Policing in austerity: One year on

July 2012

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Contents

Executive summary

Police forces have risen to the financial challenge, cutting their spending while largely maintaining the service they provide the public; but HMIC has some concerns about how long this will last, as there are gaps in one force's plans, and most need to transform their efficiency in preparation for future spending reviews.

In spring 2011 Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) carried out an inspection into the preparedness of forces and authorities across England and Wales to make savings over the four years of the spending review period (2011/12–2014/15). We provided an independent commentary on the estimated scale of the challenge, and on how forces and authorities planned to meet it. The results were published in *Adapting to Austerity*.[1]

In this report we shine a light on whether forces and authorities have achieved their goals for the Year 1 of the spending review, and on how they now plan to meet the remaining challenge as they enter Year 2 (2012/13).

Our review contains data and analysis which enables the public, their elected representatives and the police to see how their force compares with others.

Key findings

HMIC found that:

- Forces are balancing their books by cutting the workforce and reducing their spending on goods and services;

- The front line is being protected, although not preserved;

- The nature of the front line is changing;

- Service to the public has largely been maintained; but

- There are some concerns around sustainability.

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[1] HMIC (2011) *Adapting to Austerity*. Available from www.hmic.gov.uk

Forces are balancing their books by cutting the workforce and reducing their spending on goods and services

Force data showed that they needed to save £768m by the end of Year 1 (March 2012). They planned to balance the books by reducing their workforces by 17,600[2] posts (between March 2010 and March 2012), cutting their spending on goods and services by around £185m[3] and using over £28m of their reserves.

By the end of Year 4 (March 2015), forces plan to reduce their workforces by 32,400 (including at least 15,000 officers), and to cut their spending on goods and services by around £474m. This reduces their bottom line. Most forces can then balance the books by using reserves; but there is still a shortfall of £302m in the total amount of savings (£2.4bn) required by 2014/15. Closing this gap may mean a further reduction in police staff or officer numbers.

It is important to note that the Metropolitan Police Service's (MPS's) residual funding gap represents £233m of the total £302m shortfall, and the force does not yet have a developed plan to resolve this. While £233m only represents around 6% of the MPS budget, it has to be found against a background of high crime rates and low victim satisfaction levels in the London area. Both the Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime and the MPS Commissioner have declared a firm intention to deal with the issue, and are currently developing their approach.

Just under 20% of police budgets are spent on goods and services such as IT, facilities management, uniform and equipment. Forces plan to make 24% of their savings from these non-pay costs across the spending review period: but this figure masks significant variation across England and Wales (from 8% to over 50%[4]). This may be because forces start from different places (i.e. some had already slimmed down their spending on goods and services before the spending review period, and so find it difficult to cut back more); some are tied into existing contracts; and some are saving more money than others through collaborating in areas such as IT (see p.8 below).

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[2] This is the planned workforce reduction from March 2010 to March 2012. Workforce numbers for 2012 will be confirmed when the national statistics are published in July. Forces started to reduce the size of their workforce in 2010/11 in preparation for the spending review cuts. In order to reflect this, and give a clearer picture of overall workforce reductions across England and Wales, we have taken March 2010 for our starting point in assessing the impact of the spending review on the workforce.

[3] This does not include data from all forces: one was unable to split savings between pay and non-pay, and two are currently not projecting planning to make any non-pay savings.

[4] See n.3 for three forces excluded from this total.

The front line is being protected, although not preserved…

HMIC defines the police front line as 'those who are in everyday contact with the public and who directly intervene to keep people safe and enforce the law'.[5]

We would expect forces to concentrate on:

- making savings from non-frontline areas first – and especially from the back office, which comprises functions like finance, human resources and IT; and

- restructuring so that the greatest possible proportion of their workforce (and especially officers) are in frontline, crime-fighting roles.

Our review indicates that this is happening: on average, forces plan to reduce frontline workforce[6] numbers by 6% and non-frontline workforce numbers by 33% between March 2010 and March 2015; and over the same period, they will cut frontline officer numbers by 6%, and non-frontline officer numbers by 42%.[7]

Number and proportion of total workforce on the front line

HMIC found that the size of the workforce will be smaller, but more of those who remain workforce will be in frontline roles. Forces plans show that they aim to **increase the proportion** of their total workforce on the front line, from two-thirds in March 2010 to almost three-quarters in March 2015 (67% to 74%). At the same time however, the frontline workforce will still shrink by 6%, or 8,100 posts.

Number and proportion of police officers in frontline roles

Forces will also increase the proportion of officers on the front line, from 83% in March 2010 to 89% by March 2015. Almost half plan to have more than 90% of their officers in frontline roles by March 2015. However, this percentage varies from force to force, and overall forces currently plan to have **6%** or 5,800 fewer officers in frontline roles.

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[5] This definition was developed with ACPO and the Association of Police Authorities. See HMIC (2011) *Demanding Times.* Available from www.hmic.gov.uk. For more on how roles are divided between the front and non front line, see Annex A.

[6] The police workforce comprises police officers, police community support officers (PCSOs) and police staff.

[7] The Metropolitan Police Service and Cheshire Constabulary were unable to provide frontline data for all years and so are excluded.

In addition, plugging the outstanding £302m funding gap (see p.4 above) might require a further reduction of officer numbers.

Number and proportion of police officers in non-frontline roles

Forces plan to reduce the number of police officers in non-front line roles from 17,900[8] in March 2010 to 10,300 by March 2015, equivalent to a reduction of **42%**. In particular, they intend to cut the number of officers in back office roles such as training – although again, there is some variation between forces.

HMIC acknowledges that we might expect police officers to carry out some non-frontline functions:

- Much non-frontline activity constitutes the behind-the-scenes elements of specialist and middle office work (such as 30% of criminal investigations and 60% of intelligence work) where officers' operational knowledge is required.

- In *Adapting to Austerity*[9] we set out other good reasons why forces assign officers to non-frontline roles. These included ensuring there are supervisors with operational experience; providing resilience (as officers can be ordered to work on any task); and using officers in business critical roles (as they are prohibited from striking). Specialist training such as firearms and investigative skills may be best delivered by operational experts. In addition, often officers who are injured and recuperating or have other restrictions to what they can do are assigned to non-frontline duties.

However, we remain concerned that some forces could do more to protect their front line. We will look at this issue more closely later in 2012.

… and the nature of the frontline is changing

Fundamentally the operating model of British policing is unaltered. However, HMIC found that as forces plan to reduce the frontline by 2,700 officers in Year 1 of the spending review they are changing how it is structured:

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[8] This excludes the MPS and Cheshire (see n.7 above). If they are included, the 2010 baseline is 24,600 non-frontline police officers, projected to fall to 17,300 by 2013.

[9] HMIC (2011) *Adapting to Austerity*, p.23. Available from www.hmic.gov.uk

- **Divisions between local response, investigation and community teams are becoming less distinct**, and officers are increasingly expected to carry out a wider range of activity. For instance, while there are now 2,300 more neighbourhood police officers,[10] neighbourhood teams are responding to calls (as response functions have reduced by 5,200 police officers[11]) or doing some investigative work – functions which previously would have been the remit of response or CID officers respectively. This approach may allow these teams to manage peaks in workloads more efficiently (particularly in rural areas where larger distances mean it is harder to bring in people quickly to cover unpredicted demand): but some have identified a potential risk to the ability of neighbourhood policing teams to carry out their regular community duties[12] in the face of more immediate demands like responding to calls for help or investigating crimes.

- Local restructures have also meant that forces plan an **extra 6% of spending in investigation teams** which are less visible to the public (although again, these officers may carry out other roles as well).

- HMIC found a planned **9% increase of spending in public protection roles** (such as the management of sex offenders and child protection), as demand in these areas continues to increase.

- **More efficient working practices** are being implemented to try and ensure that fewer officers can continue to carry out the tasks the public expect of them (such as visibly patrolling communities, responding to incidents, and investigating crime). Forces are using technology (such as mobile devices), different approaches (e.g. single patrolling to increase the ground covered per officer), and in some cases collaboration with other forces and private sector partners to make their resources stretch further. They are closing police station front counters that are not well used and instead sharing accommodation or providing services online.

Another potential key change is the planned increase in the use of special constables to extend forces' frontline capacity. Forces plan to recruit around **9,000 volunteer**

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[10] Between March 2010 and February 2012.

[11] Between March 2010 and February 2012.

[12] Such as reassurance roles and local problem solving, which have contributed much to addressing local crime concerns and ASB.

special constables by 2014/15 (an increase of 58% from March 2010). Specials are already being used effectively in frontline areas (such as response) at busy times. If the public join up in these numbers, it will provide further flexibility and resilience for police forces.

These changes are taking place to varying degrees across forces; some are not fully implemented; and the effects of many are still to be felt. HMIC characterises forces' approach as incremental, or one step at time. However, there is **no agreed view on the overall effect of these incremental changes on the police operating model** now, or on how that model should transform to deal with the real likelihood of extended austerity beyond this spending review. This is a significant concern to HMIC, and we are currently studying the potential to increase the ability of individual constables to operate as more productive independent professionals in the field, enabled by much stronger knowledge, technology and support.

Collaboration and partnering

Both the pace and extent of collaboration activity are increasing, [13] with forces saving money by working jointly with each other, with other public organisations and with the private sector. Forces plan to make £169m of **savings from collaboration**[14] over the spending review period, which equates to 11% of the savings requirement; but this varies from force to force – from a marginal level of saving to over half. Forces are planning to collaborate across a broad range of functions and by 2014/15 around a sixth of policing will be delivered through collaboration but again this varies from force to force. However, the overall increases in collaboration currently planned are relatively small, rising from 16% of net revenue expenditure (NRE) in 2011/12 to 17% in 2014/15.

Collaboration currently includes alliance with public and private sector bodies. Some services (such as custody services) are already contracted out; a few forces (including Cleveland and Lincolnshire) have contracted out significant elements of operational support services (for instance, control rooms and front counter services). Public–private partnerships have been floated as a prospect for transformation but have generated debate and concern on issues such as the resilience of the public service to industrial action; what framework is most likely to secure good contracts for the taxpayer; what

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[13] See HMIC (2012) *Increasing Efficiency in the Police Service: The role of collaboration.* Available from www.hmic.gov.uk

[14] Excluding the Metropolitan Police Service.

specific benefits in saving money and improving services the public can reasonably expect from large-scale partnerships; and clarity on which elements of policing remain in the public realm.

Service to the public has been largely maintained

HMIC looked at the impact of making savings on key areas of interest to the public, including crime levels; user satisfaction; visibility of local policing services; and how responsive the police are when the public seek assistance.

Overall **crime levels** fell by 3% between years ending December 2010 and December 2011 (although there have been rises in some offence categories, and results vary from force to force). At the same time, the overall level of victim **satisfaction** among members of the public who have contacted the police increased from 83.4% to 83.9%[15] – although again, this varied between forces. HMIC analysed changes in overall crime and whether there was any link with the scale of the budget reduction, this revealed no significant correlation. Similarly, there is no evidence of a correlation between the change in number of officers and the change in total recorded crime.

The level of **satisfaction among victims** who contacted the police specifically about ASB has also increased, with some improvement in all forces.[16] Between March 2010 and March 2013 75% of the workforce reductions are planned to have occurred: satisfaction trends over the next year will be critical in assessing what impact this will have.

HMIC also looked for any changes in the **visibility and availability** of the police in 2011/12.[17] Although both the number and the proportion of officers in visible and available roles has declined slightly,[18] a survey of 1,322 members of the general public conducted as part of this review found that the majority of respondents had noticed no

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[15] This is a statistically significant increase.

[16] See HMIC (2012) *A Step in the Right Direction: The policing of anti-social behaviour.* Available from www.hmic.gov.uk.

[17] This is a repeat of a survey we conducted in December 2010. See HMIC (2011) *Demanding Times* (available from www.hmic.gov.uk). In *Adapting to Austerity* we also found that although there is good evidence to suggest that a total lack of police presence leads to an increase in crime, a direct link between police numbers and crime is less well evidenced (although how they are deployed does have an impact). See HMIC (2011) *Adapting to Austerity*. Available from www.hmic.gov.uk

[18] Projected numbers will fall by 5,500, representing a 0.5% decline – although there are data limitations.

change in how often they saw the police on a day-to-day basis.[19] While forces still have a greater proportion of their officers and PCSOs visible and available on a Monday morning than on a Friday night/Saturday morning,[20] their response officers (those responding to 999 calls) are now more visible and available at this time.

Based on a small sample of calls examined as part of this review, the majority of forces are not taking longer to **respond to emergency calls**, despite the reduction in response officer numbers. However, the way the **public access policing services** is changing, with current plans suggesting 260 front counters in police stations will close between March 2010 and March 2015, but opening 140 other locations where the police will be based in buildings such as libraries and supermarkets (figures rounded). All forces have a presence on **social media**; and while all also provide some web-based services, the range of facilities varies.

HMIC has some concerns around sustainability

Forces started in different places (in terms of the financial ask and their operating context); and decisions made locally have led to further variations in terms of their outputs (such as the size of the front line and the proportion of officers visible and available to the public) and their outcomes (crime and user satisfaction). HMIC has put together information on a range of efficiency and effectiveness indicators for each force (included at Annex B) which forces can use to compare themselves against others.

HMIC's inspection process was risk-based. We therefore considered forces' financial plans and operational contexts in assessing if any gave us cause for concern. We were looking for multiple issues, such as:

- forces planning to have a smaller proportion of frontline officers than other forces, with more officers in the non-front line, while crime levels in their area are increasing;

- forces planning to cut a larger proportion of police officer roles than other forces, and to have fewer officers on the front line, with more in non-front line roles; or

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[19] Full survey results are published on the HMIC website, at www.hmic.gov.uk/data.

[20] Samples taken at 09:00 on Monday morning and 00:30 on Saturday morning.

- forces still drawing up their plans for delivering spending review savings, while some crimes (such as burglary and robbery) are increasing in their area, and user satisfaction levels are comparatively low.

The forces that give us concern for these reasons are discussed in Chapter 6. Of these, the Metropolitan Police Service currently presents the most significant level of both financial and performance issues; and as the biggest force in England and Wales, it is therefore of the greatest concern.

Next steps

HMIC recommends that all forces and authorities consider the data and analysis contained within this report, to see how their efficiency and effectiveness compares with others. Annex B sets out a package of efficiency indicators that may help forces to make this comparison.

We will continue to monitor the efficiency and effectiveness of all forces – but particularly those we have identified as presenting multiple causes for concern. As per our 2012/13 business plan, we intend to develop a further round of inspections. In particular we will:

- do further work on the constable as an independent practitioner;

- follow up on issue of police officers in the non-frontline and back office; and

- work with the NAO to inspect a major force procurement, in order to identify good practice and learning from collaboration with the private sector in the context of austerity (with the aim of publishing the results in autumn 2012).

Introduction

In spring 2011, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) carried out an inspection into the preparedness of forces and authorities across England and Wales to make savings over the four years of the spending review period (2011/12–2014/15). We provided an independent commentary on the estimated scale of the challenge, and on how forces and authorities planned to meet it. The results were published in *Adapting to Austerity*.[21]

HMIC committed at the time to carrying out:

> *'A revisit of force plans… This will focus on the progress forces are making in determining how they will achieve their cuts… and how well those forces that face the greatest challenges are doing.'*

HMIC (2011) *Adapting to Austerity*, p.8

This report fulfils this commitment, and reviews:

- how far forces and authorities have achieved their plans at the end of the first year of the spending review;

- how they now plan to meet the remaining challenge as they enter Year 2;

- the effects that implementing these plans have had (and continue to have) on the police workforce[22] – and particularly on the front line; and

- the effects on the service provided to the public.

