn help to decrease levels of volume crime.
- Fortnightly partnership tasking and co-ordination group (PTCG) meetings are held across the force, although they are presently at different stages of advancement as the roll out of SNTs has yet to be completed force-wide. Police and partners attend these meetings but generally partners act as the lead. All partners attending have agreed to devote resources as and when required to resolve identified priorities. The meetings form part of a regular cycle, including the fortnightly BCU TTCG, problem-solving groups (PSGs) and neighbourhood/community action groups. The PTCGs are attended by a number of different agencies, with the relevant BCU superintendent representing the force. Partners confirm that they are heavily and consistently involved in problem solving, particularly in those BCUs where SNTs have been rolled out.
- Examples were seen of problem-solving activity across BCUs. One such example involved SNT engagement with an entire street of more than 60 households, all of which agreed and signed up to an Acceptable Behaviour Contract (ABC). Included in the ABC were restrictions on under-nines playing outside after 8pm and a requirement that all football activity (for under-nines) be supervised. As a result of this work, which received widespread media coverage, there have been no ASB calls relating to this street since October 2006.
- Sitting beneath the PTCGs are formalised PSGs. The PSGs meet on a monthly basis and can be tasked by the PTCG to assist with SNT priorities which are beyond SNT capability. Core members of the PSG are representatives from the police and local authority community safety departments, although any individual from a relevant agency with a particular interest can be co-opted as required. There are plans to extend these meetings to include public representation. Problem-solving plans are stored on a shared drive on the force intranet, and there are plans to include them on Sharepoint, thus increasing their availability to partner agencies.
- There is evidence of effective partnership work taking place around community

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safety. Since March 2006, police and partner agencies have been located together in Haven Bridge House in Great Yarmouth, while a similar facility exists in Norwich. The premises are predominantly police-funded, but see partners working together in support of police/crime and disorder reduction partnership (CDRP) priorities. Each agency brings with it not only expertise but also access to its information technology (IT) systems and databases. Representatives from Haven Bridge House have delivered internal training to SNT staff, and problem-solving training is provided by a Home Office-trained problem solver employed by the county council. Additional problem-solving and community engagement training has also been delivered by partner agencies.

- The force aims to hold a masterclass in citizen focus in November 2007 and will invite the ACPO citizen focus lead, along with a customer service expert who works closely with the Institute of Customer Service. Invitations to the event will also be sent to neighbouring forces.
- The force tailors NHP training to local need and bases it on the relevant Centrex modules. Training includes a two-day course for SNT staff which contains input from partner agencies on problem solving. Every PCSO in the force has now received this training.
- The force has developed a number of products to assist with training on community intelligence, and many of these feature on the force intranet. They include screensavers, presentations to staff, input at SNT and student officer training courses, '60-second briefing' notes and leaflets inserted in salary slip envelopes.
- The force has produced a 'Safer Neighbourhood Policing community intelligence practitioner's guide', which defines community intelligence and explains the process for gathering and submitting such intelligence. The guide will be of even greater benefit to the force when the required changes to the crime intelligence system (CIS) come into effect during the summer of 2007.
- Tailored engagement plans for individual SNTs are being produced; these set minimum standards, detailing what activity has already taken place, how well it has worked and how to move forward with future engagement activity. This engagement activity clearly drives and informs local priority setting. All information obtained from local engagement activity is presented at public meetings and all attendees are asked to identify priorities, from which three are selected and formally adopted as SNT priorities.
- Officers put postcards through letterboxes inviting residents to place the card in their window if they would like SNT members to call on them. The cards also incorporate details of alternative methods of contacting local officers. Although the scheme has not been fully evaluated, the demand for additional cards is a measure of its success.
- The force publishes a magazine entitled *You Said, We Did* which details success stories across the force. This magazine is available both inside and outside the force.
- The website safernorfolk.co.uk provides an introduction to Neighbourhood Policing; each SNT has its own page on the site with contact details, including an area for community feedback. The site also provides links to partner websites through an A–Z search facility, enabling the public to obtain advice in on various issues, such as fly-tipping and noise pollution. The force is also part of 'Norfolk Connect', an

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arrangement whereby all local authority sites have links to other partner sites. An aspiration is to place pictures of all staff involved in the neighbourhood management arena – for example, trading standards and housing officers – on the SNT pages.

- An abstraction policy exists for SNTs: abstractions are monitored at a local level and performance data is collected and recorded monthly. A target has been set to limit abstraction to 10% and this is subject to continual review by BCUs and the force. SNT staff will be ring-fenced and should not be abstracted for service commitments or for other local duties except in the most exceptional of circumstances. If such circumstances arise, then the authority of an officer of the rank of chief inspector, or of the duty Inspector, will be required to abstract an SNT officer. There is evidence that the policy is being strictly applied, with response teams required to work overtime to cover absences rather than SNT staff being abstracted from their roles to provide cover. There is flexibility within the policy to allow BCUs to employ officers with specialist skills on SNTs, and there is evidence of this happening. A skills matrix is used when posting members of staff to SNTs, to ensure an equal distribution of those with secondary specialisms (eg police search advisor authorised firearms officers).
- The strength of the intelligence function has been enhanced, with 14 additional posts created, both centrally and in area intelligence units (AIUs) to cater not only for the expected increase in community intelligence submissions, but also for Management of Police Information (MoPI) compliance and changes to the CIS.
- The force has implemented a volunteers policy which clearly articulates definitions, roles, responsibilities and a process for engaging volunteers. This is supported by a volunteer role profile which outlines the expectations of volunteers and the training required to undertake their roles successfully. There is evidence of volunteers working in parish councils and post offices to improve accessibility to police services.
- The force ensures that SNTs are integrated with other areas of policing. For example, PCSOs undertake attachments to response shifts to increase mutual awareness of roles and all student officers spend a month attached to an SNT. SNT sergeants attend response briefings to raise awareness of SNT priorities, and where possible response and SNT staff brief together. Response and roads policing officers are aligned to SNT areas and support SNTs by focusing on SNT priorities in periods of downtime.
- Considerable progress has been made in respect of performance development reviews (PDRs), and all SNT staff now have objectives to reflect priorities in the neighbourhoods they serve. These will be reviewed as and when priorities change.
- An addendum to the force PDR system asks SNT staff to identify three objectives over a three-month period which are specifically linked to an identified priority relating to their SNT, in addition to any development opportunities such as training requirements. The addendum forms are scrutinised by both supervisors and area HR departments. Between 10 and 20 PDRs a month are dip-sampled by the HR department. The force has also identified between 25 and 30 PDR 'champions' to explain and support the system, and the PDR process is now linked to promotion and lateral transfer procedures.
- A pilot project has been running in Great Yarmouth since August 2006 whereby witness care officers are raising awareness of their role and interacting with SNTs by way of a referral system. If a witness care officer identifies a particular need, this

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will be flagged to the SNT which then conducts reassurance visits, thereby enhancing engagement opportunities and dealing effectively with repeat victimisation issues. There are no current plans to identify an end date for the project or to evaluate its effectiveness, but the pilot will not be rolled out elsewhere until an evaluation has taken place.

- Community action days have been arranged by local residents' associations following street audits of issues such as waste, damage and graffiti. Relevant agencies are then invited to attend on an arranged day and deal with each highlighted problem. An example of this work took place in Cobholm, which is below sea level and at risk of flooding. The SNT used a planned training day for the police diving team to clear local ditches of debris such as shopping trolleys.
- As part of the inspection process, a telephone survey of 100 randomly selected residents was conducted, asking them six questions about their experiences of Neighbourhood Policing and how it is being delivered. Norfolk scored above the national average outcome for each question, suggesting a very positive response to its approach.
- The DCC has chaired the Neighbourhood Policing project board since January 2007, with the project lead reporting directly to him. There is clear evidence of ACPO support for the implementation of NHP.
- The implementation of Neighbourhood Policing has been project-managed by way of Projects in Controlled Environments (PRINCE) methodology. The project has now been redeveloped into seven separate workstreams; audit/performance; information and communications technology; problem solving and partnerships; control centre and switchboard; HR (including training); communications; and National Intelligence Model (NIM)/intelligence. The dedicated PRINCE trainer has prepared work packages for each of the workstream leads.
- The head of community safety for the county council is a member of the project board, as is the chief executive of Broadland District Council. The police authority is also represented.
- In identifying the required resource commitment for SNTs, BCU commanders considered defined boundaries and incident/crime trends and worked out what resources could be committed to SNTs. This process also took account of sparsity factors and deprivation data.
- The HR plan 2007/08 makes reference to SNTs and sets a strategic overview.
- There was detailed consultation with partners and communities when neighbourhoods were initially defined and existing partnership structures were used as far as possible.
- Each SNT has its own engagement plan (also kept in the team folder and on Sharepoint), which is a living document. This includes planned activity such as street meetings and panels. Furthermore, each smaller beat and wider SNT has its own menu of activity.
- The force and partners consider the Neighbourhood Policing agenda to be a safer neighbourhoods agenda as opposed to a Neighbourhood Policing agenda. Central BCU, although yet to roll out SNTs, has engaged fully with partners and is seeking to include representatives of partners, for example housing officers and neighbourhood managers, on its SNTs. Where partner reluctance has been encountered, multi-

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agency activity has countered it – one example being the co-locating of several agencies in Haven Bridge House, Yarmouth.