Data and methodology

This report includes analysis which enables the public, their elected representatives and the police to see how their force compares with others. The underlying data, together with individual reports which outline findings for each force, are available from www.hmic.gov.uk. A full methodology is available at Annex C.

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[21] HMIC (2011) *Adapting to Austerity*. Available from www.hmic.gov.uk

[22] The police workforce comprises police officers, police community support officers (PCSOs) and police staff.

1. The financial challenge: Balancing the books

How wide is the funding gap?[23]

In July 2011, forces reported that they needed to find **£2.1bn[24]** between March 2010 and March 2015 in order to manage the 20% real cut in the central Government funding and the rising costs of pay, fuel, utilities and other inflation. Data collected in February 2012 shows this estimate has increased to **£2.4bn**.[25]

Figure 1. Financial challenge: change from 2011 plans to 2012 plans
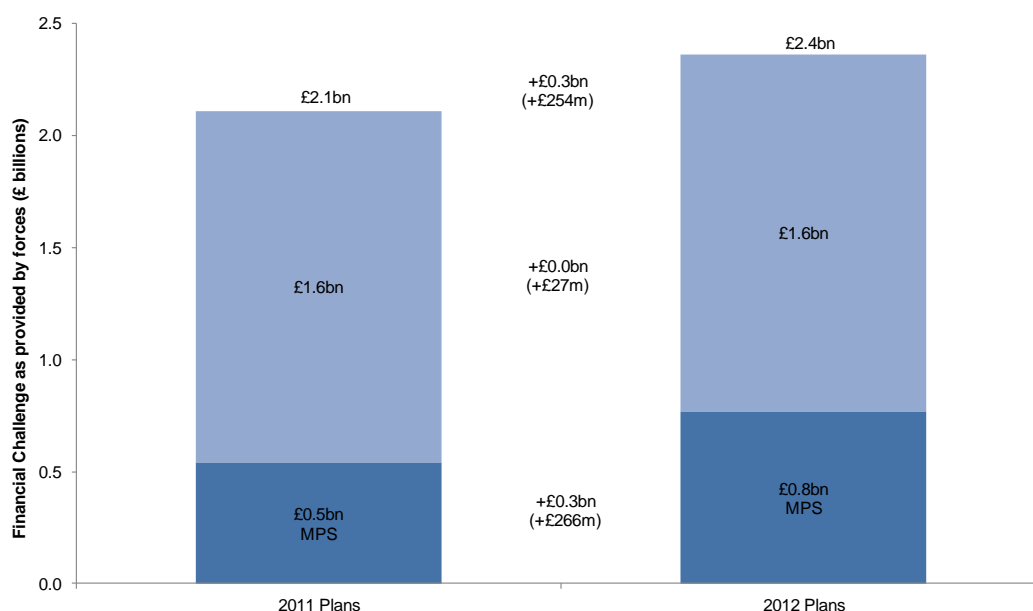
We would expect some fluctuation in force estimations of the funding gap: one year into the spending review, forces should have more accurate models of what their workforce costs will be, a better idea of how their income will be affected,[26] and

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[23] 'Funding gap' is used in this report to refer to the amount of money forces need to save.

[24] £1.9bn in 2010/11 terms.

[25] £2.2bn in 2010/11 terms. We have not deflated the financial numbers for the rest of this report in order to be consistent with how forces have explained their own savings requirement to the public.

[26] For instance, forces that offer training are reporting a sharp decrease in income.

updated inflation assumptions around fuel and utilities. In particular, the Government's 2011 announcement that council tax can be frozen for one year in exchange for the one-off Council Tax Freeze Grant will mean that those forces accepting the grant will be unable to grow their precept[27] and will then need to make up the difference in Years 3 or 4.

However, the increase in the MPS's funding gap (from £543 to £769m) is too large to be explained by these factors. HMIC therefore carried out a further review of their plans, and found that it was the result of making new spending commitments in the course of the last year. The Commissioner and the Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime have both made firm commitments to tackle this issue.

Bridging the funding gap

Year 1 (2011/12)

Based on force data, the funding gap in Year 1 was significant: £768m, which represents over 30% of the total gap for the whole spending review period. Despite this, HMIC found that forces had plans in place to balance the books in March 2012, and that by December 2011 they had already made £703m of savings.[28] This gave us confidence that by the end of the financial year they would have met (and in some cases exceeded) the total amount required, with reserves used to cover any residual gap.

Many forces have chosen to go further and save more than they need to in Year 1. They are planning either to put the extra money in reserves to help manage the end of the spending review period, or to fund restructuring programmes and police staff redundancy schemes that will drive out further savings in later years. Because the rate of workforce reductions is also faster than previous projections (see below p.24), savings will be reached ahead of target. In many cases this overachievement is not only due to the pulling forward of plans and rigorous financial control, but also a reflection of increased financial awareness across the organisation and the fact that individuals are taking on more responsibility for reducing expenditure.

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[27] 'Precept' is paid by householders, set by police authorities and collected through the council tax system. In broad terms, the greater the percentage of a force's funding that comes from precept, the less a force will be affected by cuts to its central Government grant.

[28] These figures are in cash prices.

Whole spending review period (2011/12–2014/15)

Forces have worked to hard to identify their savings and ways to balance the books, and their plans outline how they will save 87% of the total amount required by March 2015. This is an improvement on plans reported on in *Adapting to Austerity,* when only 74% of the spending review gap was covered. To note: the outstanding 13% includes the MPS's residual funding gap of £233m gap. If this is excluded, forces have identified 96% of the necessary savings.

Forces are balancing their books by identifying savings and using reserves in some cases to plug any remaining gaps. The table below summarises the level of savings planned for each year of the spending review and how far this bridges the funding gap (including the MPS)

Table 1. Financial plans breakdown for each year of the spending review

	2011/12 (£ millions)	2012/13 (£ millions)	2013/14 (£ millions)	2014/15 (£ millions)
Savings required	768	705	574	582
Savings planned	749	656	377	280
Residual gap	**19**	**49**	**197**	**302**
Planned use of reserves [29]	28	52	48	40

All forces will have balanced their books in Year 1. Forty-one force have also planned how they will achieve this in Year 2; 35 forces in Year 3; and as the graph on the next page shows, while 12 forces have not balanced their books in Year 4, there are four forces which (at this stage) are planning to save more than they need.

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[29] Reserves can be used to balance the books (if insufficient savings have been identified), and to fund one-off expenditure such as redundancy costs.

Figure 2. Residual gap in 2014/15 following planned savings and use of reserves[30]
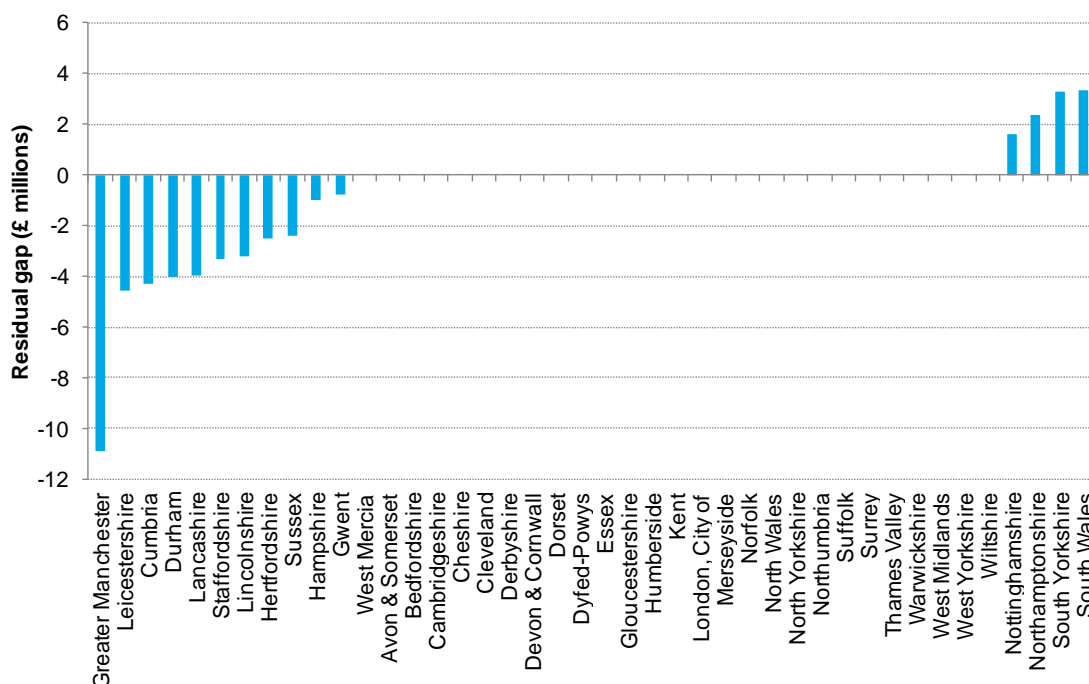
HMIC recognises that plans will be continuously refined and become more robust as the spending review progresses, and that as a consequence the level of challenge may change as assumptions adjust or workforce numbers fluctuate.

How realistic are forces' financial plans?

Use of reserves

One test of how confident we should be in the forces' planning is to look at their use of reserves.

Many forces are using their cash[31] reserves to manage the spending review challenge in Year 1, in order to fund change programmes which may not start generating savings for some time, and to smooth the impact of the relatively higher savings requirement in 2011/12 (see above, p.15). This is an appropriate use of reserves – as long as they are

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[30] The Metropolitan Police Service are not shown on the chart due to scale. Their residual gap is £ 233m

[31] All forces have very large reserves to balance liabilities such as future pension provisions payments. These cannot be used for other purposes and in some cases do not exist as cash. Forces may also build up reserves of cash over a number of years to replace assets (such as buildings) when they reach the end of their useful life. Forces are also required to hold a prudent level of reserves for unforeseen events.

not reduced below prudent levels, as this would limit forces' flexibility to manage unforeseen costs.

However, there are potential risks associated with planning to use significant levels of reserves in Year 4 of the spending review. Reserves by their nature have a limit: and if forces cannot balance their books without them, it indicates their running costs are too high for their budget. It also places them in a potentially precarious position if there are further savings requirements in the next spending review.

HMIC therefore examined how far (at this stage) forces are relying on reserves to balance their books in Year 4. We found that 17 forces plan to use a total of £40m of reserves in 2014/15, which equates to 7% of the funding gap for that year. However, this percentage masks some significant variations: six forces[32] are balancing at least a third of their Year 4 gap with reserves. We recognise plans will continue to be refined, and so will monitor this.

Planning assumptions

Another way of testing force plans is to look at whether the assumptions that underpin them are reasonable. If forces make overly optimistic assumptions about future council tax precept levels, or the effects of inflation on their costs (such as salaries or fuels), they might face an unexpected financial gap later in the spending review period.

Given public sector salary constraints (including the measure in the 2011 autumn statement that public sector pay would be capped at 1%), HMIC would expect a fairly standard set of **pay assumptions**; and we found that most forces were planning on the basis of a 1% increase in Years 3 and 4. However, because the announcement on what effect this pay cap will have specifically on the police funding settlement has not yet been made, some forces have been more cautious, and assumed a 2% or 2.5% increase in their pay costs instead.

Precept assumptions[33] in Years 3 and 4 range from 0.0% to 5.0%; the average (mean) is 2.8%. Forces, particularly those planning large increases, should keep this under review; and all forces will need to consider such assumptions with their police and crime commissioners in the autumn.

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[32] Avon and Somerset, Derbyshire, Norfolk, North Yorkshire, West Mercia and West Midlands.

[33] I.e. about how much the amount of money a force receives in council tax. See n.31 above.

Assumptions around fuel and utility costs varied considerably between forces – although often this is to be expected, as forces have struck different local deals and there may be regional price variation. Such costs represent a very small proportion of the policing budget, so different assumptions do not have a large impact on the savings that need to be made: but it is important that the force makes a realistic and prudent set of assumptions overall, which is why we mention it here.

Conclusion

All forces have worked hard to identify savings. The majority of forces have plans to balance the books over the whole spending review period, and all have made in strong start in delivering their savings. It is no surprise that the savings challenge and force plans have changed since 2011, and they will continue to evolve as the spending review progresses.

However, several risks remain. First, HMIC is concerned that some forces still do not have a plan for how they will make savings for all years of the spending review (although we recognise that for many only a small proportion of their overall budget remains to be found). Second, while we are supportive of prudent deployment of reserves to smooth the impact of the cuts or fund one-off costs, there is a risk attached to continuing reliance on reserves in Year 4, particularly in light of likely continued austerity measures beyond this spending review.

2. How forces are making savings

Based on information provided by forces, savings between 2011/12 and 2014/15 will be made as follows:

Table 2. How forces are making the savings in each year of the spending review[34]

£ millions	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Savings planned	749	656	377	280
of which pay	*514*	*449*	*286*	*215*
of which non-pay	*185*	*175*	*70*	*44*

The rest of this section discusses each of these savings areas in turn.

Pay savings: Workforce reductions

With the majority of the policing budget spent on pay (£11.3bn in 2010/11), and only just under 20% on goods and services (such as IT, facilities management, uniform and equipment), it is unsurprising that forces are planning to achieve the bulk of their savings by cutting the number of officers, staff and police community support officers (PCSOs) they employ.

Nationally, forces plan to save a total of £1.5bn by March 2015 through reducing their workforce by 13% (32,400 posts). This figure is slightly different to that given by forces when we last asked them about this (in spring 2011), as the table on the next page shows:

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[34] To note: Pay and non-pay savings will not add up to total savings as one force was unable to separate their totals savings between pay and non-pay.

Table 3. Plans for workforce reduction between March 2010 and March 2015[35]

	March 2010 (Actual)	March 2015 (Planned)	Planned change by 2015	Change in percentage terms	Range in forces	Change from 2011 plans
Police Officers	143,800	128,800	-15,000	-10%	-21% to +3%	1,200
Staff	83,200	67,600	-15,600	-19%	-47% to +12%	450
PCSOs	16,900	15,200	-1,700	-10%	-69% to +79%	100
Total Workforce	**243,900**	**211,500**	**-32,400**	**-13%**	**-29% to -2%**	**1,700**

This kind of fluctuation is to be expected; workforce plans are constantly refined in step with savings plans, and as the yields from various savings streams are realised. In the future, it is likely that they will also be affected by possible changes in Government funding allocations, adjustment in precept levels, Winsor Part 1 savings (see boxed text below) and Winsor Part 2 recommendations (if implemented). With this in mind, the relatively small difference between the 2011 and 2012 plans – of 1,700 posts, or about 1% of the total workforce – potentially demonstrates that forces' projections are relatively stable.

Savings from Winsor Part I[36]

The elements of the Winsor review supported by the Police Arbitration Tribunal and endorsed by the Home Secretary[37] include freezing incremental pay progression and non-salary pay costs such as overtime and special priority payments. Data collected by HMIC in February 2012 showed that 17 forces had yet to include Winsor savings in their plans.

[35] Figures are rounded. To view these figures on a force-by-force basis, see Annex D. We have excluded Lincolnshire and Cleveland from the range set out in the table as their large staff reductions are due to a shift from an in-house provision of services to an outsourced provider, and significant numbers of staff have been transferred to these providers.

[36] See www.review.police.uk

[37] Available from www.lge.gov.uk

HMIC used forces' projected workforce figures (as provided in February 2012) to assess the impact of these reductions on the Service's workforce profile in the future. While there are slight increases in the proportion of police officers, the profile will remain reasonably consistent by March 2015, as the following chart shows:

Figure 3. Workforce profiles for March 2010 and March 2015
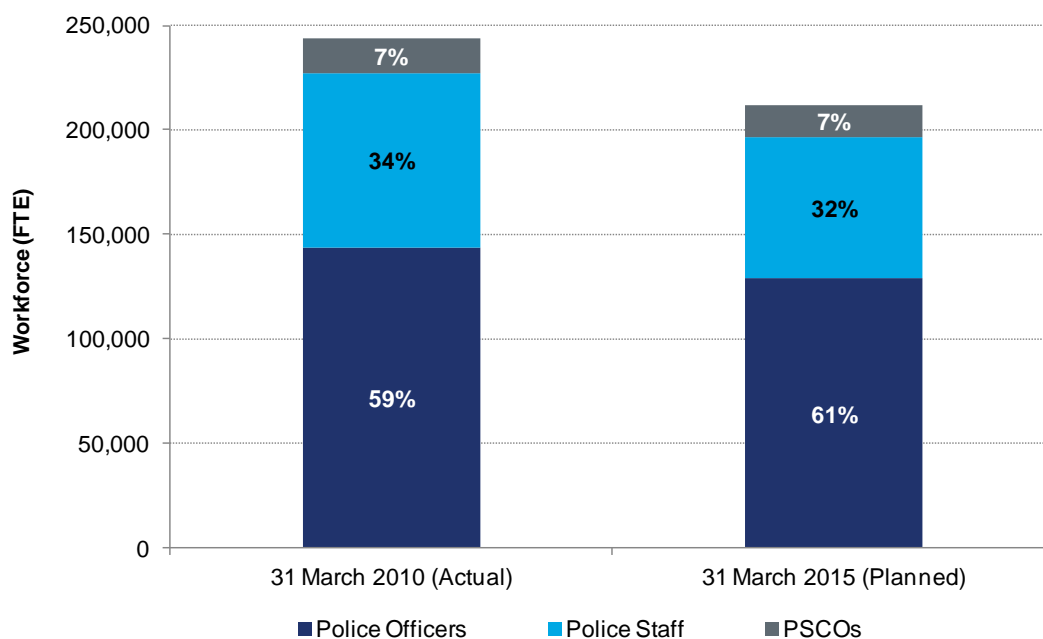
However, all these workforce figures need to be treated with caution because of the outstanding residual funding gap across forces of £302m, of which £233m is the MPS's. Some of this might be addressed by further non-pay savings (as discussed later in this chapter); but it is not unreasonable to assume a large proportion of the savings to bridge this gap will come from further workforce reductions by 2014/15.

Force variations in workforce reduction

It is clear from the data provided that some forces are more reliant than others on workforce reductions to meet their savings. The national figure is a 13% reduction by 2015: but some forces are planning to cut by much more than this, as the chart on the next page shows:

Figure 4. Planned workforce reduction between March 2010 and March 2015 by force[38]
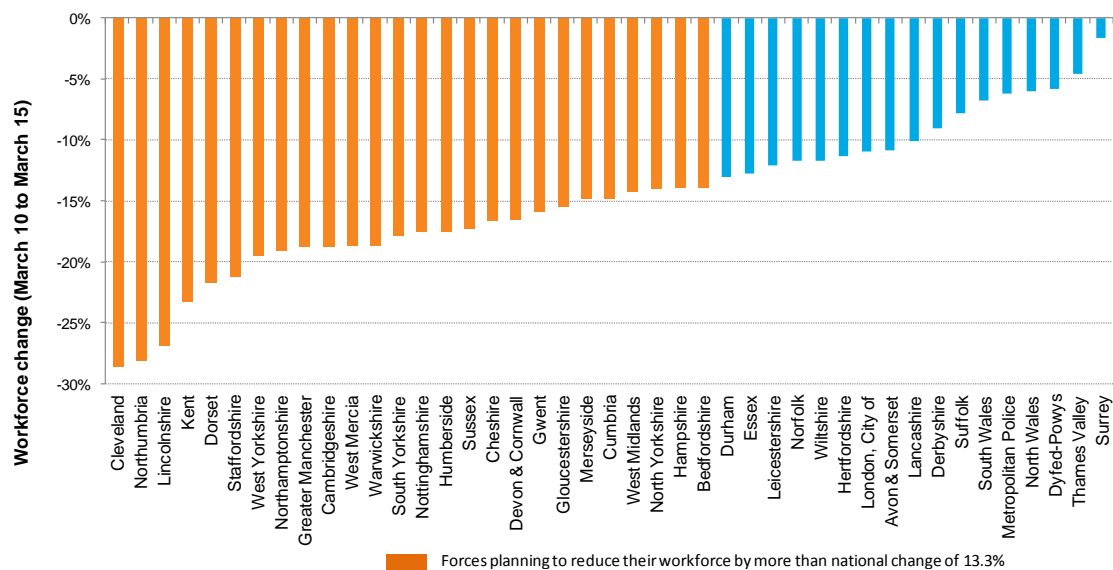
HMIC found that broadly two-thirds of those forces that are planning lower than average workforce reductions intend to make higher than average non-pay savings. These forces are therefore using non-pay savings to help them protect workforce numbers. To note: this does not necessarily imply that the remaining forces have scope to do the same, as this depends on how efficient their non-pay activities were to start with.

Force variations in police officer reductions
Looking specifically at reductions to police officer numbers also reveals considerable variation from force to force. For instance, while the table on page 18 shows 1,200 fewer police officer posts cut at a national level than was suggested from the data forces provided in 2011, 16 forces are now projecting a greater reduction in police officer numbers than they did in 2011. In some cases this is simply because they are

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[38] To note: Cleveland and Lincolnshire, which are planning the first and third greatest workforce reductions respectively, are both outsourcing a large proportion of their back and middle office roles to the private sector (see Annex A for explanation of what roles are included in the back office). More detail about this kind of arrangement is discussed in the HMIC report, *Increasing efficiency in the police service: The role of collaboration* (available from www.hmic.gov.uk).

now in a position to give projections for the entire of the spending review period, which they were unable to do last spring.

See Annex D for a breakdown of officer, staff and PCSO reductions by force; and 'Methods and pace of workforce reduction' on p.23 below for a discussion of forces' decision to cut staff as opposed to officer roles.

Force variations in estimated savings per post cut

Data from across England and Wales shows that 20 posts will be cut for every £1m of pay savings. However, this varies significantly from force to force, suggesting even forces with similar savings challenges are adopting very different approaches.

Forces have reported several possible reasons for this variation, including:

- the profile of the workforce lost – officers tend to cost more than police staff, and seniority and time in service also has an effect. A force cutting relatively more long-standing senior officers will therefore make a greater saving;

- different abilities to bear down on non-salary pay costs (i.e. some spend more on discretionary costs like overtime and special priority payments, pushing up the cost per person);

- a different approach to redundancy costs (for instance, some offer higher redundancy packages); and

- a deliberate choice to drive a more radical restructure rather than simply balance the books – so reductions may be out of step with actual savings levels.

The end result is that forces with similar budget cuts are planning significantly different levels of workforce reduction. It is therefore important that forces understand why the variation exists and whether they have any opportunity to further adjust or recalibrate their savings plan in a way that would allow them to maintain the most appropriate workforce size and shape in order to maintain or improve services.

Methods and pace of workforce reduction
Methods

A greater proportion of workforce reductions are police staff rather than police officers. This reflects both a decision by forces to protect officers, and the practicalities of

managing the workforce: different employment terms mean that it is easier to cut staff posts, as this can be achieved through voluntary and (if necessary) compulsory redundancy.   By contrast, police officers cannot currently be made redundant or be required to resign (with the exception of chief constables and deputy chief constables, who are on fixed-term appointments).[39] However, some forces have reduced their police officer numbers by using Police Regulation A19 (under which those with 30 years' service can face compulsory retirement on the grounds of organisational efficiency) and natural turnover, combined with limited or no recruitment.

Pace

Based on forces' current projections, the majority of the workforce reductions occur in Years 1 and 2 of the spending review, as the following table shows:

Table 4. Cumulative projected workforce reductions over the spending review period[40]

	31 March 2012		31 March 2013		31 March 2014		31 March 2015	
	Number	Cumulative %	Number	Cumulative %	Number	Cumulative %	Number	Cumulative %
Police officers	-8,600	58%	-11,900	79%	-13,500	90%	**-15,000**	**100%**
Police staff	-7,900	50%	-11,100	71%	-13,900	89%	**-15,600**	**100%**
PCSOs	-1,100	63%	-1,300	73%	-1,600	91%	**-1,700**	**100%**
Total workforce	**-17,600**	**54%**	**-24,300**	**75%**	**-29,000**	**90%**	**-32,400**	**100%**

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[39] The contracts of police officers and terms and conditions of employment are an area explored in the latest Winsor review (Winsor Part 2), and may be subject to change in the near future. See www.review.police.uk

[40] This table shows the projected number of post reductions over the spending review from a baseline of March 2010. Also shown is the projected cumulative percentage of workforce reduction from March 2010 to March 2015.

Compared to the plans that forces submitted in 2011, data shows that posts will have been cut earlier than planned. The most significant difference in the speed of change is in Year 1 (2011/12), with 4,700 or 36% more posts being cut than forces had initially projected. This is shown in the graph below:

Figure 5. National workforce reductions from March 2010: 2011 plans compared with 2012 plans
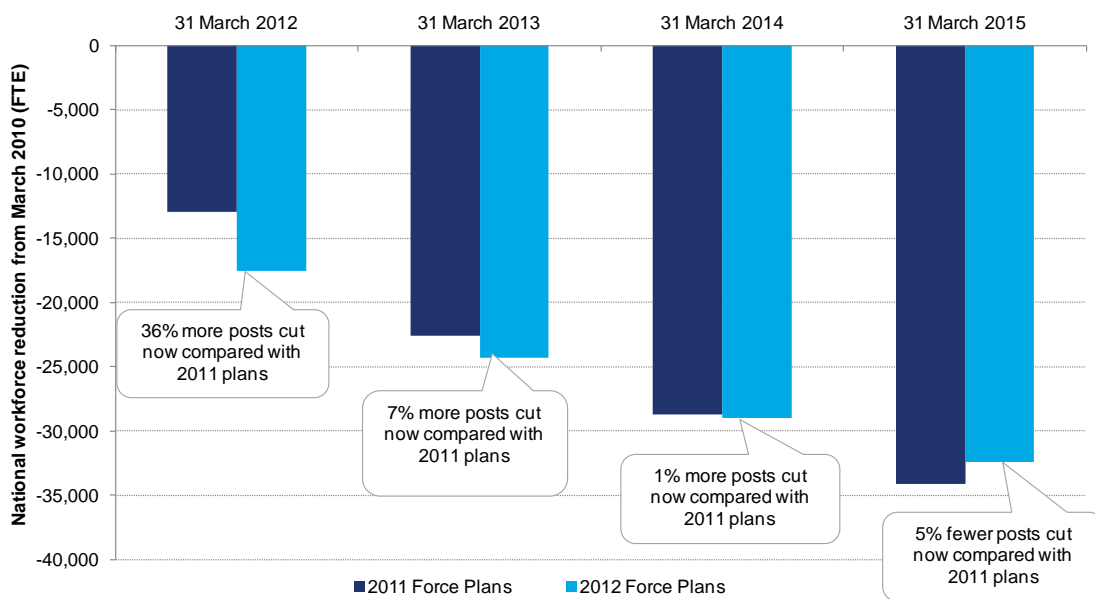
Reasons for this increased pace may include:

- more robust workforce planning, now forces have had the opportunity to ensure that the workforce reductions are in line with the savings they need to make; or

- officers and staff exiting more rapidly than anticipated. It has been suggested that police staff redundancy schemes have been oversubscribed in some forces, and that police officers are more willing to leave because of potential changes to pensions and future pay arrangements.

Being ahead of those plans submitted in 2011 has considerable benefits: the earlier the post is lost the greater the saving, and it also means that forces will reach their required headcounts earlier, giving more time to embed changes in how the new, smaller workforce delivers its services. However, managing such a rapid reduction in posts

does present some risks to the Service, particularly when it runs in parallel to other changes in policing models:[41]

- There needs to be rigorous and high quality workforce planning to ensure that the loss of key skills is anticipated and that they are replaced. This is made even more critical as Regulation A19 is a relatively blunt instrument: once implemented it applies to every officer with over 30 years' service,[42] so individuals cannot easily be retained on the basis of skill.

- A rapid reduction of the workforce coupled with other austerity measures (such as pay and pension changes) will have an impact on workforce morale. The effect of this will become clearer as forces progress through the spending review; and it will be a focus for HMIC in the future.

Planned recruitment

Many forces instigated recruitment freezes in advance of the spending review, to help reduce numbers. As forces have reviewed their workforce plans, they are now beginning to recruit, which will help to prevent stagnation (and thereby potentially mitigating one of the risks Winsor commented on in Part 2 of his review).[43] HMIC asked the Service when and how many people they are intending to recruit in each year of the spending review.

Table 5. Planned recruitment across the four years of the spending period

	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Number of forces planning to recruit	27	36	31	30
Planned intake of Police Officers	2,160	1,760	1,830	1,810
Planned intake of Police Staff	1,570	1,100	1,000	840
Planned intake of PCSOs	530	750	410	410

[41] Changes to the policing model are discussed in Chapter 5 below.

[42] Although some forces have only applied it to particular ranks.

[43] Available from www.review.police.uk

Reducing spend on goods and services

Across England and Wales, forces are planning to make 24%[44] of their savings through reducing non-pay costs over the spending review period. However, this varies significantly between forces (from 8% to over 50%), as the following chart shows:

Figure 6. Planned savings over the spending review period split by pay and non-pay by force[45]
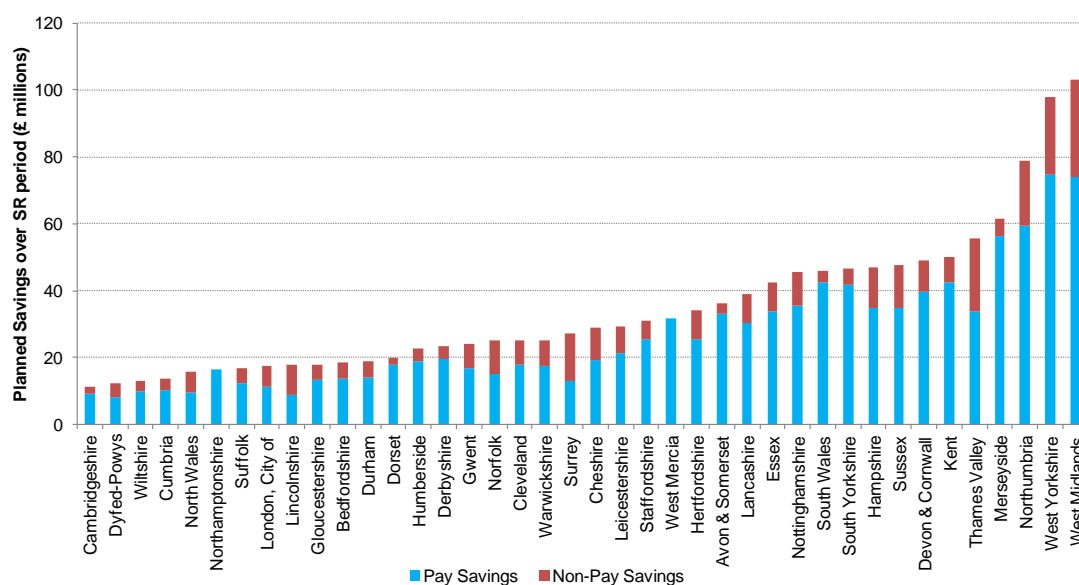
Reasons for this variation include:

- some forces worked to reduce their non-pay expenditure before the spending review period, and therefore are finding it difficult to achieve further savings (data shows that in 2010/11 between 15% and 24% of forces' budgets comprised non-pay); and

- the extent to which forces are locked into existing contracts.