- The force training manager and the Neighbourhood Policing project lead enjoy a close working relationship, with a sense that SNTs are seen as 'business as usual' across the force.
- Staff are conversant with PCSO powers and view PCSOs as an integral part of SNTs. There was evidence of effective tutoring of PCSOs beyond their induction course and of a phased PCSO training programme.
- All training for SNTs is to be evaluated at level 2 and PCSO training at level 3. This is in addition to routine evaluation by way of feedback questionnaires at all training events.
- There was evidence of the use of community impact assessments, not only around issues such as murders, but also on a more localised SNT basis.
- The force has conducted an audit and gap analysis of Neighbourhood Policing pertaining to the HMIC specific grading criteria. This audit generated nine recommendations which were considered by the project board. The force has been in regular contact with the Neighbourhood Policing Project Team field officer and a 'light touch' assessment visit took place early in 2007. From this an action plan was formulated to ensure areas for improvement were addressed.
- In May 2007 the police authority formed a citizen focus committee to maintain a strategic overview of the citizen focus agenda, including Neighbourhood Policing. Two lead authority members are also assigned to the Neighbourhood Policing project board.

Work in progress

- The force has in place a plan to ensure 100% SNT coverage by September 2007, when Central BCU will have rolled out the remainder of its teams.
- Each identified neighbourhood priority will be managed through the production in September 2007 of a problem-solving action plan, involving partners and the community. These plans will be documented and held on the force intranet within the Sharepoint folder system for that SNT, which can be accessed by all other SNTs and partners.
- The force is seeking to involve and join the Institute of Customer Service. Membership will professionalise the role of those delivering front-line services and will involve accreditation through learning and development. It will also serve as a useful benchmarking tool and allow the sharing of best practice relating to customer service. Membership could help the force to be involved in the shaping of the customer service agenda nationally and thus enhance its reputation, as it would be one of only three police forces involved.
- The force is currently examining its reward and recognition system to incorporate SNTs, but this work is not due for completion until the end of 2008.
- The PTCGs are looking to undertake outcome evaluation on the problems/priorities they seek to address.

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- The force has targeted black and minority ethnic communities in recruitment drives, and runs access courses for such applicants. On Central BCU there are plans to use four PCSOs as minority ethnic liaison officers (MELOs). They will not be aligned to an SNT but will have a floating role, to bring their cultural expertise to SNTs as required. In principle this proposal is worth pursuing, but the deployment of the officers will require careful evaluation to ensure effective use of resources.
- The imperative of achieving 100% SNT coverage by September 2007 has caused some staff to feel that the pace is too quick and that as a consequence SNTs have become the focus at the expense of other areas of activity within the force. It is important that the force monitors how it manages its change programme so as not to isolate those not involved in SNTs.
- AIUs are in the process of being restructured to manage community intelligence and improve the production and upkeep of neighbourhood profiles.
- Community intelligence and its relevance to Neighbourhood Policing are not understood by some officers. Front-line staff are aware that work is ongoing but some are clearly not yet familiar with the concept.
- The force is updating the CIS so that community intelligence can be captured and categorised, allowing easier searching, retrieval and analysis; the required technical changes were due to be complete by the end of June 2007. This has had an impact on the marketing strategy for community intelligence, which has been delayed while these changes take place.
- Methods of sharing good practice and encouraging communication between SNTs are being considered and may include an SNT conference. Plans were in place for sergeants and SNTs to meet on a quarterly basis, beginning in May 2007.
- The Sharepoint database – containing the SNT profiles and details of staff, community contacts and meetings – is not as easy to navigate as the safer neighbourhoods section of the force intranet. Consequently, call centre staff and enquiry officers are not able quickly to search the database to provide information to the public. This is due in part to the site being newly established – discussion threads have not yet been accessed or responded to and the 'shared documents' section was empty at the time of inspection.
- Although the force has a communications strategy, there is confusion over the existence of two other documents – a police authority and force consultation communication and engagement strategy, which is at least three years old, and a joint force and partner engagement strategy. The police authority recognises the need to improve the situation and seeks to take a lead in this area through its recently formed citizen focus committee.
- The police authority is to dip-sample aspects of engagement at neighbourhood level and to develop, with the force, a community engagement strategy, clearly defining the roles of the force and the police authority.
- Engagement with partners is not consistent at all levels. While there is strong support for engagement at chief executive and ground operational level, improvement is required at middle management level where most operational, as opposed to strategic, decisions are made. Officers from Central Area spoke of experiencing difficulty in liaising with their colleagues in the council. This may be due to the fact that some Norwich SNTs are not yet fully up and running.

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- The Neighbourhood Policing project board is due to hand over responsibility for Neighbourhood Policing to the community safety department. A date for this handover has yet to be agreed.
- The HR department oversees the production of data on abstractions from SNTs. There have been a number of teething troubles encountered in obtaining this data, and work is ongoing to improve the process. In addition, the HR/payroll system has only recently interfaced with the force duty management system.
- A community engagement strategy has been written by the county council community safety manager, detailing an overarching strategic approach which links to the engagement toolkit available to SNT staff. The author was chosen for his expertise in partnership working and to give the strategy a partnership emphasis. The strategy will also incorporate guidance on how to complete an engagement plan, available on Sharepoint. This strategy will become a subsidiary of the existing police authority communication, engagement and consultation plan. The community engagement strategy was presented to the police authority citizen focus committee in July 2007, followed by a programme of presentations to each of the local strategic partnerships across Norfolk. The strategy will in turn lead to a renewed partnership engagement strategy.
- There are plans to co-locate county council staff within the community safety department at force headquarters.
- The force makes use of its MELOs to act as the main points of contact for hard-to-reach groups. They are part of the domestic violence (DV) and hate crime units on each BCU and have strong links with minority groups, as well as compiling community impact assessments. The force is seeking to extract the wealth of information held by the MELOs and overlay it with work that the diversity team is conducting in conjunction with independent advisory groups and others (for example, identifying faith-based meeting places). This will inform an overall 'rich picture' template, which will in turn inform neighbourhood profiles. The force is acutely aware that its force area demographic profile is changing and acknowledges that it has yet to profile all its resident groups; this process is cyclical and it will be informed by the work of the SNTs.
- An in-depth review of how the NIM applies to Neighbourhood Policing generated nearly 70 actions and a detective chief inspector (DCI) was detailed to oversee implementation of the recommendations. The DCI now attends the project board meetings and implementation is continuing.
- The force recognises the need to consult with partners to deliver a joint strategic assessment by April 2008, with a more consultative process being adopted in the interim. The force has secured the services of the Cambridgeshire Constabulary principal analyst on a shared basis to assist with this and other projects.
- The force has only recently produced the bulk of its neighbourhood profiles (over 40 in the last three months) and they are still a relatively new concept. The responsibility for owning and updating them currently rests with BCU chief inspectors. However, work is under way to identify a model profile, and to establish where ownership and responsibility for updating the documents should rest.
- A training needs analysis for police officers on SNTs will take place over the coming months.

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- User satisfaction data is presently broken down to BCU level and work is under way to bring this down further to SNT level over the next year. The force is operating a 'service recovery' process through survey activity and is feeding the results back to BCUs for remedial action. This process is part of the wider user satisfaction process. Where during the customer survey a dissatisfied response is given, permission is sought to pass the information back to the force. This is to allow the poor service provided to the customer to be rectified and future service to be improved.
- A three-month pilot on Eastern BCU employs supervisor call-backs, whereby a supervisor contacts a random number of callers within 48 hours of initial contact to ask a series of questions on the quality of service received. After evaluation this procedure may be rolled out force-wide.
- A review of the force inspection process by the corporate support department has identified the need to conduct quarterly inspections of BCUs and departments. The objective is to identify areas of risk and vulnerability, while looking through a 'citizen focus lens' and asking what each department contributes to the overall citizen focus agenda. An increase in staff will be required to carry out the inspection work. SNTs/Neighbourhood Policing will feature in the new inspection process, as the force is keen to evaluate the effectiveness of SNTs, particularly in the area of customer satisfaction.
- Key performance measures have been agreed for Neighbourhood Policing, with a plan for how and when data will be collected. Although the plan has been agreed by the ACPO team, the Neighbourhood Policing project board and BCU commanders, the force has yet to confirm how this data will be used.

Areas for improvement

- BCU analysts do not have access to partnership data held by CDRP analysts, and networking between BCU and CDRP analysts could improve.
- Until the CIS is amended, community intelligence entered onto the system will not be easily searchable. Although a solution is imminent, the current situation has the potential to affect SNT work adversely.
- The Norfolk Constabulary website contains a link to all SNTs but in some cases there is no information on the team partnership working or details of community engagement meetings.
- The NIM features as one of the workstreams reporting to the Neighbourhood Policing project board, but the force analysts do not contribute to this process.
- The number of constables and PCSOs supervised by sergeants varies between six and fourteen per sergeant; these high supervision levels are affecting quality of supervision in some cases, not only in terms of administration and welfare, but also in that they limit the opportunity for some sergeants to patrol with their teams.
- The force intranet details the priorities that have been set by the SNTs, but some lack detail. For example, one SNT describes one priority as being 'all traffic issues'. Another SNT appears not to have consulted with its community as its priority is to 'engage with the community'.
- There is no direct partner input into the creation of neighbourhood profiles. CDRP analysts are now feeding into the process, but partner data is not routinely sought,

used or incorporated.