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[44] This does not include data from all forces in England and Wales: one was unable to split savings between pay and non-pay, and two are not projecting any savings from non-pay.

[45] The Metropolitan Police Service are not shown on the chart due to scale. Their planned pay savings are £372.1m, and planned non-pay savings are £161.7m

We would expect forces to continue to drive savings from non-pay to protect policing roles. (For more on how forces are reducing non-pay costs through collaboration and procurement, see Chapter 5, 'Transforming efficiency'.)

Conclusion

Forces are making their required savings primarily by reducing their workforce. By March 2015, this means that there will be significant cuts to the workforce: but despite this, current estimates show that the workforce split of officers, PCSOs and police staff will remain relatively stable, with a marginal increase in the proportion of police officers (in comparison with March 2010).

However, the workforce projections for 2015 should be treated with caution. While it is to be expected that forces will continue to refine their plans, the Service – and in particular the MPS – still needs to meet the outstanding financial gap. This could demand considerable further reductions in workforce numbers.

3. Effect on the front line

Definition of front line

In *Demanding Times*, we set out a model for the police workforce. This was designed and agreed with the Police Service and allocated roles to 'visible', 'specialist', 'middle office' and 'back office' categories, but more broadly divided the workforce into frontline and non frontline roles.[46] We said that:

> *"The police front line comprises those who are in everyday contact with the public and who directly intervene to keep people safe and enforce the law."[47]*

Frontline roles therefore cover a broad range of operational activities, from patrolling neighbourhoods, responding to 999 calls, air support and roads policing to protecting vulnerable people, and form a critical part of a force's crime-fighting capacity. Before the spending review period, they represented two-thirds of the workforce. The remaining third, referred to in this report as **non-frontline roles**, include some elements of non-patrolling roles (e.g. investigation) and functions such as control rooms and intelligence, as well as full-time roles in the back office (in support services such as IT support, HR and finance).

All these functions complement each other and are of critical importance in delivering policing services to the public. However, HMIC would expect forces to concentrate on making savings from non-frontline areas first. Many support services (such as finance, HR, fleet management, procurement and estates management) involve processes and approaches which are not locally specific, or specific to policing at all. Therefore adopting industry best practice, and driving economies through collaboration and/or partnering with the private sector are all approaches which forces can pursue to minimise the cost of these functions: we discuss this further in Chapter x.

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[46] HMIC (2011) *Demanding Times*. Available from www.hmic.gov.uk. The model is replicated at Annex A.

[47] HMIC (2011) *Demanding Times*. Available from www.hmic.gov.uk

Numbers and proportion of total workforce in frontline roles[48]

On average, forces currently plan to reduce **frontline workforce numbers** by 6% (8,100) and **non-frontline workforce numbers** by 33% (20,300) between March 2010 and March 2015. The result of this is that the proportion of total workforce (i.e. officers, PCSOs and staff) in frontline roles will increase by 7 percentage points between March 2010 and March 2015, as the following chart shows.

Figure 7. Workforce profile split by frontline and non-frontline for March 2010 and March 2015
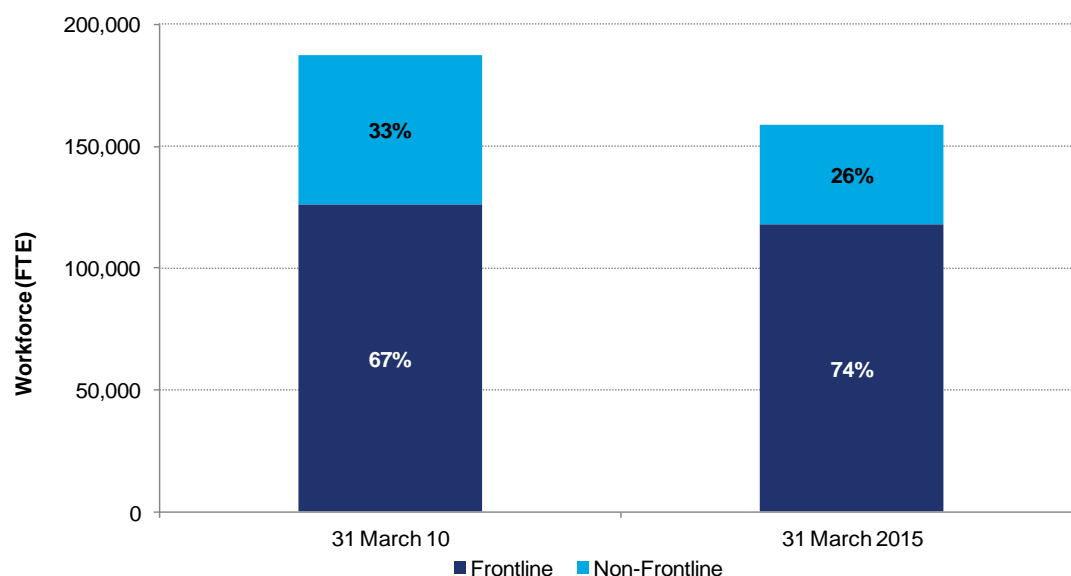
Note. Data in the above chart excludes the Metropolitan and Cheshire due to missing data

This national picture shows that while the majority of forces cannot sustain the total **number** of frontline posts (because of the scale of the cuts required), they are protecting them more than non-frontline roles, and reconfiguring their services so a greater **proportion** of their overall workforce can be engaged in crime fighting.

However, there is again considerable variation between forces. As the graph below shows, the greatest planned reduction in frontline overall workforce numbers is 19%, with 15 forces decreasing their frontline overall workforce numbers by 10% or more. In

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[48] It is important to note that the figures discussed in this chapter (which have been provided by forces) may be subject to variation as forces progress through the spending review and finalise their workforce plans. In addition, two forces have not provided figures for this section: the MPS and Cheshire Constabulary have yet to project their frontline numbers for Years 3 and 4. However, both forces have confirmed an ambition to protect frontline roles.

contrast, seven forces are anticipating that the frontline workforce will increase, with 9% the highest anticipated increase.

Two forces could not give us plans until 2015: the MPS and Cheshire. Although both reported an ambition to protect the frontline, and HMIC recognises that figures now may be subject to change, we remain concerned that these forces cannot provide us with their current best projections until the end of spending review period.

Figure 8. Planned frontline workforce volume change from March 2010 to March 2015
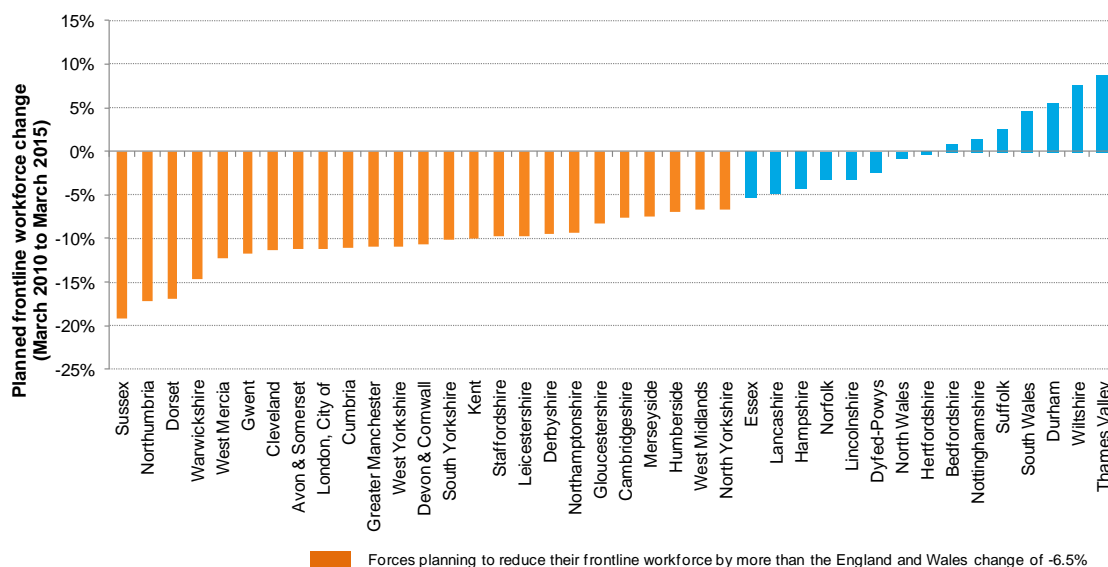
Note. Metropolitan and Cheshire are excluded due to missing data and Surrey are excluded as the 2012 data collection exposed discrepancies in their data.

HMIC would expect that forces planning to make significant reductions to their overall workforce will find it harder to protect the volume of officers in the frontline. However, some of those forces that are planning a larger reduction to their overall workforce than the average across England and Wales are, at the same time, increasing the volume of their workforce in the front line. They are achieving this principally through focusing reductions in non-frontline areas and configuring local policing models to move officers into frontline roles. Other forces in similar positions might look to see whether there are elements of this approach they could replicate.

Number and proportion of police officers in frontline roles

The last section looked at the proportion of the overall police workforce (i.e. officers, PCSOs and staff) on the front line. This section looks specifically at police officers. Force data shows that they are planning to cut a far higher proportion of non-frontline officer roles than frontline officer roles, as the following table shows:

Table 6. Frontline police officers in March 2010 and March 2015 (projected)

	March 2010	March 2015	Overall reduction	% reduction
Police officers on the front line	90,300	84,500	5,800	**6%**
Police officers non front line	17,900	10,300	7,600	**42%**

Note. The data in this table does not include figures from the MPS and Cheshire as they can only project frontline and non-frontline split to 2013. Including MPS and Cheshire gives a baseline in 2010 of 24,600 non-frontline police officers, projected to fall to 17,300 by 2013

This indicates that forces are planning to protect the front line, which is reinforced by the anticipated six percentage point increase in the proportion of police officers carrying out frontline activity by 2015:

Figure 9. Police officer profile split by frontline and non-frontline for March 2010 and March 2015
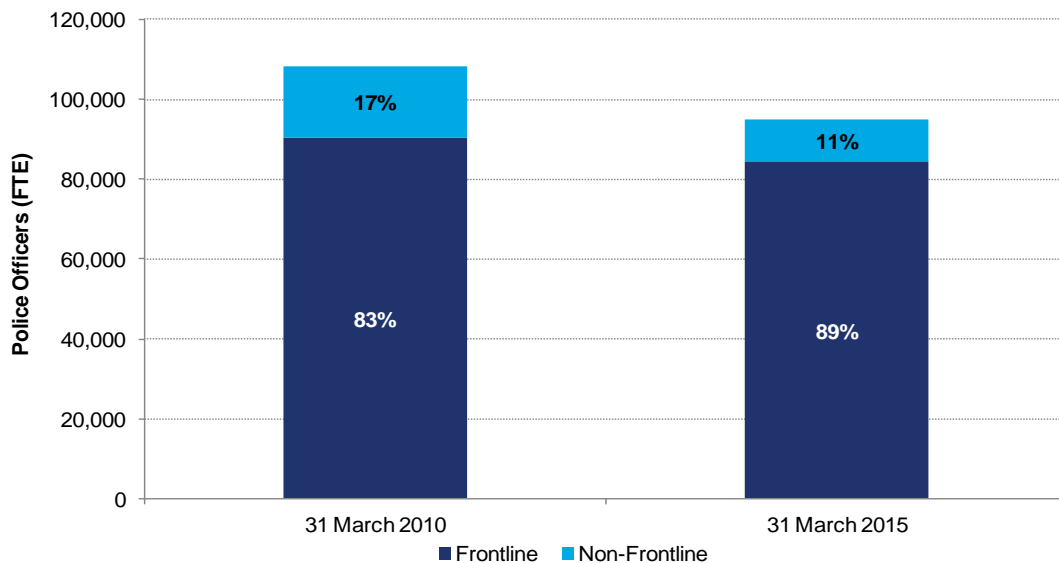
Force variations

While the national figure shows a six percent fall in the *number* of police officers in the front line, eight forces are actually planning increases. All but one force is in step with the national trend to increase the *proportion* of police officers in the front line. The largest increased proportion to the front line is 14%, as the following graph shows:

Figure 10. Planned proportion increase in police officers on the frontline from March 2010 to March 2015

Forces planning to increase their frontline officer proportion by more than the England and Wales change of 5.7 percentage points.
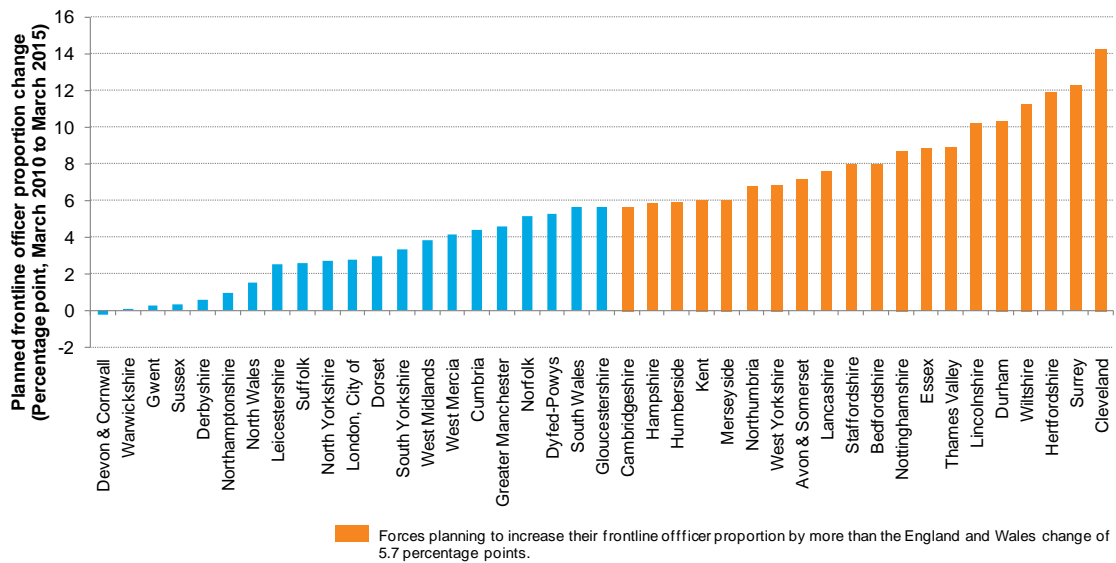
On current plans (which are subject to continual refinement), forces in England and Wales plan to have between 81–95% of their police officers in frontline roles by 2015.