- Neighbourhood profiles are at varying stages of development and use, with some uncertainty as to what a profile should contain.
- There is mixed knowledge of PCSO roles and powers, particularly among CDC and other non-SNT staff.
- The method of selecting PCSO tutors requires review; a number of PCSOs reported that they had been appointed to this role without being consulted.
- Reality checking as part of the inspection, in both urban and rural areas, demonstrated a good standard of marketing undertaken to promote SNTs. In the rural areas there was good interaction between SNT members and the community. However, in more urban areas the standard of engagement was significantly lower, particularly with the business community, where opportunities to engage are being missed.
- There is a discrepancy between the staffing establishment of some SNTs and the number of officers in post. Some teams have been launched publicly but in fact have only one PC and/or PCSO in post. There is a risk of raising public expectations but being unable to deliver accordingly.
- The force website enables members of the public to access SNTs and find out when the next public meeting for a particular SNT is to be held. However, on some SNT sites there are messages to the effect that no SNT meetings are being held, whereas in reality staff confirm that they regularly attend town or parish meetings and are allocated specific areas of responsibility. Opportunities are thus being lost to inform the public of forthcoming meetings as well as to promote the work of SNTs.
- In some areas, transport for SNTs is not fit for purpose. Some rural SNTs are equipped only with bicycles, which are impractical as a mode of transport in large areas.

Performance Management

GRADE	GOOD
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National grade distribution

Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
6	29	8	0

National contextual factors

There is no single accepted model of performance management across the police service but any such model or framework must be fit for purpose. Ideally, forces should demonstrate that individuals at every level of the organisation understand their contribution to converting resources into agreed delivery, and know how they will be held to account. On a daily basis, first-line supervisors monitor, support and quality assure the performance of their teams. At the other end of the spectrum, chief officer-led performance meetings – often based loosely on the American Compstat model – are a vehicle for accountability and improvement. Robust leadership, a commitment to improvement and reliable, real-time information systems are all critical factors in effective performance management.

There is no mechanistic link between overall force performance and the grade awarded in this framework. The grade is based on the quality of the force’s processes that enable it to identify and react to changes in performance.

Contextual factors

Norfolk Constabulary was graded Good in the 2006 baseline assessment and has built on this position of strength throughout 2006/07. The new Chief Constable took up post at the turn of the year and his appointment has been followed by a period of consolidation and development, with significant achievements in terms of crime reduction and detection, together with a reduction in the number of people killed or seriously injured on the county’s roads.

The force has turned its attention towards increasing customer confidence and satisfaction, and securing improved productivity in light of a challenging financial climate. The roll-out of Neighbourhood Policing supports the Constabulary’s aim of providing an increasingly citizen-focused service while developing capacity and capability, both to tackle serious and organised criminality and also across the range of protective services.

Strengths

- The force, supported by the police authority, has decided to move away from straight reduction/detection targets in order to focus on an all-crime reduction target of 1% (while still monitoring the core crimes of burglary/vehicle crime and violent crime), along with satisfaction and confidence measures. BCUs are expected to align their priorities accordingly while retaining a degree of autonomy in their own target setting. This approach has been welcomed by many members of the force as representing a shift away from the pursuit of purely quantitative targets, with a greater emphasis now placed on qualitative issues that underpin the strategic priorities.

- A tried and tested performance framework is integrated into everyday business, and is well understood throughout the force. Staff are clear about their contribution to force performance and how they are held to account.
- The new Chief Constable has brought with him a demonstrable commitment to improve performance further. This is not limited to the pursuit of statistical targets but centres on quality and service. Other members of the COG also provide clear leadership in all aspects of force performance.
- A range of internal audit, review and inspection processes helps to ensure that data collation, incident and crime recording and financial and HR structures comply with legislative requirements, and that operational and organisational goals are met. The inspection and review unit undertakes internal inspection and monitors recommendations from other audit activity, to ensure that lessons are learnt and acted upon. A recent inspection examined stop-and-search processes and identified a number of areas for improvement that are currently being addressed.
- A culture of openness exists between the force and the police authority. Following the reorganisation of the force's board structure, the police authority chief executive and chairman now attend the new force management board (which replaces the former force performance management group).
- Representatives from the HR and IT departments are actively involved as members of the annual policing plan working group and articulate the views of, and impact on their departments of, the targets proposed. This group also includes police authority members and representatives from BCUs and the operations department. The finance department offers advice on the costing of plans, paying due regard to the parallel costed planning process, which considers growth bid applications. Each BCU is required to offer potential savings when submitting growth bids.
- The force uses a costed planning process which links strategic and financial planning.
- The police authority has access to all risk registers maintained by the force and also maintains its own. Twice a year the scrutiny and audit committee considers the status of current organisational/departmental risk.
- Norfolk Constabulary is piloting a software solution (Signals from Noise) to create an electronic method of statistical process control. Signals from Noise is a software package that extracts data from the force crime system and applies statistical tools to identify performance either below or above normal levels, highlighting exceptional activity. The software can cut across a number of dimensions including crime categories, time-spans, victim and property types and geographical locations down to neighbourhood level. It is currently being piloted on Eastern Area and at organisational level within the corporate data unit. Storyboards are used to integrate performance analysis with NIM processes to inform decision making on resource allocation. The software's predictive capability will assist in planning future operational activity.
- Customer needs and expectations are monitored by way of satisfaction surveys and other engagement activity, further underpinned by the work of SNTs. The satisfaction surveys are conducted by an external consultancy which is also used by other forces in the region. The force monitors the responses from these surveys and highlights broader trends, which are then used to improve service provision.

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- The force produces establishment and 'actual strength' data on a monthly basis for each BCU and department, and this is shared electronically with all commanders. Similar data is generated for sickness and annual leave and is considered by the staff deployment group and the senior staff deployment group, both of which are attended and chaired at senior level within the force. A risk management element is provided by the force management board, which is chaired by the Chief Constable (by the DCC in his absence) and is attended by the force executive and BCU/department commanders, as well as by representatives from the police authority.
- The force has formal service level agreements with neighbouring forces to provide resilience in certain areas of business, such as covert equipment and surveillance capability. Norfolk is a member of the six-force Eastern Region Intelligence Group, which is chaired by the force's director of intelligence and meets monthly. Norfolk shares key intelligence on 'raves' and other unlicensed events with member forces. To ensure an intelligence-gathering capability at all times, a rota is staffed across the six forces to give weekend coverage. This is increased during particularly vulnerable periods such as bank holiday weekends. The force is also working with Suffolk in relation to strategic ANPR locations. Currently, a collaborative project is operating to provide a three-county (Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire) ANPR network function, with agreement on good practice and a standard operating procedure (SOP) for officers to follow.

Work in progress

- The Chief Constable has commissioned an organisational development review which consists at the present time of four major workstreams:
 - understanding the expectations and requirements of customers;
 - cultural survey;
 - resource demand analysis; and
 - examination of how support functions are delivered.
- An element of duplication exists in the work and membership of the annual policing plan group and the costed planning process group. The force is considering whether to merge these processes/groups to make them more streamlined and integrated.
- The force is seeking to develop a data warehouse to store a range of data, both internal and external. This will allow users to select a 'dashboard' of data and export information of individual or departmental relevance.
- Although it is already in use across the force, there are plans to further develop the use of activity-based costing data at a local level, integrate it into financial planning and embed it in the police authority scrutiny and review process.
- There are plans for the police authority to play an active role in the inspection of force activity. Findings will be fed in to the scrutiny and audit committee, and a member of the authority will be involved in major inspection activity.
- A quarterly survey captures information on violence, ASB, racial crime and burglary (see above); additional work identifies specific areas of weakness and obtains personal details, so that follow-up can take place and quality-of-service issues can be addressed, including feedback to the officers involved.

Area for improvement

- Despite a considerable drive to link the performance of SNT officers to local and force priorities, uncertainty exists as to whether this also applies to other officers in the response and operations departments and the criminal investigation department (CID). As the force is seeking to use the PDR process more proactively in its promotion and lateral developmental processes, this issue should be addressed.

Protecting Vulnerable People – Overview

National contextual factors

The assessment framework for Protecting Vulnerable People was first developed in 2006 as part of HMIC's baseline assessment programme. It replaced two existing frameworks – Reducing/Investigating Hate Crime and Crimes against Vulnerable Victims – which focussed on hate crimes (predominantly racially motivated), domestic violence and child protection. Following consultation with practitioners and ACPO leads, a single framework was introduced with four components – domestic violence, the investigation and prevention of child abuse, the management of sex and dangerous offenders, and vulnerable missing persons. Although the four areas are discrete, they are also linked and share a common theme – they deal with vulnerable victims where there is a high risk that an incident can quickly become critical, and where a poor police response is both life-threatening and poses severe reputational risks for the force.

This year's inspection has been carried out using similar assessment standards as those in 2006. These highlight the importance of leadership and accountability; policy implementation; information management; staffing, workload and supervision; performance monitoring and management; training; the management of risk; and partnership working.

The work carried out by forces to protect the public, particularly those most vulnerable to risk of serious harm, is complex and challenging. No single agency, including the police, has the capacity to deliver the required response on its own. Success is therefore, dependent on effective multi-agency working and there are a number of established partnerships, involving a wide range of services and professionals, aimed at ensuring that an integrated approach is adopted to protecting those most vulnerable to risk of serious harm.

Contextual factors overview

The force responded positively to the 2006 HMIC baseline assessment of protecting vulnerable people (PVP), focusing particularly on: the strategic profile of PVP; management structures; resource allocation; welfare considerations; consistent application of policy; dangerous and sex offender management; working with partners; and linking PVP with other business areas. The DCC is the lead chief officer for all areas of PVP.

The force has a dedicated family protection unit (FPU), encompassing the public protection unit (PPU), child protection unit (CPU) and adult protection unit (APU). The FPU also contains the vulnerable persons unit, responsible for DV, missing persons, people trafficking and prostitution.

Strengths

- The force is innovative in respect of some elements of PVP work, receiving visits from other forces to learn from its good practice. An example of this is Operation Amarillo (see Developing Practice below).
- There is effective leadership of PVP from both chief officers and the police authority, the latter appointing lead members who have regular contact with PVP officers.
- The force has produced clear and consistent policies in respect of each aspect of PVP which, where applicable, are fully compliant with ACPO/National Centre for Policing Excellence guidance.