Figure 11. Planned proportion of police officers on the frontline in March 2015
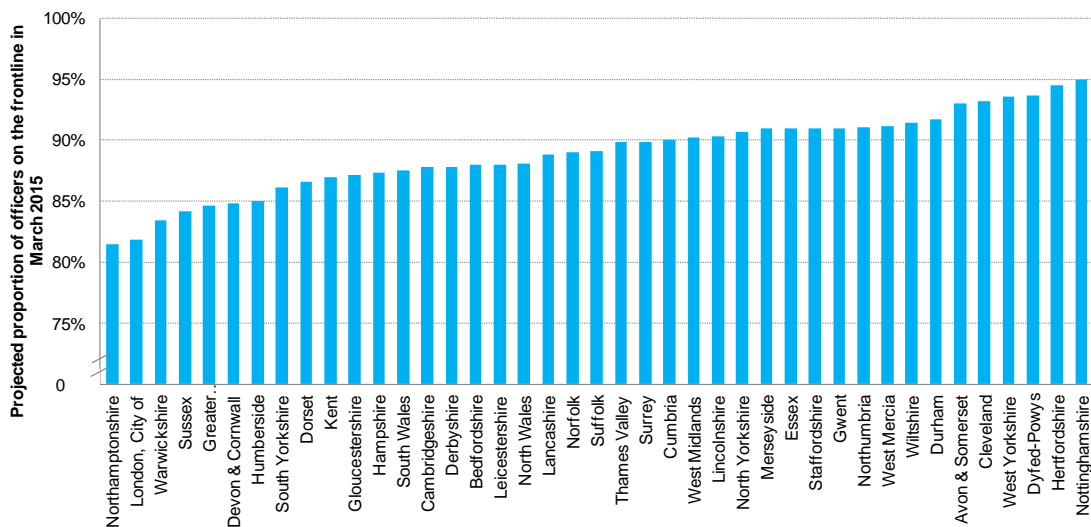
Number and proportion of police officers in non-frontline roles

Data collected from forces shows that 10,300 police officer equivalents[49] will remain in non-frontline roles by March 2015. This represents about a quarter of non-frontline activity; and 10% of the overall projected police officers, down from 17% in March 2010. However, as shown in the chart below, seven forces are planning to increase the proportion of police officers in non-frontline roles across the workforce: [50]

Figure 12. Planned change (from March 2010 to March 2015) in the proportion of police officers in non-frontline roles

Forces planning to reduce more than the England and Wales change of -4.0 percentage points
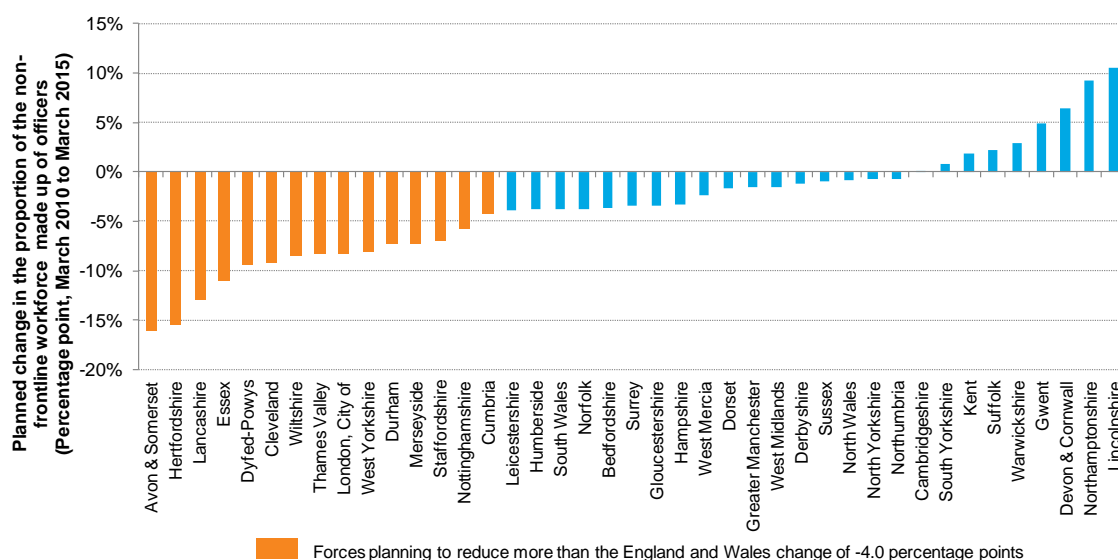
Much of this non-frontline activity constitutes behind-the-scenes elements of specialist and middle office work, such as 30% of criminal investigations, 60% of intelligence work and 40% of the control room. We might expect police officers to carry out some of these activities (such as some elements of criminal investigation). However, around one third of police officers in the non-frontline roles are in back office posts (such as finance, HR, training, IT, corporate development, and estates and facilities management).

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[49] Data from 41 forces – MPS and Cheshire Constabulary are not included (see n.7 above).

[50] We have excluded one force planning only a 1% increase as this may be due to data issues.

Analysis of the current picture suggests:

- Overall the number of officers in the back office is decreasing: data shows a fall from 7,300 to 6,600 between March 2010 and 2011; [51] and based on data returns from the majority of forces we anticipate that there will be less than 2,500[52] by the end of the spending review – which is around 2% of the projected police officer numbers.

- The areas where the police account for a significant proportion of the back office workforce are training and corporate development, with figures from March 2010 and March 2011 showing that these constitute almost 60% of back office police officers.[53] For some training (for example in firearms use or investigation) key skills can be effectively taught by police officers with recent operational experience. It is also beneficial for officers to learn a range of management skills: so it can be appropriate for police officers to spend some time running major change programmes in corporate development.

Officers on restricted and recuperative duties[54]

Data suggests that overall the number of police officers on restricted and recuperative duties has risen since 2005/06. Typically, officers in these categories cannot fulfil all the responsibilities and activities required of frontline police officers: for instance, they might have an injury which means they cannot go out on patrol. So we anticipate these police officers will not fulfil frontline roles. However, forces do seek to make the most of these officers' operational experience and expertise: for instance, many carry out desk-based investigative functions, or work in the control room or on some elements of protective services.

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[51] This data comes from Home Office statistics, ADR601. The March 2011 figure was updated in September 2011 to 6,433. It includes the MPS and Cheshire Constabulary.

[52] Because this does not include data from MPS or Cheshire Constabulary, it is not directly comparable to the 2010 and 2011 data.

[53] The data on the back office also show that a significant number of officers are categorised under 'other'. This category includes staff absent from duty due to maternity / paternity leave, a career break, being in full-time education, being suspended, or on long-term leave (sickness, compassionate, special or unpaid).

[54] The Home Office (2008) *Guidance on Attendance Management* sets out the definition of restricted and recuperative duties. To note: the terms and conditions of officers on such duties are currently under review following Winsor Part 2. See www.review.police.uk

Changes to the front line

Forces are adopting a range of approaches in order to balance out the reductions in frontline numbers (see Chapter 3, 'Effect on the front line') with compensating improvements in efficiency.

All forces told HMIC that they were analysing the frequency, timing and nature of the demand for different police services[55] (**demand analysis**) in order to inform their decisions on how they should structure their workforce, and on what shift patterns should be used. They described the broad range of robust and often independently validated techniques used to do this (many of which involved innovative use of technology), and how they have used this work to decide the most efficient way to deploy frontline resources.

Shifting resources: Response to neighbourhood

In February 2012 there were 5,200 fewer police officers and PCSOs in response functions[56] than in March 2010[57], but 2,300 more in neighbourhood policing. This is the result of forces implementing a range of new local policing models (based on their demand analysis):

- some forces are merging their response and neighbourhood teams into single local policing units;

- others are widening the scope of neighbourhood teams to include supporting response functions. This means that (for example) the nearest unit – whether neighbourhood or response – will respond to an incident; and neighbourhood teams are investigating volume crimes such as burglary, rather than passing them on to CID.

This shift away from clearly defined functions to a more fluid construct with multi-skilled officers enables forces to better match resource and demand. However, some have already identified a potential risk to the ability of neighbourhood policing teams to carry

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[55] Particularly for response and neighbourhood teams, but many have also carried out demand analysis for their investigation departments and public protection services.

[56] Cheshire Constabulary has restructured their workforce so they do not have a response function: they are all categorised as neighbourhood.

[57] March 2010 data is taken from information submitted to the Home Office as part of the annual data return. February 2012 data was submitted to HMIC as part of the availability snapshot (see p.41ff).

out their regular community duties[58] in the face of more immediate demands around incident response and crime investigation.

Decisions on how to deploy frontline resource are operational, and will be different in every force according to a professional assessment of the threats faced in that force area: there is no 'one-size-fits-all' answer. But this evidence suggests that, while the activities that the police undertake are fundamentally unchanged, traditional descriptions such as response, investigation and neighbourhood functions might now have less resonance with how forces structure local policing.

Shifting resources: Frontline visible to frontline non visible

Visible frontline roles are those carried out by police officers and PCSOs who wear uniform and mainly work in public.[59] Some police officers (although not PCSOs) work in **non-visible** frontline roles, such as those that investigate crime, manage sex offenders and tackle organised crime. HMIC has previously outlined the link between public confidence and a visible police presence. [60]

Data provided to HMIC shows that 30 forces increased the number of police officers and PCSOs in frontline non-visible roles between March 2010 and February 2012, with the result that nationally numbers increased by 10% (from 38,500 to 42,500). We then looked at where these additional resources are being employed:[61]

- Across England and Wales, spend on 'protection roles' (including child protection, sexual offences investigation, and the management of sex offenders and domestic violence) increased by 9% between 2010/11 and 2011/12. This explains where some of the additional non-visible resource is being deployed and suggests that forces are focusing their resources on those areas of greatest harm and risk.

- Funding to local investigation functions also increased by 6% over the same period. Forces explained that this was the result of a shift of functions away from response team officers to investigation teams and prisoner processing

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[58] Such as reassurance roles and local problem solving, which have contributed much to addressing local crime concerns and ASB.

[59] A full outline of what functions fall in this category is given in the workforce model at Annex A.

[60] HMIC (2011) *Demanding Times*. Available from www.hmic.gov.uk

[61] This data comes from CIPFA Police Objective Analysis estimates.

units; to neighbourhood teams under a wider remit; and to dedicated teams for specific high-risk crime areas (such as domestic violence).

See also the 'Visible policing' section below (p.41ff).

Collaboration: With other forces

HMIC also found a rise in the number of collaborations between two or more forces in the more specialist frontline functions (such as firearms, public order, serious and organised crime, and counter-terrorism). These provide a significant opportunity to maintain levels of resilience while reducing costs.   A number of forces report that these plans will advance more quickly after the London 2012 Olympics, as firearms and other functions are brought under such collaborative arrangements.

Collaboration: With partners

Some forces are also looking beyond the Service's resources to enhance visibility, increase deployable assets and extend their reach. For instance, Nottinghamshire's Project Aurora integrates local authority staff within a neighbourhood policing unit.

Collaborative activity (in all its forms) is the subject of a separate HMIC report, *Increasing efficiency in the police service: The role of collaboration* (available from www.hmic.gov.uk).

Increased use of volunteers

Special constables have the same police powers as regular police officers. With training and resource management to match the availability of the special constabulary with peaks in demand, they can provide local managers with added flexibility as well as numbers.

The evidence collected by HMIC suggests that special constables make a considerable contribution to visible policing and the reassurance which it provides to members of the community. While regular police officers and PCSOs are of course drawn from the communities in which they work, the special constabulary provides perhaps an even more obvious link, giving communities the opportunity to participate in policing. In

addition, March 2011 data shows that 31% were female and 11% were minority ethnic (both higher percentages than is the case for regular police officers).[62]

Forces plan to increase the number of police special constables from 15,500 to 24,500 between March 2010 and March 2015 – a rise of 58%. The most significant increases are in three forces: the MPS (+3,490), Greater Manchester Police (+580), and Thames Valley Police (+340), although 10 other forces are also planning to increase their specials by 200 or more constables. While the increase may be partly attributable to the changing recruitment processes in forces, it could also be evidence of the Service seeking to mitigate the effect of workforce reductions.

Forces are also encouraging volunteering in roles to complement the special constabulary. The idea of volunteering in support roles has gained momentum over the past 10 years and has now matured into a structured **Police Support Volunteer** (PSV) programme. PSVs provide additional capabilities to existing service delivery; they are not a replacement for staff, nor do they prevent staff being employed.

There are 9,700 PSVs across England and Wales, a number that has significantly increased in recent years and continues to expand. Fully developed programmes are present in 12 forces, and being developed in 16; trial programmes are underway in 11 forces; and the British Transport Police and the remaining four forces are actively examining or considering the concept.[63]

PSVs perform over 100 roles, and at a conservative estimate contribute 800,000 hours in support of police activity. Approximately 45% of all PSV activity is linked to neighbourhood policing teams – and this is increasing. Many forces use PSVs in front counter activity: for instance, Thames Valley Police use 123 of their 640 volunteers in 31 stations.[64] Other uses include watching CCTV, monitoring social media during operations and events, mystery shopping and obtaining feedback from users of police services.

The increased use of volunteers may be seen in part as a means of maintaining capability that might otherwise be lost as forces look to reduce their operating costs (e.g. staffing front counters that otherwise might not be viable). However, volunteers also enable forces to secure additional skills, provide additional capacity.

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[62] Home Office ADR data March 2011.

[63] NPIA data.

[64] NPIA data.

There is a wider base of community support for policing which continues to grow and develop. **Neighbourhood Watch** is perhaps the most well known and the largest with more than 7.5million members (or 3.5 million households) in 150,000 schemes working in support of police to improve the quality of life for an area and develop community cohesion.[65]   **Citizen-led patrols** are an increasing element of active community support for policing. They range in from the very locally based (for example, resident and tenant associations who patrol their own estates) to those with a wider span of coverage and which are organised under a structured model (e.g. street pastors, street watch and street angels).[66]

Conclusion

The number of police officers, PCSOs and police staff working in frontline roles is shrinking; but forces are making clear efforts to protect it, by making greater reductions in non-frontline roles. As a result, the proportion both of the overall workforce and (within this) of police officers on the front line is increasing.

While the proportion of officers in non-frontline roles is reducing, it is predicted that there will still be 10,300 officers in such roles by March 2015;[67] and some forces are actually planning to increase the proportion of officers in these roles. These forces need to urgently review their approach. We recommend that forces examine this further, to ensure they are not only making cost effective decisions about where to post staff, but are maximising the contribution of their police officers and making best use of their skills.

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[65] For more information about Neighbourhood Watch see www.ourwatch.org.uk/.

[66] More information about these groups can be found at www.kedgeweb.co.uk/streetwatch/index.htm; www.streetpastors.co.uk; and www.streetangels.org.uk

[67] Not including projections from the MPS and Cheshire Constabulary: see n.7 above.

4. Impact on service to the public

This section looks at the impact of making savings on four key areas of interest to the public: the visibility of local policing services; how easy it is to access policing services; how responsive the police are when the public seek assistance; and the extent to which they protect the public from harm.

To assess if budget cuts had made a difference in these areas, HMIC collected qualitative data from forces, and analysed existing performance and satisfaction outcomes. We also carried out phone surveys and focus groups with the public; their perspective is included below, with full results available from www.hmic.gov.uk.