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- Supervision and accountability are robust at all levels in the FPU.
- Centralised management of public protection, child abuse investigation and missing person enquiries has raised the profile of the FPU and helped bring greater consistency in both policy formulation and the delivery of operational activity.

Work in progress

- Work is in progress to formalise a bi-annual review process which will incorporate all PVP work. The first review is planned for September 2007.

Areas for improvement

- In spite of the best efforts of the FPU management team, the force still needs to satisfy itself that the strategic priorities for PVP have an appropriate profile throughout the organisation.

Developing Practice

INSPECTION AREA: PVP – child/adult protection/public protection

TITLE: Operation Amarillo

PROBLEM:

Timely access to information for child/adult protection referrals, intelligence management, prioritisation, analysis, co-ordination and tasking (IMPACT)/MoPI compliance and Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks; potentially dangerous persons (PDPs) database and Violent and Sex Offenders Register (ViSOR) data cleansing; and insecure storage of data.

SOLUTION:

Although the Norfolk CPU and APU had databases on which referrals were recorded they were not IMPACT-compliant and were approaching the end of their useful life. Furthermore, referral details were not on the databases but recorded on paper files and sent to an outside company for storage. The referrals were constantly required for a variety of purposes, including enhanced CRB checks, and costs were incurred for storage and retrieval. Furthermore, the process was deemed insecure by a data protection inspection. Also stored in this way were completed sexual offences crime files which were again constantly required by staff. This system also incurred costs for storage and transportation.

With the migration from the interim solution to ViSOR a number of records were left with 'scrambled' information that required cleansing. Additionally, the force had recently implemented a new CIS which required details of ViSOR nominals for MoPI compliance. The PDP database also required cleansing and linking with the CIS.

The solution has been a multi-faceted project, Operation Amarillo. Business cases were submitted for IMPACT funding and continued funding from the crime command budget. This has enabled the force to dispose of the old paper-based systems and replace them with the case administration tracking system (CATS) which has been expanded to capture adult protection referrals. Staff have back-record converted all child/adult protection referrals onto CATS; child protection records spanning 20 years are now available. Sexual offences crime files have been back-record converted, indexed and scanned onto CD. Access to the files is through the force intranet, with access to the database itself being restricted. The PDP database has been cleansed and linked with the CIS. ViSOR is also being cleansed.

OUTCOME(S):

1. CATS has replaced the old child/adult protection databases and paper system to provide a paperless IMPACT/MoPI-compliant system. All new referrals are put on CATS.
2. Data is now held securely.
3. Sexual offences crime files are available instantly via the force intranet (using Alchemy software).
4. ViSOR has been cleansed.
5. ViSOR nominal information has been placed on the CIS with a 'signpost' to contact the PPU for detailed information.

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6. FPU management has been freed from CRB checks, as the Police National Computer (PNC) bureau has access to CATS adult/child and Alchemy software; there have been efficiency savings as a result of streamlining the process.

7. CATS and ViSOR are accessible on supervisors' terminals in the CDC, with appropriate training given to staff. This arrangement provides 24/7 information to operational officers.

8. PDP information is available to officers.

9. Efficiency savings have been achieved by cancelling the contract with the storage company.

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Protecting Vulnerable People – Child Abuse

GRADE	GOOD
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National grade distribution

Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
3	17	21	2

National contextual factors

The Children Act 2004 places a duty on the police to ‘safeguard and promote the welfare of children’; safeguarding children, therefore, is a fundamental part of the duties of all police officers. All police forces, however, also have specialist units which, although they vary in structure, size and remit, normally take primary responsibility for investigating child abuse cases. Officers in these units work closely with other agencies, particularly Social Services, to ensure that co-ordinated action is taken to protect specific children who are suffering, or who are at risk of suffering, significant harm. The Children Act 2004 also requires each local authority to establish a Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB). This is the key statutory mechanism for agreeing how the relevant organisations in each local area will co-operate to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in that locality, and for ensuring the effectiveness of what they do.

Membership of LSCBs includes representatives of the relevant local authority and its Board partners, notably the police, probation, youth offending teams, strategic health authorities and primary care trusts, NHS Trusts and NHS Foundation Trusts, the Connexions service, Children and Family Courts Advisory and Support Service, Secure Training Centres and prisons.

Contextual factors

The CPU is part of the FPU and comprises a number of specialist investigators at constable and sergeant level, supervised by detective inspectors (DIs) reporting ultimately to a DCI. The CPU deals with intra-familial abuse, historical abuse and cases of abuse by those in positions of trust. Its terms of reference are outlined in a service level expectation agreed with BCUs, and are widely available to all staff through the FPU section on the force intranet.

The specific comments in this section should be read in conjunction with those contained in the generic protecting vulnerable people section of the report.

Strengths

- The DCC provides effective leadership for child protection work.
- The CPU terms of reference are outlined in a service level expectation agreed with

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BCUs. The terms of reference are also available on the FPU intranet site and are therefore available to all staff 24/7.

- CPU officers are protected from routine abstractions and such instances are rare. In the last three years only two officers from the CPU have been abstracted, and these abstractions followed the extraordinary demand created by Operation Sumac, investigating a series of murders in Suffolk in December 2006. Force policy states that officers working in the CPU are no longer available for specialism activity or training such as POLSA training, as they must be available solely for CPU work.
- CPU staff undertake joint services Achieving Best Evidence training, delivered by the force training department. All staff are investigative interview tier 2-trained and a smaller number are accredited at tier 3. All staff are either already qualified detectives or are working towards accreditation. Officers also receive local safeguarding children board training and Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre courses. Training is identified and planned through the PDR process and courses are programmed into the force training programme.
- There is evidence of strong supervision within the CPU at both sergeant and inspector level and lines of accountability are clear. One DI is responsible for the Norwich office and the new central referral desk (CRD), while the other is responsible for the Gorleston and Swaffham satellite offices. The DIs report to a DCI who in turn reports to the FPU detective superintendent.
- Staffing levels provide good resilience within the CPU, which has a total of four detective sergeants (DSs) and 20 detective constables (DCs) spread across the force area but based in dedicated units (with the exception of Swaffham, where officers are based within the police station).
- Staffing levels within the CPU have been determined by a review of caseload, and a business case was submitted when levels per officer in the Norwich teams were deemed to be too high. This led to an increase in the establishment to reflect the demand, indicative of the force's commitment to the Safeguarding Children agenda. Caseloads are now monitored by the CPU team DSs, using a dedicated IT system – evidence suggests that, at any given time, a CPU officer is dealing with six to eight referrals. Overall, the CPU dealt with 1,220 referrals between April 2006 and March 2007, equivalent to 61 cases per CPU officer over the year.
- The FPU DCI is a member of a national working group looking at the issue of officer workload and performance. Norfolk has agreed to pilot 'caseload per officer' as one of three provisional national key performance indicators.
- Performance information is generated on a monthly basis and incorporates child abuse referrals, arrests, sanction detections and the number of intelligence reports submitted. Crimes recorded and detected are measured per CPU officer and aggregated to provide overall team and CPU performance. This information forms part of an FPU statistical package which is discussed at FPU management meetings and shared with BCU commanders.
- The force records child abuse investigations on a dedicated IT system, CATS. The force has back-record converted all its old paper-based referrals, stretching back to the late 1980s, onto CATS. Simultaneously, the force has back-record converted all paper-based sexual offence crime files so that they are also available electronically.
- Protecting children at risk of harm is incorporated in one of the four force strategic

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aims, 'engaging with local communities', and documented within the annual policing plan.

- The force has a clear and robust procedure for dealing with CPU referrals. The CRD is the dedicated point of contact and receipt for all CPU referrals, thereby ensuring they are handled in a consistent manner. A prescribed number of checks are carried out on all referrals, in accordance with SOPs, and all initial strategy discussions are conducted with social care services by an officer from the CRD to determine any need for joint or single agency investigation. The CRD is responsible for entering referrals onto the CATS system and emailing details to the relevant CPU team for allocation.
- There was clear evidence of effective supervision of CATS enquiries by supervisors both in the CPU and the CRD. Supervisors regularly accompany officers on enquiries and either sit in on or monitor interviews of victims, witnesses and suspects.
- The force identified that maternity leave was having a considerable impact on CPU resilience, and to cater for this the ACPO team provided additional funding to bring in a number of staff on long-term secondments. The seconded officers are assessed, and if they are considered suitable for future CPU vacancies are put on a waiting list when they resume their previous duties once the original post-holders return from maternity leave. This process is now fully embedded and provides a ready supply of applicants for any vacancies that arise.
- The FPU senior management team holds a monthly HR meeting with senior HR personnel from headquarters to discuss staffing issues, with a particular emphasis on the management of secondments and part-time staff.
- To cater for the number of part-time officers and officers with caring commitments on the CPU, the force has run its own Initial Crime Investigators' Development Programme (ICIDP) course so that officers do not have to travel and reside out of force.
- Communication and lines of accountability within the CPU are clear and consistent. Monthly management meetings are held and the CPU DSs meet formally with the DCI every three months. The DIs also hold team meetings on a monthly basis. The FPU holds an annual team day, with guest speakers: this provides an opportunity for all staff to speak to the management team and address any issues or concerns. At these events good work is acknowledged and awards are presented. Recently, the Chief Constable commended the entire CPU establishment in recognition of its good work.
- The CPU has set itself a sanction detection target of 20%. As of March 2007, the CPU detection rate was 59% and their contribution to BCU and force performance is commendable.
- There is evidence of positive contributions by the force to the safeguarding children board. The force representative at strategic level is the detective superintendent in charge of the FPU, a level of practitioner input viewed favourably by partner agencies. The detective superintendent also sits on the serious case review, corporate parenting and safe staffing subgroups. Other members of the FPU management team represent the force at various levels.
- Force policy is compliant with ACPO guidance on investigating child abuse and

safeguarding children.

- Role profiles for child abuse investigators are up-to-date and accurately reflect their roles. New staff receive an induction pack incorporating the role profiles.

Work in progress

- Referrals to the CPU by police officers and staff are currently carried out by way of a dedicated form. To ensure a smoother process, the force is working to prepare an electronic version of this form which can be emailed. There is a degree of partner reluctance to receive emails as opposed to faxes, and this must be addressed and overcome if possible.
- CPU office accommodation at Swaffham is considered unsuitable by both staff and senior managers. The force acknowledges this longstanding issue and is seeking appropriate resolution through the building of a new police station, scheduled for completion in 2009.
- The force is in the process of working with partner agencies to introduce multi-agency risk assessment conferences (MARACs). This may have implications for resilience of CPU staff (in addition to DV staff). A review of the administrative function is under way and is examining, among other things, whether to relocate a police staff post to provide administrative support to the MARACs.

Areas for improvement

- Scope exists to improve awareness among front-line and other staff of the role of the CPU and the requirements on front-line staff. While staff interact well on a daily basis and the terms of reference appear on the force intranet, there was a lack of understanding among some staff, who viewed CPU work as specialised and, as such, distanced from front-line policing. CPU staff also expressed concern that response officers are on occasion more concerned with completing the necessary forms than with taking positive action.
- A number of staff have access to the CATS system, but it is not fully integrated with the force CIS.
- The level of interaction between the CPU and domestic violence units (DVUs) appears to depend on location. In one BCU it was described as a struggle to get DVU staff to attend case conferences and strategy meetings. The CRD has access to the standalone DVU database but there is considerable scope to align working practices more closely.
- There is confusion among CPU staff as to the criteria for sharing intelligence with partners, particularly with social care services in respect of placing/leaving children at premises on which the police hold specific intelligence.
- Audit and inspection approaches and outcomes would benefit from some tightening. For example, the force is unable to provide the percentage of referrals resulting in a recorded crime. Responsibility for monitoring referrals and ensuring that crimes are properly recorded rests with the CRD. Periodic reviews of recorded offences are

carried out by the crime registrar, but the force does not routinely examine those referrals not recorded as crimes to ensure full compliance with the National Crime Recording Standard.

- A number of issues with the interview recording equipment used by the force have been highlighted. The poor quality of some interview recordings, large parts of which are inaudible or distorted, has been the subject of adverse comment by partners and the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS). The matter is being addressed by the force but the potential consequences for CPU investigations are severe should resolution not be achieved in the very near future.
- When a single agency investigation is agreed as the appropriate course of action, there is a gap in receiving feedback or updates from the agency in question as to the outcome of the investigation.

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Developing Practice

INSPECTION AREA: PVP – child protection

TITLE: Referral desk/CATS/IMPACT checks/intrusive supervision/Climbié/Laming compliance

PROBLEM:

Individuals who wanted to report child protection issues to the CPU would, in the past, phone a child protection officer. This system was reliant on an officer being present in the office and being free to talk. Often this was difficult, as officers could be engaged in other activities such as case building. If an officer was available, they would use their judgement to decide if a referral to CPU was merited. This was an inefficient use of officer time and inconsistent: one officer might refer, another might not. There was poor intrusive supervision as supervisors were not sometimes aware of officer workload. Furthermore, initial strategy discussions were often held with partners without supervisory oversight, contrary to Climbié/Laming recommendations. Whoever picked up the phone ended up dealing with the investigation, which was not a fair or equitable process and was also unsupervised. Furthermore, a regime of initial checks was not in place for referrals being registered under the old paper-based system. While referrals were booked onto a database, this lacked detail to the point of not even having the alleged offender's date of birth recorded. A radical overhaul of the system was required.

SOLUTION:

The solution has been the establishment of a CRD The referral desk has a dedicated staff of one DS, two DCs and three administrators. The police officers are all experienced child protection staff. The administrative staff include a dedicated IMPACT nominal index (INI) operator. The DS and two officers undertake initial strategy discussions with partner agencies by telephone, but the DS oversees all decisions. If the issue is a referral requiring police action it is placed on CATS. A thorough checking regime is now in place which includes undertaking an INI check on every referral. Children's services have provided a terminal which allows access to its child protection database; this is accessed during the initial checks. All administration staff have been trained to use INI, PNC, the children's services database (ISIS) etc. Other relevant force databases are checked, including crime, intelligence and DV, to allow an informed strategy discussion to take place.

Once a referral has been put onto CATS, the referral desk will alert the DS responsible for one of the four CPU teams that a referral is ready to be allocated to an officer. They will make the allocation decision on the basis of officer workload, and can maintain supervisory oversight of the investigation at any time and location. Management oversight is in place, with a dedicated DI being responsible for the desk and referrals. On a daily basis the DI checks with the referral desk DS the quality/quantity of referrals coming in to the CPU.

In tandem with this, a service level expectation has been agreed with the three BCUs, allowing a more businesslike approach to decisions on who deals with referrals.

A further recent development has been deployment of a member of children's services to the referral desk to keep up to speed with referrals that require oversight from the local authority designated officer (LADO), as defined in *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (Appendix 5, page 239). The LADO has access to the CATS system and is able to check

the progress of relevant referrals.

OUTCOME(S):

1. Efficient use of CPU officer time.
2. Consistent criteria applied to the acceptance of referrals.
3. Supervisory/management oversight of referrals allowing intrusive supervision.
4. Electronic recording of referrals that can be maintained and accessed from specific terminals.
5. Initial strategy discussions conducted by experienced officers with supervisory oversight at a supervisory level.
6. Thorough regime of initial checks applied to referrals.
7. Reduction in the number of referrals being placed on CATS.
8. Climbié/Laming compliance.
9. Effective inter-agency working around the LADO.
10. Agreement with BCUs concerning the service level expectation.
11. Streamlined efficient electronic process.

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Protecting Vulnerable People – Domestic Violence

GRADE	FAIR
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National grade distribution

Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
1	13	27	2

National contextual factors

There is no statutory or common law offence as such of ‘domestic violence’; the term is generally used to cover a range of abusive behaviour, not all of which is criminal. The definition of domestic violence adopted by ACPO does, however, take account of the full range of abusive behaviour as well as the different circumstances in which it can occur:

‘any incident of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional) between adults, aged 18 and over, who are or have been intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality’.

As with the investigation of child abuse, responding to and investigating domestic violence is the responsibility of all police officers. Again, however, forces have dedicated staff within this area of work, although their roles vary. In some forces staff undertake a support/liason role, generally acting as a single point of contact for victims and signposting and liaising with other agencies and support services; in others, staff have responsibility for carrying out investigations.

Irrespective of who carries out the investigation in domestic violence cases, an integral part of every stage is the identification of risk factors, followed by more detailed risk assessment and management. In 2004, HMIC, together with HMCPSI, published a joint thematic inspection report on the investigation and prosecution of domestic violence. At that time, risk identification, assessment and management were in the early stages of development throughout the service. Since then, there has been considerable progress in developing formal risk identification and assessment processes and - in a number of forces - the implementation of multi-agency risk assessment conferences (MARACs). Other improvements include the introduction of specialist domestic violence courts and the strengthening of joint working arrangements.

Contextual factors

A range of performance information is gathered, including SPI 8a data (percentage of incidents where a power of arrest existed and was used); the number of DV incidents; repeat victimisation rates; the number of individuals charged with DV-related offences; the number of offenders brought to justice; and the number of predicted convictions.

The specific comments in this section should be read in conjunction with those contained in the generic protecting vulnerable people section of the report.

Strengths

- The DCC holds portfolio responsibility for the investigation of DV.
- Local public service agreement (LPSA) targets from the Home Office were met, leading to a £1.2 million reward grant. A large percentage of this will be reinvested in DV work and be of benefit to the whole county.
- A DV training programme is in place which is Centrex-compliant, using both PowerPoint and interactive multi-agency delivery. In Central Area this has already commenced, with two-hourly sessions added to unarmed defence training sessions which all staff are required to attend. The sessions are delivered by the DV reduction co-ordinator, DVU staff and the CPS. LPSA reward grant money is funding the spread of these training sessions to the other two areas by the end of 2007.
- DV champions have been identified on each BCU at DCI rank to lead on all issues pertaining to DV and act as a conduit for the dedicated DVU staff. The appointment of dedicated DV champions has generated a significant amount of change and improvement, culminating in the forthcoming update to the CIS, which will considerably enhance performance in the arena of DV.
- There is evidence of excellent multi-agency work, including a DV strategy group which has its own implementation plan. Furthermore, MARACs will commence operation in June 2007. A specialist DV court is now operational in Central Area.
- The force policy in respect of DV, including repeat victimisation, is fully compliant with the ACPO guidance on investigating domestic violence and is clear and well-written. The policy is widely available and well understood by front-line and CDC staff.
- There is a high level of awareness of DV issues among front-line and CDC staff, with clear guidance for both in the form of patrol directory entries and SOPs.
- A specific SOP has been produced for the CDC staff to refer to when dealing with DV calls. All DV incidents are graded according to an initial risk assessment by the call handlers, who are only allowed to grade them 1, 2 or 3. All DV incidents are screened by the DV call handler manager and any issues either dealt with at the time or referred to the vulnerable persons co-ordinator.
- A dedicated lead member of the police authority oversees DV work in the force at strategic level.
- Strategy and policy responsibility for DV is owned by the headquarters-based vulnerable persons co-ordinator, reporting to the detective superintendent in charge of the FPU. Responsibility for DV investigation rests with BCU commanders, supported by teams of specialist DV officers assigned to each BCU, headed by a DS. The specialist officers monitor and risk-assess all cases of DV and investigate all high-risk cases; wherever possible, specialist officers deal with perpetrators. They are supported in their role by dedicated administrative staff and victim advocates.
- The force is in the midst of implementing a new phase of the CIS, scheduled for roll-out in July 2007. When embedded, this new phase should address a significant number of the areas for improvement identified below; but this report is based upon the system in operation at the time of inspection.