Visible policing

In *Demanding Times* (2011), [68] HMIC outlined the link between public confidence and a visible police presence. Eighty-five percent of all police officers and PCSOs work on the front line; and on average, 60% are in visible roles. However, this varies:

Figure 13. Proportion of police officers and PCSOs in visible roles[69]

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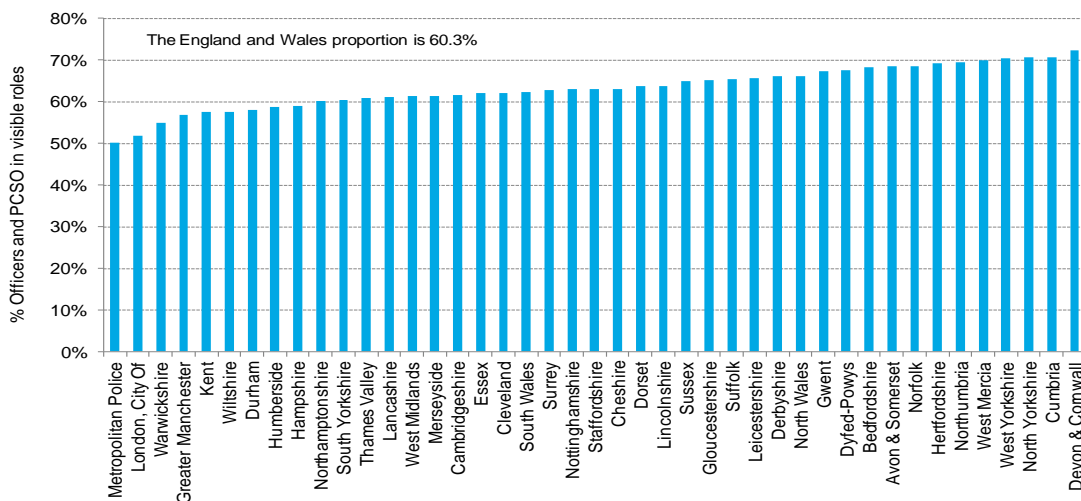
[68] HMIC (2011) *Demanding Times*. Available from www.hmic.gov.uk

[69] Data collected as at 06 February 2012 (although two forces used different dates due to mitigating circumstances).

Factors determining the proportion of officers and PSCOs in visible roles who are available to the public at key times include:

- the proportion of police officers and PCSOs allocated to visible policing functions in the first place (see Figure 13 above);
- the shift systems in use in visible policing functions, and in particular the scope these provide to vary the supply of resources in line with predictable variations in demand; and
- the force's approach to managing annual leave, sickness, training and other factors which reduce visible availability.

Visible and available snapshot – February 2012

HMIC contacted forces in February 2012 and asked them to report the numbers of police officers and PCSOs in visible functions who were on duty and available for the public at three different times of the week: Monday morning at 09.00; Wednesday evening at 19.00; and Saturday morning at 00.30. This was a repeat of a survey we conducted in December 2010, and aims to provide an indicative 'snapshot' which can both give the public a sense of 'where the police are', and a proxy for productivity.

To note: While the snapshot is expressed as a percentage figure, it would not be possible for any force to achieve 100% of their force available in visible functions at any one time, as across England and Wales only 60% of the workforce is employed in such functions. The need to provide 24/7 cover further reduces the number of the workforce that will be available at any particular time. For example, if a force operates an eight-hour shift pattern (with three shifts covering a 24-hour period and a fourth off), only around a quarter of this workforce could be available at a point in time (i.e. 15% of all officers and PCSOs in the force).

By comparing the December 2010 and February 2012 data, we found:

- the number of police officers in visible functions has reduced by 5,500;

- the proportion of police officers and PCSOs in visible policing functions was very slightly lower, dropping from 61% to 60%;[70]

- there has been a small reduction in the average proportion of the total number of officers and PCSOs who were visible and available across England and Wales, from 12.3% to 11.8% (although there was significant variations across forces, as Figure 14 shows).

Figure 14. Average proportion of police officers who were visible and available for duty
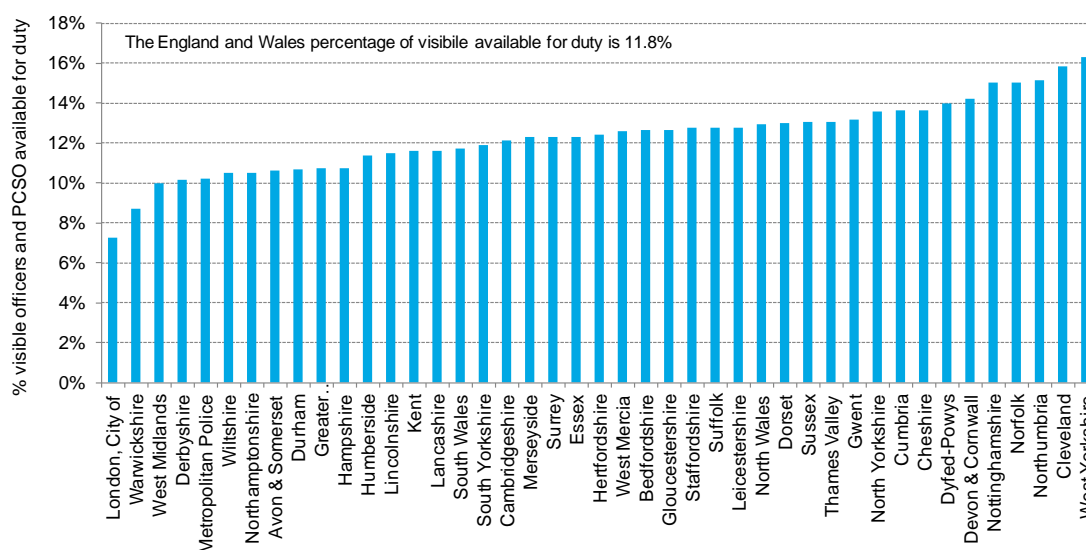
As mentioned above (p.42), a degree of the variation can be explained by a slight decrease in the proportion of frontline officers in visible roles, caused partly by forces prioritising investigation and public protection (see p.37 above): forces that are in step with this national trend will have a correspondingly lower proportion in visible functions. However, forces with a similar level of resource investment in these functions but lower visibility should consider whether this variation is because of local need and informed choice, or if it indicates they could do more to get officers and PCSOs out on the streets.

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[70] Data limitations mean that caution should be exercised before drawing too strong a conclusion here: the 61% is taken from March 2010 Home Office ADR data, whereas the 60% comes from a snapshot which forces provided to HMIC in February 2012.

How did visible availability vary throughout the week?

As was the case when we surveyed forces in December 2010, we found that visible availability was greater on Monday morning at 09.00 than either Wednesday evening or Saturday morning (although the difference in 2012 was slightly less pronounced).

This following table shows how visible availability varied over the three key times (i.e. Monday morning, Wednesday evening and the early hours of Saturday morning). It shows the total number of visible police officers and PCSO on duty as a proportion of total force strength (police officers and PCSOs).

Table 7. Comparison of the proportion of officers and PCSOs visible and available at key times across two data collections

	Average	Mon 09.00	Wed 19.00	Sat 00.30
2010	12.3%	15.9%	11.6%	9.4%
2012	11.8%	14.2%	12.0%	9.4%

However, this masks variation between different policing functions: for example, on Monday morning 17.9% of the force's response (officers and PCSOs) were on duty. The following table shows how many of the police officers and PCSOs allocated to individual visible functions are on duty in that function at the key times.

Table 8. Proportion of officers and PCSOs visible and available at key times across key functions

E & W Availability (as % of function strength)	Average	Mon 09:00	Wed 19:00	Sat 00:30
Response	*20.1%*	*17.9%*	*18.5%*	*23.8%*
Neighbourhood	*19.4%*	*26.2%*	*24.4%*	*7.7%*
Roads /Firearms Policing	*18.6%*	*25.7%*	*16.1%*	*14.0%*
Community Safety / Relations	*22.0%*	*58.0%*	*6.6%*	*1.3%*
Dogs	*17.4%*	*23.2%*	*13.8%*	*15.3%*

HMIC then examined (for the first time) whether this variation can be explained by different functions having different demand patterns. We concluded:

- The data suggests that in some areas there is clear matching of resource to demand. For instance, there are more response officers on duty in the early hours of Saturday morning than at the other key times, which fits well with the demand for service for response policing. Similarly, roads policing resources appear to vary in line with road traffic volumes, which may be taken a proxy for demand.

- Although all forces had neighbourhood policing resources on duty at 00.30 on Saturday morning, this was significantly less than on Monday morning or Wednesday evening, and was made up predominantly of police officers. This reflects the fact that PCSOs, who make up just under half of the neighbourhood policing cohort, tend not to work beyond midnight (as forces report that this is not a cost-effective option, because of the terms of their contract), and that there may be a greater demand for neighbourhood policing teams during the working day and early evening.

- The distribution of visible and available dog handlers is heavily weighted towards Monday morning. However, it is less clear how this can be based on demand, indicating scope for improvement in efficiency or effectiveness.

Due to the increasing tendency for firearms officers to operate within roads policing units it has been difficult to separate the availability of firearms officers from that of roads policing resources in general. We recommend that forces conduct demand analysis for these policing functions in order to ensure that their resourcing models deliver the right people with the right specialisms at the right time.

As might be expected, there were relatively few **special constables** on duty on Monday morning at 09.00 (as they are more likely to be engaged in their full-time jobs). The data suggests that special constables do account for a greater proportion on duty on Wednesday evening, when they represented just over one in 25 (4%) of visible officers or PCSOs. However, at 00.30 on Saturday morning, one in every 10 (10%) of visible officers or PCSOs was a special constable. While there is considerable variation between forces, the Service is therefore leveraging an additional 10% of visible and available resource through deployment of special constables in order to manage emergency response at its busiest time.

The public perspective: Visibility

Despite significant reductions to the police workforce (see p.20), a reconfiguration of policing structures (p.37), and the slight drop in the proportion of officers and PCSOs available to the public (p.43), our survey of the public indicates that to date this has not had a significant impact on the public's experience of visible policing: 19% of respondents reported seeing police more often in their area over the last 12 months; 55% reported seeing no change; and 3% reported seeing police less often.

When asked a wider question as to the whether they had seen any changes to policing in their area over the last 12 months 67% had not noticed a difference. We found no correlation between the size of the local budget cut and whether people reported seeing a change.

In *Demanding Times*, HMIC concluded that there was a link between police visibility and public confidence in the police. This confidence is measured using the British Crime Survey and the next publication (July 2012) will provide a further update on whether confidence has been affected by the reduction in police visibility.

Access to police services

Police station counters

The police station and front counter have traditionally been the physical mainstay of forces' presence in communities. Clearly identifiable and open to the public, they have become an iconic symbol of British policing and a proxy for the police presence in communities. However, the potential savings benefit to a force in shrinking its estate can be considerable: one reports that it will achieve a £0.5m revenue saving from changes to its estate in 2013/14, rising to £1.6m in 2014/ 15.   Based on average costs this could be the equivalent of around 10 police officers in the Year 1 and a further 20 in Year 2.

One way of helping to maintain physical access is to provide front counter services at other locations, which might be cheaper and more convenient for the public.   Such shared service sites see the police providing access to front counter services in locations such as local authority sites, supermarkets, libraries and other non-police buildings. Force data reveals that the number of police stations and police counters in England and Wales will decrease between March 2010 and March 2015; and although

the number of shared service sites will increase (as the table on the next page shows), there will be an overall net decrease in the number of access points.[71]

Table 9. Available access points across England & Wales[72]

	2009/10	**2014/15**	**Change**	**%**
Police Stations	1,291	1,112	-179	-14%
Front Counters[*]	1,218	954	-264	-22%
Shared Locations[**]	278	415	137	+49%

Some forces were unable to provide data for all years. In these cases data has been infilled (see Annex C for more details). *This excludes one force that was unable to provide any data on front counters. **This excludes two forces which were unable to provide any data on shared locations

While the public retain allegiance to the traditional front counter, the experience of actually using them can be less inviting. Despite the best efforts to improve accessibility it often said that the appearance of the front counters (i.e. their physical architecture, often with protective screens, intercoms/microphones and fixed furniture) can create an aura of hostility. A shift to shared provision does provide an opportunity for the police to redefine their approach to the relationship with the public and become closer to the community by making services available to where the public choose to be or would be for other purposes. The number of police stations and front counters closing in each force varies widely, as can be seen in the chart on the next page:

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[71] The number of front counters and shared service points that will be available in 2014/15 is likely to change as plans are finalised.

[72] A police station in this table refers to a police building that is solely or predominantly for the use of police officers and police staff but does not have a front counter.   Front counter refers to a police building that is open to the public to access face to face police services. Shared service sites refers to locations where the public can routinely access police services at a location other than a police building.

Figure 15. Planned change in police stations and front counters (2009/10 to 2014/15)
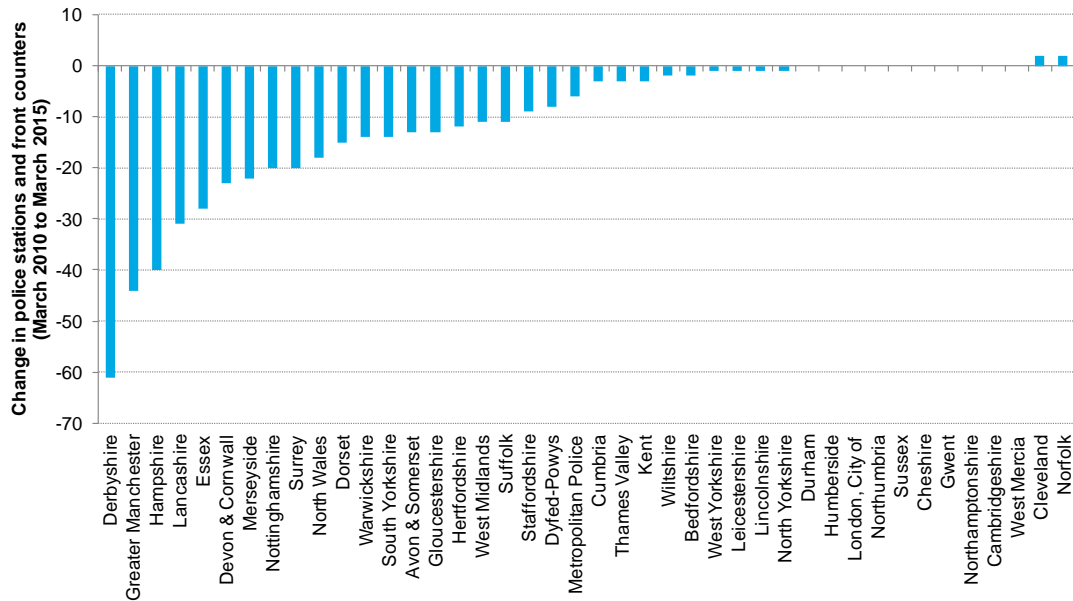
This chart excludes South Wales Police due to missing front counter data.

The following chart shows that a number of forces are seeking to increase their provision of front counter services though shared service sites.