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- DVU administrative staff perform a menu of checks on both the victim and offender and can generate a referral to the victim support service.
- In addition to catering for the needs of the victim in high-risk cases, DVU staff also deal with the perpetrator whenever possible. The force has been proactive in its use of police staff investigators in the DVU environment.
- Average caseloads for specialist DV staff range from 40 incidents per week on Eastern Area to 60 on Central and Western Areas. In addition, each team processes between 12 and 20 DV offenders per month.
- The Norfolk County Council DV reduction co-ordinator has conducted training with officers in risk-assessment issues and other aspects of their role.
- DV performance is subject to scrutiny through internal performance management processes and is a standing item at divisional management and tasking and co-ordination meetings.
- The force structure chart shows clearly the lines of responsibility for DV work, from constable to ACPO level. The force strategic assessment has enhanced the role of DV investigations, with each BCU clearly accountable for performance in this area.
- An action plan to meet LPSA targets is in place, to ensure a corporate response and the monitoring of all actions through to completion. An example of an action to be monitored is the identification of high-risk cases to divisional DIs.
- DV is covered by the force control strategy and the force strategic assessment. There is also a dedicated DV strategy implementation plan, which is a multi-agency document incorporating performance measures for DV.
- A system is in place to ensure PNC and bail checks are undertaken, through electronic prompts on screen. Details of injunctions are sent from the PNC bureau. First harassment warnings are available on the DV database, which is accessible by control room supervisors.
- The force has a system of six-monthly mandatory referrals to the welfare department for DVU staff; if staff do not attend, their supervisor is informed. Staff consider the referral process to be beneficial.
- Receipt of court results has improved and a system is in place to register and audit conviction rates. A gap in provision of court results was identified and the CPS now send results twice-weekly. As a result of LPSA funding, a researcher is to be employed by the CPS to access its database.
- DV incidents involving children are highlighted by completion of a dedicated form which is faxed to the youth liaison office and then on to the CRD if appropriate. The form is also forwarded to social services and other relevant agencies. This process is included within both force policy and the patrol directory. Staff displayed sound awareness of the need to inform the CPU of any children present at, witnessing or involved in DV incidents.

Work in progress

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- An information-sharing agreement, covering the interaction between multi-agency public protection arrangements (MAPPA) and MARACs, is currently in draft format.
- The police authority is seeking to introduce DV performance targets, on repeat victimisation and offences brought to justice, into the forthcoming policing plan. The reasons for setting such targets are to improve performance, to mainstream activity across areas (where accountability rests) and to ensure a consistent focus on DV issues. A joint police authority/force working group formulates the policing plan and sets targets for the year. However, there is concern on the part of the force about adopting DV targets because of problems identified in the provision of data, primarily surrounding the physical collection of data. The force and the police authority are seeking to resolve this issue as a matter of priority. The force is keen to have appropriate DV targets, but clearly highlighted the need for an accurate baseline before targets are set.
- Executive agreement has been reached that all DV officers will receive detective training and status. Central Area has adopted this process, and the other two areas will follow during 2007.
- Along with Cambridgeshire and Suffolk Constabularies, the force aims to secure a regional agreement on the investigation of DV incidents where police officers or staff are the alleged offenders.
- The facility to transfer 999 calls from the CDC to station computers by email, to download and use in suspect interviews, is under development. This will enhance the quality of investigation and has the potential to improve opportunities to secure detections and earlier resolution to DV cases.
- A NIM problem profile is to be conducted to identify 'hot houses'; this will consider DV data and overlay information from the children at risk register. This will inform work on vulnerable victims and high-risk venues, and allow for formulation of intervention plans.
- Head cameras are to be introduced to enable officers to identify, secure and record evidence at scenes. This will potentially have a positive impact on interviews and child abuse matters. Evidence can be played back almost instantly to enable interviewing officers to prepare interviews as well as to present to the suspect if necessary.
- Role profiles for both officers and police staff operating in DVUs are currently being updated.
- The force operates a stand-alone DV database which, although outdated, is just fit for current purpose. The forthcoming CIS will include risk assessments and intervention plans which can be circulated to other agencies through an interface. The new system will also negate the need for a paper DV referral.
- An audit of processes in place to record DV incidents will be conducted by the performance department. Quality assurance of DV data is currently undertaken by the DV lead (DCI) and involves a twice-yearly review of DV, missing persons and children at risk incidents. Results will be fed back to the ACPO lead and BCU commanders.

Areas for improvement

- The rationale for the current establishment of DVUs in the three areas is weak and lacks evidential rigour. This issue was identified by HMIC in 2006 and an action plan generated, but the situation remains a matter of some concern.
- The working relationship between DVUs and SNTs is not clear. For example, DV alarms could be fitted to premises, with this fact recorded on the computer-aided despatch (CAD) system, but there is no mechanism to inform the relevant SNT.
- Some DVU staff consider that SNT officers do not know the locations of 'hot houses' or of repeat victim premises. (This belief was confirmed as correct by SNT officers interviewed during the inspection.)
- Two separate IT systems are in use at the present time: all DV incidents are recorded on the CAD system, but DV cases are then managed on a stand-alone DV database. There is no integration of these systems, nor do they interact with other force systems and databases.
- The DVU administration worker routinely trawls CAD as a means of ensuring that incidents have been classified, coded and/or closed properly, and chases up those for which a referral form has not been received. Administrative staff reported that CDC and front-line officers do not always identify the DV element of many incidents, such as disorder in the street, assaults and harassment.
- Advocacy workers complete safety plans for DV victims, but unless they feature a high-risk case they are not routinely seen by the DVU DSs. They are paper documents and are not recorded on the DV database.
- All paper copies of DV referral forms go from the support worker directly to the BCU DVU DS, who then conducts an initial risk assessment based on the content of that document. This is the first stage at which a formal risk assessment is carried out. While it is acknowledged that CDC and front-line staff do carry out an element of risk identification, this does not appear to be routinely recorded and there is sometimes a considerable delay in completing a formal risk assessment.
- There is concern about the workload of the DVU DSs, particularly at the BCU visited during the inspection, who covers two offices, at Great Yarmouth and North Walsham. DVU DSs are responsible for signing off all initial risk assessments and entering them onto the DVU database. This represents a significantly high workload when covering two offices and the demands of other supervisory functions. If the DS is away, the responsibility for completing risk assessments falls to a DC or constable on the unit, if they are available. This is an area of high risk for the force.
- If an offender is arrested following initial attendance at an incident, there is no routine means of informing the DVU. This means that the DVU support worker has to check the custody database on a daily basis.
- After conducting the initial risk assessment, the DS marks up any action required, including a phone call or contact if a repeat victim is involved. When the actions are completed a remove/avoid/reduce/accept assessment is carried out. The DS signs off all such assessments, which are also entered on the DVU database and the paper copy filed. This process entails duplication, both in double-keying and in the maintenance of both electronic and paper records.

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- A lack of corporacy is apparent in the roles of the DVUs across the force.
- Control room staff do not routinely receive feedback on the quality of their call taking.
- The force has a risk identification/assessment/management chart which is very concise and clear. It is uncertain, however, who actually receives and uses this document – although it records an overall process, it would be of considerable use to front-line staff.
- There is little scope for the DS in each DVU to check/monitor all DVU database entries as cases progress, primarily because the database does not allow a search on recent entries or entries made over a specific timescale.

RECOMMENDATION

The rationale for the current establishment of domestic violence units in the three areas should be reviewed as a matter of urgency to underpin it with objective evidence.

Protecting Vulnerable People – Public Protection

GRADE	GOOD
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National grade distribution

Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
2	16	23	2

National contextual factors

The Criminal Justice and Courts Services Act 2000 led to the formation of the Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements, commonly known as MAPPA, requiring the police and probation services to work together as the Responsible Authority in each area of England and Wales to establish and review the arrangements for the assessment and management of sexual and violent offenders. Subsequent legislation brought the Prison Service into the Responsible Authority arrangements and also requires a range of social care agencies to co-operate with the Responsible Authority in the delivery of the assessment and management of risk in this area. These agencies include health, housing, education, social services, youth offending teams, Jobcentre Plus, and electronic monitoring services.

Under MAPPA, there are three categories of offender who are considered to pose a risk of serious harm:

Category 1 – Registered Sex Offenders (RSOs)

Category 2 – violent and other sex offenders

Category 3 – other offenders (with convictions that indicate they are capable of causing, and pose a risk of, serious harm).

To be managed under MAPPA, offenders must have received a conviction or caution. However, there are some people who have not been convicted or cautioned for any offence, and thus fall outside these categories, but whose behaviour nonetheless gives reasonable ground for believing a present likelihood of them committing an offence that will cause serious harm. These people are termed Potentially Dangerous Persons (PDPs).

Following risk assessment, risk management involves the use of strategies by various agencies to reduce the risk, at three levels:

- Level 1 offenders can be managed by one agency;
- Level 2 offenders require the active involvement of more than one agency;
- Level 3 offenders – the ‘critical few’ – are generally deemed to pose a high or very high risk and are managed by a multi-agency public protection panel (MAPPP).

In 2003, the Home Secretary issued MAPPA guidance to consolidate what has already been achieved since the introduction of the MAPPA in 2001 and to address a need for greater consistency in MAPPA practice. The guidance outlines four considerations that are key to the delivery of effective public protection.

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- defensible decisions;
- rigorous risk assessment;
- the delivery of risk management plans which match the identified public protection need; and,
- the evaluation of performance to improve delivery.

Contextual factors

The PPU sits within the overall FPU structure and consists of a DI, two DSs and nine DCs (who are now termed sex offender managers). This approach is relatively new – previously, two of the DCs were intelligence officers tasked with completing initial risk assessment and other intelligence-related tasks, while the other officers carried out the visits to registered sex offenders (RSOs). The dedicated sex offender managers work together within a centralised PPU; administrative support is provided by one full-time and one part-time administrator. One further full-time administrator works in the force intelligence bureau (FIB) providing the intelligence link between the PPU and the FIB in order to comply with NIM issues.

A separate MAPPA unit sits within the FPU; although located in the same building as the PPU and working closely with it, it is an independent team. The MAPPA management team includes probation service staff, who have direct access to probation IT systems and can thus be more effective in sharing information. The team consists of a manager, a deputy manager and two administrative staff. It receives referrals from all agencies, including – but not restricted to – the police and the probation service. All referrals are screened and risk-assessed; the relevant risk level/category is then assigned and the FPU arranges invitations to MAPPA meetings.

In April 2007, Norfolk Constabulary held 677 RSO, of whom 150 were in custody and a small proportion were living abroad. The total officer caseload is approximately 76, with 59 RSOs managed in the community. Currently, the PPU visit regime for RSOs is that low-risk offenders are visited every twelve months, medium-risk offenders every six months, high-risk offenders every three months, and very high-risk offenders every month. These visit frequencies are reviewed regularly and amended in response to any changes in the level of risk.

The specific comments in this section should be read in conjunction with those contained in the generic protecting vulnerable people section of the report.

Strengths

- A comprehensive SOP explicitly sets out the accountability structure pertaining to public protection work. The SOP also details policy in respect of how RSOs are managed, incorporating: the role of the PPU in the wider constabulary; performance management; resourcing; resilience; the visiting regime; the dissemination of information on RSOs; and the recruitment/staff development policy within the department.
- There is a clear line of access to the ACPO portfolio lead (the DCC) if situations

arise that require ACPO involvement and support.

- The MAPPA strategic management board consists of representatives from the police, the probation service and the prison service and the role of chair rotates every two years. The senior representatives meet on a monthly basis to ensure business continuity. Requirements for the establishment of subgroups are considered and actioned, with two such groups in place to cater for policy and procedure and for quality assurance.
- The funding arrangement for MAPPA ensures an appropriate degree of independence in that funding is sourced from a separate MAPPA budget, supplemented by contributions from the force, the probation service, the youth offending service, children's services and adult services.
- The MAPPA management team includes probation service staff who have direct access to probation IT systems, which in turn facilitates effective information sharing. The team consists of a manager, a deputy manager and two administration staff. MAPPA working arrangements across the county are strong and well co-ordinated; the dedicated MAPPA chair sits as part of the FPU management team.
- All PPU staff are either ICIDP-qualified or working towards accreditation. All but one of the sex offender managers have attended the national 'Management of high-risk offenders' course, with the remaining officer due to attend the next available course.
- Training requirements for PPU staff are identified and planned through the PDR process and courses are factored into the force training programme.
- The force has a mandatory referral system, termed Proactive Support, which requires staff to attend counselling every three months. The occupational health department keeps records of attendance and informs supervisors if officers do not comply with attendance requirements, recommending the removal of staff members from their current role until they have attended. Other facilities are available to all staff, including access to an occupational health nurse, medical advisers and cognitive behaviour therapists.
- There is strong police authority involvement across the PVP arena, including regular dialogue and contact with the force. The authority is sighted on overall targets – for example, its performance and policy officer reports to it on the status of RSO visits.
- New staff to the department receive a 'welcome pack' and are formally mentored.
- Public protection features in the force control strategy.
- The risk of unauthorised or unwarranted database checks by staff to identify RSOs is managed through monitoring by the professional standards department (PSD); any such searches are flagged so that if an officer conducts a blanket check of the force intelligence system to identify RSOs in a particular area, the PSD is automatically aware.
- PPU staff are trained to level 2 in respect of foot surveillance to facilitate evidence gathering. While this is a positive move, the force must consider the extent to which PPU staff are used to conduct surveillance on RSOs, as their training is restricted to level 2 and surveillance represents a significant drain on resources.

- Supervision within the PPU is robust and supportive. The entire PPU team works from the same location, which facilitates intrusive supervision. The DS and/or DI sign off initial Risk Matrix 2000 risk assessments and endorse risk management plans. This routinely extends beyond simple endorsement through signature to include the addition of comments and advice.
- The cross-flow of intelligence from PPU across the force works well, and PPU staff add intelligence from visits or other sources to ViSOR. This is forwarded to the PPU administrator in the FIB, who ensures that the intelligence is added to the force intelligence system.
- All new recruits to the FPU and DVUs are subject to enhanced CRB checks and also psychologically tested. Existing FPU staff have undergone enhanced CRB checks to ensure corporacy across the unit.
- All RSOs, MAPPA cases and PDPs are marked with a flag on the CIS. The CIS has only recently gone live and this process continues through the dedicated PPU administrator located in the FIB.
- There are mechanisms in place to identify and review risk and ensure that it is appropriately assessed. PPU officers carry out a range of checks in advance of each visit to an RSO and undertake a risk assessment. Such assessments are signed and endorsed by a PPU supervisor, as are ViSOR activity logs. Risk management plans are then also overseen and agreed by supervisors.
- Force policy outlines the rationale for PPU staffing levels, based upon a number of factors including workload. The staffing levels of the PPU are to be reviewed every year by the DCC in consultation with the head of crime command and the head of the FPU.
- A staffing resilience policy exists to ensure consistency of staffing within the PPU. Areas of potential risk are identified and catered for, examples being routine absences through leave/courses/sickness and other abstractions. Details of the processes involved in the management of these risks are incorporated within the policy.
- Job descriptions for PPU staff are accurate and up-to-date.
- The performance information relating to PPU visits to RSOs are fed to area managers on a monthly basis.
- The PPU performance management framework measures include maintenance of visiting regime, staff management (sickness/abstractions), arrests and enforcement action, submission of intelligence bulletins, joint working opportunities with the probation service, MAPPA attendance and actions, repeat offending, supervisory actions on risk plans and defensible decision making.
- There is evidence of PPU staff working closely with both child protection and DV officers. Furthermore, there are established mechanisms whereby PPU staff can seek intelligence and information from the wider force regarding individual RSOs.

Work in progress

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- A proposal to deal with PDPs is currently before MAPPAs. Each case will be managed by whichever agency initially identifies the PDP; the police lead will be the head of the FPU. It is acknowledged that the agencies will not be working under the MAPPAs structure but will draw upon the expertise of MAPPAs members in respect of risk management. Any lessons learnt will be fed through the MAPPAs policy and procedure subgroup.
- The independent dedicated MAPPAs unit works in the same building as the PPU, facilitating very close links. It receives referrals from all agencies, including the police, the probation service etc, and is developing service level expectations to define timescales for the referral process and other actions.
- An information-sharing agreement, catering for the interaction between MAPPAs and MARACs, is currently in draft format.
- The PPU adopted the ViSOR interim solution and was then an early adopter of ViSOR in Autumn 2004. All ViSOR data was migrated from the interim solution; however, the force is still undergoing a data cleansing process, including the populating of specific ViSOR information fields. The PPU is progressing this operation, which was scheduled for completion by July 2007.
- In order to ensure that all PPU staff are Risk Matrix 2000-trained, the force paid for accredited trainers from the Metropolitan Police Service to deliver the appropriate course in early July 2007.
- To promote a greater awareness of ViSOR across the force, the PPU has embarked upon a campaign aimed at all staff, particularly operational officers, entitled 'Be ViSOR wiser'.
- Only Category 1 MAPPAs offenders are recorded on the ViSOR system. As part of a live review process, the force is considering whether Category 2 and Category 3 offenders will be managed in the same way in the future.

Areas for improvement

- Force policy states that two officers at a time should visit each RSO, but there is evidence that this does not happen in every case and that on a small number of occasions staff are undertaking lone visits to RSOs. In such instances, the RSO visited is always in a lower risk category and a detailed risk assessment, in accordance with guidelines, is conducted in advance.
- Staff carrying out visits to RSOs do not routinely inform the force control room of their whereabouts. Although the PPU supervisor will have a general idea as to their location and planned activity, there is scope for improvement in this area to ensure that staff are not placed in potentially risky situations.
- To ensure that the RSO visiting schedule is maintained, two members of the major incident team have been loaned to the PPU. These officers have received awareness training from PPU staff and only carry out visits in company with a fully trained PPU officer. While this is a positive move to meet increasing demands upon PPU staff, exacerbated by the additional challenge of being centrally based yet

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covering a large geographical area, the force should nevertheless ensure that it complies with recently introduced policy to review the resilience and capacity of the PPU on an annual basis.