Figure 16. Planned change in shared locations from 2009/10 to 2014/15
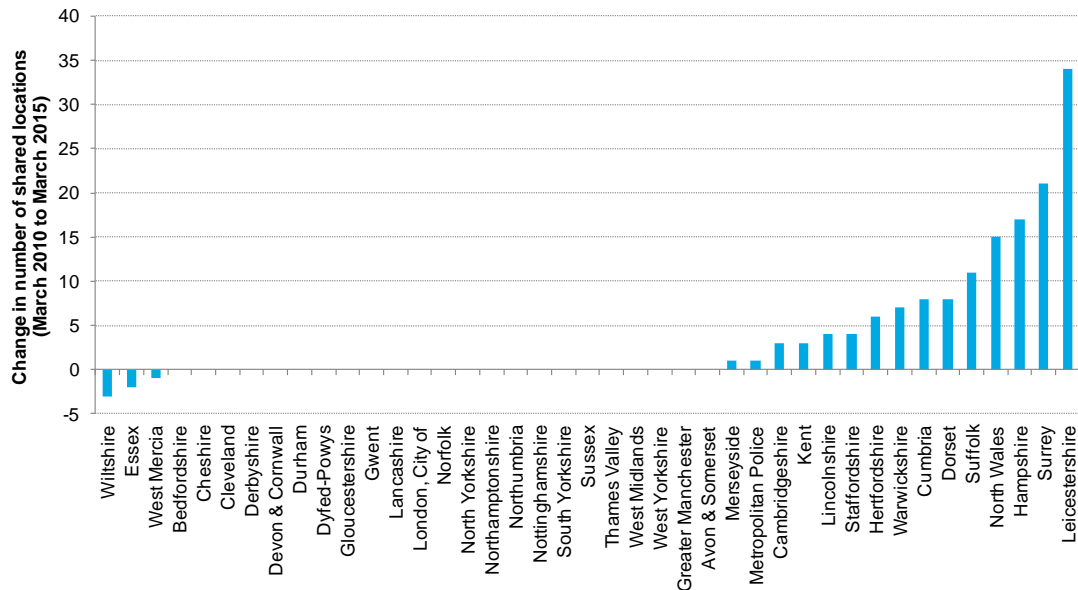
This chart excludes Humberside and South Wales Police due to missing data.

However, forces start from very different positions: for instance, a number had begun a rationalisation of their police stations and front counters before the spending review period began.

We can gain a better understanding of the level of front counter provision that will be available to the public at the end of the spending review by looking at geographical concentration and spread per head of population.[73] This shows that in 2014/15 there will be 1.4 front counters per 100 square miles across England and Wales. However, this varies across forces, with a range from between 0.3 to 11.8 front counters per 100 square miles. Similarly, the number of front counters per 100,000 people varies across forces (from 0.5 to 4.7), with a national figure of 1.8.

The Service recognises the importance communities attach not only to accessing their services but to the symbolic presence a police building has in their neighbourhood or local area. Forces report an informed approach in determining station closures, taking into consideration factors such as the number of front counters in an area, and how often and when front counters are used by the public.

Forces also reported extensive community consultation on station closure. For instance, Wiltshire Police analysed why the public use their police stations, to inform decisions regarding future provision. Consultation has had various impacts on force decisions in areas such as opening hours, and maintaining a minimum presence in particular areas; and, in the case of Northamptonshire, it led to the decision to retain current provision.

Public perspective – Police station front counters

Our survey provides a useful insight into the public's thinking on front counters:

- 57% respondents would never support the closure of a front counter;

- a much smaller proportion would accept the closure of a front counter in specific circumstances, with 29% of respondents indicating that they could support the closure if the building remained in police use, and 28% if a front counter had a low rate of callers.

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[73] Figures exclude MPS and City of London Police, due to their impact on the figures for England and Wales. South Wales Police has not provided data.

The public were also asked their preferred alternative means of accessing police services if a front counter is closed: 73% would find it acceptable where the police provide the service at another or a shared location; 75% would find it acceptable where the services are available by phone; and 41% where the services are available online. Age was a determiner as to the acceptability of online options: 62% of the aged 18–24 group most favoured online option, compared with 36% of those aged 55–64.

We put a number of questions on police stations to our focus groups, in order to test how the public would respond when faced with the tough choices that forces are having to make. The spontaneous answer was to expect local officers to be based at a very local station that could also be easily called with matters of concern. Very few in the sample had ever needed to visit their local station and never had cause to think about its role with any depth. The necessity for a local station tended to be simply assumed as part of what the police needed – a base to be called out of when needed, or simply a place to go to work. And of course just knowing there was a place to turn to when in need offered reassurance.

However, when faced with the choice of maintaining either police stations and front counters, or officers patrolling, there was a shift in view. With a clear benefit proposed the group were more inclined to see a gain rather than loss, and for it to be an evolution towards a stronger service rather than erosion of a reassuring tradition.

"Nice to know it's there, but is that indulgent?"

Female, 50s, Manchester

"It has changed my view on having a local police station, I now feel it is not so important. I'd use the phone in an emergency."

Female, 50s Manchester

"Should do away with duty desk. If I can get hold of them on the phone that's enough. No logic in walking the beat as you don't know where they are when you need them."

Female, 30s, S.Wales

Asking people to make choices and exposing them to the extent of police resources required in a modern force prompted a significant number to recognise that their interests can be better served by prioritising the telephone over the front desk, although the concern remained that response times would not be as fast as wanted or required.

Enhancement of online service provision

A move towards shared services is just one component of how forces are changing the way the public can access their services. For many this forms part of a strategy to enable the public to access police services across in a variety of ways and through different channels, to encourage a shift away from a reliance front counters and traditional officer deployment. As part of this review, HMIC therefore looked to see which services forces were making available to the public online.

We found a mixed picture across England and Wales. A number of forces relied on contact by phone or attendance in person as the principal means of accessing services.   However, five forces stood out as offering a wide range of services online: Avon and Somerset, Devon and Cornwall, Suffolk, Sussex and West Yorkshire. The table on p.52 sets out whether frequently used police services are available online.[74]

In an age of extensive internet use (particularly among the younger demographic), this table shows that there are certainly opportunities for all forces to consider the extent of the services they make available online. This would not only offer greater choice and assist in reducing demand on contact centres, but also offers the public an alternative way of accessing services which otherwise have been provided through a front counter. However, the public's willingness and ability to use different access channels varies, and forces must not leave particular groups behind (such as those who most value face-to-face contact, or who do not have ready access to the internet).

Police use of **social media**, as a component of online provision, is significantly developing with forces increasingly extending their use of social media as a communication tool as well as in support of operational policing. All 43 forces report having a presence in social media, which includes use of Twitter[75] and Facebook for communication, Flickr for promoting appeals, and YouTube for particular events.

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[74] This is based on a desk-top review conducted in April 2012 by HMIC staff, who reviewed force websites. Where a policing service was not readily found it was recorded as not provided.

[75] It is estimated that there are more than 800 police Twitter sites.

Table 10. Online service provision

Policing Service	Yes/no
Report a crime	• 15 forces offer a facility • 20 forces do not offer facility • 8 forces limited facility for hate crimes
Report ASB	• 11 forces offer a facility • 29 forces do not offer a facility • 3 forces offer a facility via third party
Report an incident	• 16 forces offer a facility • 25 forces do not offer a facility • 2 forces offer a limited facility
Make a formal complaint against police	• 28 online facility • 9 email only • 6 forces do not explicitly offer the facility
Provide quality of service feedback	• 32 online facility • 3 email only • 8 forces do not explicitly offer the facility
Make an FOI request	• 19 online facility • 20 email only • 4 forces do not explicitly offer the facility
Report lost property	• 7 forces offer a facility • 36 forces do not offer a facility
View photograph and contact details for Neighbourhood Policing Team	• 36 forces offer a facility • 2 forces do not offer a facility • 4 forces have no photographs or partial photographs
Identify face to face access points and opening times	• 42 forces offer a facility • 1 forces do not offer a facility
Provide intelligence	• 17 forces offer a facility • 15 forces do not offer a facility • 11 refer the user to Crimestoppers
Allows services to be accessed in different languages	• 27 forces offer a facility • 16 forces do not offer a facility
Does the site enable services to be accessed by those whose sight is impaired	• 22 forces offer a facility • 14 forces offer a limited facility • Some forces address other disability issues eg providing BSL, different colour backgrounds. • 7 forces do not offer a facility
Apply for a firearms licence	• 40 forces offer a facility • 3 forces do not offer a facility
As a question or seek specific information	• 37 forces offer a facility • 6 forces do not offer a facility
Other services	• All forces offer a variety of links and other services via their websites
Other digital access	• 38 forces have links sign posted to presence on Flicker, Twitter, YouTube and Facebook • 2 forces limited links sign posted to social media • 3 forces have no links signposted to social media

Forces are at different stages in their development, with some examples of innovation. For example:

- Northumbria Police convene neighbourhood meetings online;

- Bedfordshire Police operate a daily virtual front counter on Facebook;

- a number of forces (such as Sussex and the MPS) effectively use social media during public protests to provide information and counter misinformation;

- some forces, including the MPS, have used Flickr widely to promote images of persons wanted in connection with the 2011 August riots;

- Lancashire Police recently promoted its ASB campaign 'The Old Skool Massive' on YouTube, which the force reported had received more than 60,000 hits.

Social media is invaluable as an interactive communication tool, especially in fast moving situations and to target younger communities. It can therefore act as a useful addition as a 'virtual police presence' – although as a vehicle for service provision it offers fewer opportunities than force websites.

The public perspective: User satisfaction – overall access and use of online channels

HMIC looked at satisfaction data on the public's experience of making contact with their police, and conducted a survey to find out more about this (although it should be noted that many of the changes to the police estate and development of alternative channels of access are yet to be fully implemented, and so the impact may not yet be felt).

Currently, forces measure how satisfied victims of crime were with the ease of contacting the police (although this is not broken down into what channel was used). Overall, user satisfaction rates with ease of contact remains high, ranging from 91% in Lincolnshire to 99% in Northumbria. However, the results show a mixed picture across England and Wales, with four forces showing a statistically significant decline between the years ending December 2010 and December 2011, while there has been a statistically significant increase in eight forces.   Accepting that respondents were not asked specifically about how they contacted the police, we found no correlation between those forces reducing front counters and current levels of reported satisfaction.

The survey carried out for HMIC suggests that the public's preferred means of contact lags behind forces' ambitions to achieve a shift away from traditional means of access. Certainly, if forces are to increase the take-up across the range of access channels and to ensure the public see this as an enhanced (rather than diminished) service, there needs to be more work to persuade the public of the benefits.

As forces increasingly look to social media as a means of interaction, the public have yet to view this medium as a principal access channel. In our survey the public were asked the circumstances that they would use social media to interact with the police: 42% responded that they do not use social media; 15% would use it to obtain information about what their force is doing; 19% to find for information on specific incidents; and 10% to report crime.

Responding to need

As described above (p.36), forces are making a variety of changes to the structure of their response teams. We also found variation in how they respond to demand for services, from the initial decision on whether to send an officer to the scene to how far they will continue to investigate crimes with no evidential opportunities.

A number of forces reported using a risk-assessed approach to inform their deployment decisions (i.e. assessing the risk related to a call, and prioritising their response accordingly), while others use a protocol detailing the incidents and crimes that will be assigned a deployment. If an immediate deployment is not required, most forces offer scheduled appointments at a time convenient to the caller. Ten forces reported that they attend all crimes, with a view to maximising investigative opportunities.

Table 11. Deployment approaches

Deployment to crime	• 33 forces taking a risk-assessed approach.
	• 10 forces respond to all victims of crime[76].
Changes to deployment approach	• 22 forces report changing their deployment approach.
	• 20 forces have not changed
	• 1 force is currently reviewing their approach.

[76] These forces are: City of London, Dyfed Powys, Essex, Kent, Lancashire, Leicestershire, Norfolk, Northumbria, Nottinghamshire, and the MPS. Humberside are also trialling the approach in one division.

The introduction of the 101 non-emergency number in England and Wales creates a single entry point for the public to access non-emergency police services. This provides an opportunity forces to assist forces in identifying and planning deployments to crime and disorder that does not require an immediate response.

Response times reality testing

As there is no nationally comparable data collected routinely on response times, HMIC dip sampled a small number of forces (with a range of policing models, financial challenges, deployment approaches and demand profiles) to look at their emergency response times to Priority 1 calls[77] between 2010/11 and 2011/12. We found that in the majority of cases, the proportion of incidents attended within the target time has increased.[78] Thus, despite a reduction in the number of officers deployed within the response function and changes to deployment approaches, the police response to emergencies is being maintained. HMIC will continue to monitor this area.

The public perspective – Response

The impact of deployment approaches on crime and satisfaction is varied. Those forces which deploy to all victims of crime do not have the lowest crime levels or the greatest levels of victim satisfaction. Only four of the ten forces which deploy to all victims of crime appear in the lowest quartile for total crimes per 1,000 people, and two have experienced an increase in crime between December 2010 and December 2012. Two of these forces have seen a statistically significant increase in user satisfaction with the overall experience.

In our phone survey, we asked the public when they thought a police officer should automatically be deployed, giving them a range of scenarios. This was to help us gauge public tolerance for the police not attending incidents where in the past a deployment may have been more routine.

The results show that respondents did not expect a deployment in all instances, suggesting that risk-based approaches to deployment are in step with public expectation.

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[77] Calls requiring an immediate deployment.

[78] Ten forces were surveyed, of which six showed an improvement.

The results showed:

- if they were the victim of a minor assault, 43% indicated an officer should attend;

- 52% expected a deployment if they were a victim of a garage burglary and there were evidential opportunities;

- 82% expected a deployment if they heard cries for help from next door;

- 6% expected a deployment to report the theft of a mobile which occurred 15 minutes earlier; and

- 10% of respondents expected the police to attend a group of youth congregating near their home, acting boisterous but not committing any crime or being otherwise problematic.

Crime

In 2010 the Home Secretary, Theresa May, set a clear priority for the police service to reduce crime and ASB, against the backdrop of reducing funding.

Nationally, the Service has been successful in reducing overall recorded crime. Between the years ending December 2010 and December 2011, total recorded crime fell by 3%, building on previous year-on-year reductions. To date this has been achieved against a backdrop of a shrinking workforce, as well as the challenge of major change programmes as forces reconfigure their policing models to achieve sustainable savings. However, performance varies across forces. While over the same period 32 forces achieved a reduction in total crime, it increased in 11 areas, as the chart on the next page (Figure 17) shows.

In addition, there has not been a fall across all crime types: there are increases in robbery by 3% and other stealing by 7%. Burglary rates – a crime of particular concern to the public – have fallen by 1%; but in most forces, the 'other stealing' category has increased.[79] HMIC will continue to monitor these trends and is scoping potential future inspection work in these areas.

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[79] The 'other stealing' category mainly comprises theft of a pedal cycle, theft from a person and other theft (including metal theft).