- Response officers are only made aware that they are attending an incident involving a RSO if control room staff check the force intelligence system in advance. This is most likely to occur if the incident features the RSO as a potential offender, but less so if he/she is contacting the force as a victim.
- While the flow of intelligence from the PPU to the CIS is clear, the process governing the opposite route is less evident. All CIS information goes on an intelligence log which is submitted to the respective AIU or in some cases directly to FIB. If the intelligence relates to an RSO then this will be highlighted at the point of input onto the CIS, as each ViSOR nominal is flagged. This will then be forwarded to a PPU inbox on the CIS which is managed by the PPU administrator in the FIB. While it is evident that all intelligence in the PPU inbox reaches the ViSOR system, there is some doubt as to whether all intelligence received by AIUs finds its way into the PPU inbox.
- Abstractions from the PPU, such as sickness and training absences, are not always covered, which often results in visits not taking place and a backlog developing. However, PPU staff have been used to cover abstractions from the CPU for officers on ICIDP courses. There is a need for the force to identify necessary abstractions across the board and ensure that they are effectively managed. Recent implementation of policy should serve to address this issue.
- Concern was expressed by a number of PPU staff over perceived problems in communication between police and partners. Examples were given of the probation service informing police of issues at the last minute, or when risk was imminent. The inspection found no evidence to suggest that this is happening routinely; however, even a small number of cases have the potential to undermine an otherwise productive working relationship.
- Reviews of risk are generally triggered by offender managers themselves. While such reviews must be entered on a risk management plan – previously approved by a supervisor – the unilateral nature of reviewing risk in the first place needs to be re-examined to include documented discussions with supervisors or colleagues who are perhaps not as familiar with the RSO as the offender manager may be, thereby adding more objectivity to the process.

Protecting Vulnerable People – Missing Persons

GRADE	FAIR
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National grade distribution

Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
1	21	21	0

National contextual factors

Each year, thousands of people are reported to police as missing. Many have done so voluntarily and are safe from harm, whether or not they return home. But a number are vulnerable, because of age or health concerns, and the police service has developed well-honed systems to respond swiftly and effectively to such cases. For obvious reasons, missing children arouse particular concern, and many forces deploy 'Child Rescue Alert' to engage the media in publicising such cases. Key good practice in this framework are early recognition of critical incident potential, effective supervision of enquiries, the use of NIM problem profiles and other intelligence techniques to analyse repeat locations (eg, children's homes), and the use of an IT-based investigation tracking system such as COMPACT.

Contextual factors

The force requires officers to adopt a thorough approach to the investigation of missing persons and strives to ensure an appropriate response in every case; force policy is clear about the procedure to be adopted each time. A full record is created on the dedicated IT system, COMPACT; a risk assessment is carried out, the outcome of which informs the nature and scale of the force's response; the Police National Missing Persons Bureau (PNMPB) is informed; and the PNC and Missing People (formerly the National Missing Persons Helpline (NMPH)) are automatically notified via the COMPACT system. A supervisory detective is made aware of any cases identified as high risk.

Force policy also outlines a process, drawn from a protocol with social services, for those cases where a person is reported to be missing from care; a separate process exists for cases involving children who are reported missing. This incorporates the use of Child Rescue Alert, a system whereby the media is used to draw attention to missing children in appropriate cases.

A 'Professionalising the Investigation of Missing Persons' project board has been in place for over two years; it has overseen the review of policy and has ensured full compliance with ACPO/NCOPE guidance on the investigation of missing persons.

Strengths

- The force requires officers to adopt a thorough approach to the investigation of missing persons and strives to ensure an appropriate response in every case; force policy is clear about the procedure to be adopted each time. A full record is created on the dedicated IT system, Community Policing and Case Tracking (COMPACT); a

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risk assessment is carried out, the outcome of which will inform the nature and scale of the force's response; the Police National Missing Persons Bureau is informed; and the PNC and National Missing Persons Helpline are automatically notified via the COMPACT system. A supervisory detective is made aware of any case identified as high-risk.

- Force policy also outlines a process, drawn from a protocol with social services, for those cases where a person is reported to be missing from care; a separate process exists for cases involving children who are reported missing. This incorporates the use of Child Rescue Alert, a system whereby the media is used to draw attention to missing children in appropriate cases.
- A 'professionalising the investigation of missing persons' project board has been in place for over two years, and has overseen the review of policy and ensured full compliance with ACPO/National Centre for Policing Excellence guidance on the investigation of missing persons.
- The force has recently introduced the COMPACT system as an electronic means of managing missing person enquiries; officers using the system have found it to be user-friendly.
- Clear lines of accountability exist in respect of missing person investigations, with ultimate responsibility resting with BCU commanders. The on-call duty superintendent has responsibility for any out-of-hours missing person matters.
- Performance information in respect of missing persons is made available to the DCC, who holds portfolio responsibility in this area.
- ACPO guidance on the management, recording and investigation of missing persons is embedded in force policy; the policy is accessible through the FPU section of the force intranet. The inspection found evidence of good awareness of the policy, its content and location among front-line staff at all levels.
- The policy lead for missing persons conducts regular audits of investigations.
- The process for identifying, recording and assessing risk begins in the force control room when an initial report is received. Risk assessments are validated by a control room supervisor before being allocated to an officer for further enquires. Patrol sergeants are responsible for reassessing risk on an ongoing basis.
- The COMPACT system generates an automatic review after 24 hours, although supervisors can amend this to set different review periods. An individual officer can override the initial risk assessment generated by the COMPACT system but risk can only be downgraded by a supervisor.
- All staff displayed a sound awareness of the potential for missing person enquiries to develop into critical incidents and/or murder enquiries. Control room staff have received critical incident awareness training and control room supervisors have additionally undertaken two days of relevant training.
- All missing person enquiries are reviewed and discussed at BCU daily management meetings.
- Depending on the level of risk, all missing persons are reviewed by an officer of

inspector rank at least once in every 24-hour period.

- Central Area has developed a protocol with a local hospital to manage and deal with missing persons; this has led to a decrease in calls for service and has potential for force-wide benefit.

Work in progress

- The force is seeking to establish standardised procedures, and develop solutions such as multi-agency intervention plans, for frequently missing young persons. Furthermore, there are plans to create a process whereby repeat juvenile missing young persons are identified from referral form submissions.
- In accordance with the force vulnerable persons action plan, a 'crib sheet' is being developed for circulation which outlines individual roles and responsibilities in respect of missing person investigations.
- An action plan is in place to ensure that each area nominates a single point of contact for missing persons.
- An action plan is in place to review the COMPACT system to ensure its MoPI compliance.
- A patrol directory supplement on missing person investigation was published in July 2007.
- The force is developing plans to dip-sample medium- and low-risk missing person investigations from each area on a monthly basis, and an audit sheet is being created to provide feedback.

Areas for improvement

- A number of officers pointed to 'teething troubles' with the COMPACT system, such as being unable to access the system. Staff have received a distance learning package through the force intranet, but knowledge of the system is variable.
- There is uncertainty regarding the use of the old paper-based missing person form. Officers attend scenes to record further details and commence an investigation, but there is evidence of officers still filling in a missing person form and taking it back to the station to form the basis of the COMPACT entry. The force should provide and communicate clear direction on this issue, to avoid the creation of a parallel paper-based record.
- Supervisors have received little or no formal training in risk identification.
- Sergeants and supervisors do not routinely check and sign completed missing person enquiry logs on the COMPACT system.
- The COMPACT system can generate bureaucracy. An example was provided where a missing person was located in custody, yet the investigating officer was still required to fill out a number of sections on the COMPACT system with the words 'in custody' before they were allowed to close the enquiry.

Recommendation

Recommendation

The rationale for the current establishment of domestic violence units in the three areas should be reviewed as a matter of urgency to underpin it with objective evidence.

Appendix: Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations

A

ABC	Acceptable Behaviour Contract
ACPO	Association of Chief Police Officers
AIU	Area intelligence unit
APU	Adult protection unit
ASB	Anti-social behaviour

B

BCU	Basic command unit
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C

CAD	computer aided despatch
CATS	Case administration tracking system
CDC	Contact and despatch centre
CDRP	Crime and disorder reduction partnership
CIS	Crime intelligence system
COG	Chief officer group
COMPACT	Community Policing and Case Tracking
CPS	Crown Prosecution Service
CPU	Child protection unit
CRB	Criminal Records Bureau
CRD	Central referral desk

D

DC	Detective constable
DCC	Deputy chief constable
DCI	Detective chief inspector
DI	Detective inspector

DS Detective sergeant
DV Domestic violence
DVU Domestic violence unit

F

FIB Force intelligence bureau
FPU Family protection unit

G

GNN Government News Network

H

HMI Her Majesty's inspector
HMIC Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary
HR Human resources

I

ICIDP Initial Crime Investigators' Development Programme
IMPACT Intelligence management, prioritisation, analysis, co-ordination and tasking
INI IMPACT nominal index
IT Information technology

L

LADO Local authority designated officer
LPSA Local public service agreement

M

MAPPA Multi-agency public protection arrangements
MARAC Multi-agency risk assessment conference
MELO Minority ethnic liaison officer

MoPI Management of Police Information

N

NIM National Intelligence Model

O

OCC Operations and communications centre

P

PCSO Police community support officer

PDP Potentially dangerous person

PDR Performance development review

PNC Police National Computer

POLSA Police search advisor

PPU Public protection unit

PRINCE Projects in Controlled Environments

PSD Professional standards department

PSG Problem-solving group

PTCG Partnership tasking and co-ordination group

PVP Protecting vulnerable people

R

RSO Registered sex offender

S

SGC Specific Grading Criteria

SNT Safer neighbourhood team

SOP Standard operating procedure

SPI Statutory performance indicator

T

TTCG Tactical tasking and co-ordination group

V

ViSOR Violent and Sex Offenders Register