Figure 17. Change in overall offence levels from 12 months to December 2010 to 12 months to December 2011
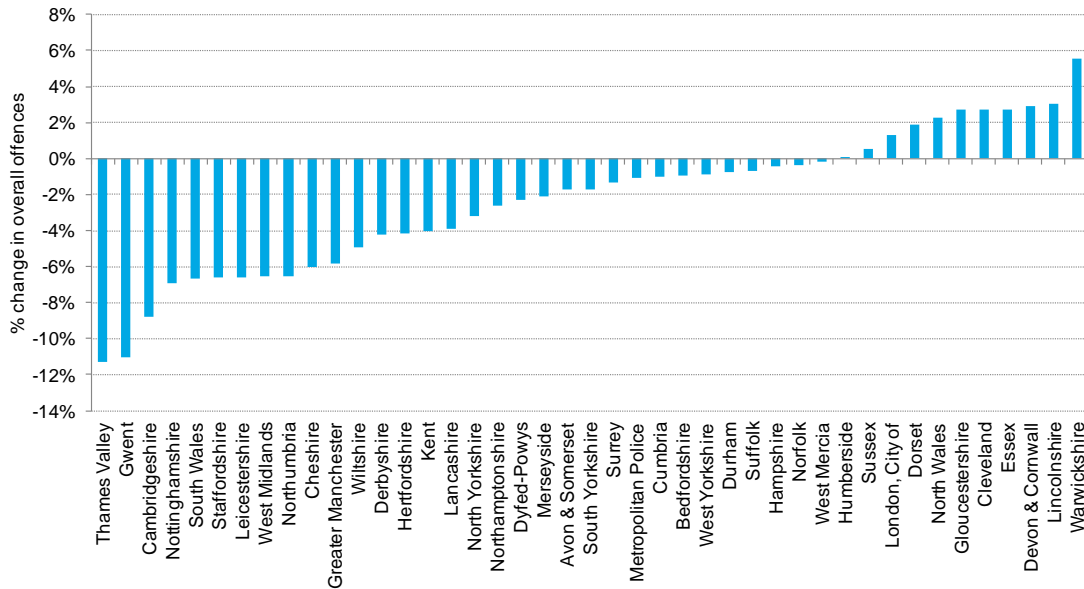
The chart below shows the level of overall crime per 1,000 people, again there is a wide variation across forces.

Figure 18. Total crimes per 1,000 population in the 12 months to December 2011
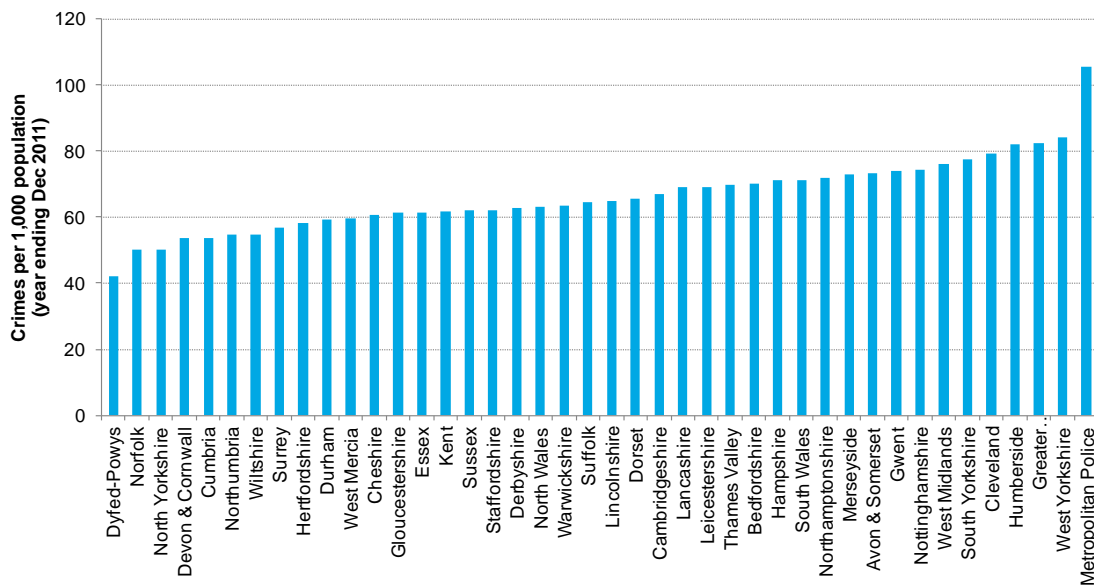
HMIC's analysis found no significant correlation between changes in overall crime and scale of budget reduction. Similarly, there is no evidence of a link between the change

in number of officers and the change in total recorded crime. This is an area which HMIC will continue to monitor over the spending review period.

The public perspective: Overall user satisfaction

The percentage of respondents who answered that they were satisfied with the overall service they received from the police varied between 74% and 93%. The chart on the next page shows the change in overall satisfaction between the years ending December 2010 and 2011. Eleven forces have shown a statistically significant increase in satisfaction over this period, while in four forces there has been a statistically significant decline.

Figure 19. Change in user satisfaction (whole experience) between years ending December 2010 and December 2011
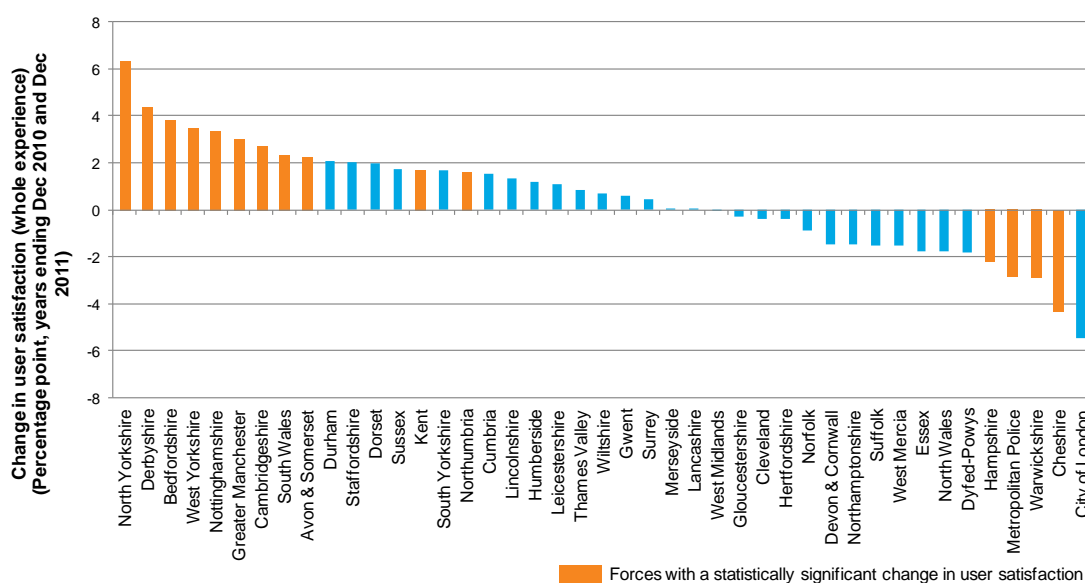
Communicating the challenges and changes to the public

HMIC found strong evidence of forces consulting widely on proposed closures of front office counters and police stations (see p.46 above).

Forces have worked extensively with their police authorities to meet their financial challenge, restructure and examine how services are provided to the public. In

particular, police authorities have been critical both in representing the public perspective and communicating the rationale for the changes and for the choices authorities and forces are making.

The public perspective: Communication of changes

HMIC's survey identified that the public were largely unaware of the decisions forces are making as they respond to the budget challenge: 62% of respondents were unaware that their force had a reduction in their budgets, and 84% of respondents did not know how their force intended to deal with these cuts. Of those who were aware of the budget reduction the main source of this information was either newspapers (47%) or television (34%). Against this backdrop it is perhaps not surprising that the public have limited tolerance for some options forces are pursuing to reduce costs while maintaining services.

Conclusion

This section looked at the consequences of forces' decisions on service delivery across visibility, accessibility, responding to need and protecting from harm. Overall, the public has largely not noticed any difference so far. For instance, while forces are changing the configuration of the two main visible policing functions (response and neighbourhoods) this has not, to date, impacted on the public's experience of seeing police locally.

Later this year police and crime commissioners (PCCs) will be introduced as part of the Government's intention to increase local accountability for policing. As they discharge their statutory functions, they may be interested in bridging the gap we identified in our survey between the budget challenges faced by forces, and the public's knowledge both of these and of the rationale behind the decisions being taken.

It is important to note that this is an emergent picture: many forces are in a transitory phase as they reconfigure their service provision. The full effect of the changes they are making is yet to be seen. The risks going forward are:

- crime increases, particularly in signal crime groups or those which are of greatest concern to the public such as robbery and burglary;

- an increasing number of forces see a decline in satisfaction; and

- securing the public's support and understanding for the changes.

5. Transforming efficiency

Forces' capacity to cut crime and ensure officers are visible and available to the public can only be sustained if the proposed workforce reductions are balanced out by compensating improvements in efficiency. The challenge for forces isn't just to balance the books, but to transform the way they deliver policing services.

HMIC (2012) *Adapting to Austerity*, p.29

In *Adapting to Austerity,* HMIC identified the need for improved efficiency to compensate for reductions in workforce numbers. This chapter summarises the key means the Service is using to achieve this.

Approaches to transforming policing

The National Audit Office has classified approaches to cost reduction in three phases, which can be summarised as:

- Tactical efficiency savings – quick wins, prioritisation localised cost savings, process efficiency

- Strategic operational realignment – better utilisation of people, processes, technology, procurement and capital assets, change customer expectations, alternative delivery models and channel shift

- Sustainable cost reduction – structured cost reduction programme/ transformational change programme, ongoing embedded cost management and continuous improvement.

These increase in implementation time and costs, but also crucially in sustainability[80].

We identified a range of approaches that forces are using to improve efficiency and effectiveness in both the front line and the non front line. In the main however, these have focused on the more transactional or 'housekeeping' aspects – or primarily 'tactical efficiency savings' with some elements of 'strategic operational realignment'.

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[80] NAO (2010) *A Short Guide to Structured Cost Reduction.* Available from www.nao.gov.uk

The same approach to policing has continued but with fewer people, rather than fundamental changes in service delivery. Based on the evidence of public expectation, what drives public confidence and police legitimacy, locally based policing that interacts with the public is critical so there is a limit on the extent to which some approaches such as shifting customer channels and changing delivery models can be implemented as alternatives to current service.

The principal changes have been outlined earlier where we described demand analysis, single crewing, risk assessed deployment has been widely used by forces to reduce the number of officers employed in response teams with a consequent redeployment in neighbourhood policing. Process improvement techniques and use of technology has also been identified (see Annex E for some examples) as being used by forces to deliver more efficient and effective policing.

The following chart summarises the principal approaches been taken by forces as they change how they deliver policing services. While we found evidence of all these approaches been taken by forces to varying degrees, the Service has by no means fully exhausted the benefits (in terms of both effectiveness and cost savings) which could be realised.

Approaches to savings
Cost control – vacancy reviews, overtime management, pay freeze, national procurement
Demand management – screening out crimes for secondary investigation, not attending non-emergencies,
Matching supply to demand – such as remodelling response shifts and staffing in custody for predictable busy periods.
Process re-engineering – industry approaches to "leaning" transactional processes such as preparing case files, HR and finance processes.
Reconfiguration of resources – for example different size and make up of neighbourhood teams depending on demands of local areas
Restructuring – centralising functions to prevent duplication, brigading of functions to better cope with peaks in demand, creation of units from public protection to prisoner handling to free up local policing
Evidence based policing – proactive patrol, hotspots policing
Technology – to support more efficient and effective deployment of officers through mobile date devices, software that supports single data entry, improved intelligence and information to support deployment of patrolling or responding officers
Partnership working – integrated offender management, or integrated tasking of community safety resources
Collaborating – driving savings and increased resilience through economies of scale, in HR, finance and procurement as well as major crimes, firearms and public order.

Left axis (top to bottom): Cutting costs; More efficient working practices; More effective working practices

Right axis: Increasingly transformational

The changes described on the frontline are principally around processes, structures and technology as these are the areas that this report so far has focused on. An area of transformation which is crucial if sustainable improvement is to be driven through with fewer resources is the transformation in skills, capabilities and roles of the workforce – particularly those on the frontline interacting with the public. HMIC is currently looking at the barriers that exist around individual police officers, particularly uniformed constables, in terms of fighting crime.

Transforming the back and middle office

Non-frontline areas of policing are set to bear the brunt of the reductions; the one-third that constitutes the non-frontline will bear three-quarters of the overall workforce reductions. It is here that we found the greatest evidence of transformation.

By reconfiguring their back and middle office functions,[81] forces are making sure they can still equip officers, staff and PCSOs with the support they need to keep them on the streets fighting crime.

Forces report the widespread development of a **shared services approach** in support functions such as human resources and finance. Centralising these services offers the opportunity to reduce accommodation, management and transaction costs through economies of scale, automation and self service. However, it is not a 'one-size-fits-all' solution: as the National Audit Office found in a 2012 report,[82] shared services can, in practice, actually increase costs if they add complexity and are overly tailored to local requirements.

Used appropriately, the shared services approach can also be used in other areas. The MPS Training Modernisation Programme has reconfigured its core training around five 'regional' learning centres and is working to extend the model to include specialist training. This programme seeks to achieve £99.7m of savings.

Greater savings can potentially be achieved by exploiting the benefits of **collaboration** – i.e. by joining services across organisations, whether through partnering with other police forces or (where appropriate) with other public sector organisations or the private sector. A good example of this is the National Police Air Service, where individual force

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[81] See Annex A for a breakdown of what roles are in each function.

[82] NAO (2012) *Efficiency and Reform in Government Corporate Functions through Shared Service Centres.* Available from www.nao.gov.uk

air support is being consolidated into a national service. This will give all forces helicopter support, 24 hours a day and 365 days a year; 97% of the population of England and Wales will remain within 20 minutes' flying time; and when fully operational it will save the Police Service £15m a year.[83]

There has been a concerted effort from the Service and Government to drive efficiencies out from **procurement** expenditure, including the considerable amount spent on ICT. Approaches include:

- frameworks which allow all forces to purchase as one customer and maximise savings – new contracts will realise typically between 4% and 6% lower costs;[84] and

- an online purchasing portal (the National Police Procurement Hub) which allows forces to buy from the top 500 policing suppliers and cuts the cost of transactions and controls by economies of scale on basic commodities by limiting the range of supplies used.

However, information about force procurement still shows multiple separate contracts with the same supplier, and some areas of expenditure where the collective buying power of the sector is not harnessed. This suggests that the Service can go further to make savings through this route (although harmonising contracts may take some time given potentially different renewal points).

Improving efficiency through partnering and collaboration

Partnering and transformational approaches are allowing forces to access a range of assets held by private sector partners: from ICT and potential capital investment to skills, business processes and innovative approaches which could be applied to policing. For instance:

- Lincolnshire has developed with its outsourcing partner (G4S) an innovative scheme to allowing police officers to remain on patrol following arrest, saving an estimated 350 police hours.

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[83] Written Ministerial Statement laid in the House on 27 March 2012.

[84] NPIA – National Police Procurement Hub

- Surrey and West Midlands Police are seeking to maximise the benefits of partnering through outsourcing, gaining the potential advantages of economies of scale, accessing business skills and the investment in technology.

While there are increasing examples of collaboration and partnering, forces are at different stages of development. They have placed more emphasis on collaborations involving support functions than operational units, although forces report the pace of change is likely to increase in these areas after the Olympics.   HMIC looks in detail at the extent of collaboration across England and Wales in *Increasing efficiency in the police service: The role of collaboration*, available from www.hmic.gov.uk.

Conclusion

We found forces are taking a range of approaches to increase their efficiency and effectiveness. However, in many cases these have been transactional and have not fundamentally altered the way policing is undertaken. We have seen the greatest change in the back and middle office and in the use of partnering and collaboration.

These changes are taking place to varying degrees across forces; some are not fully implemented; and the effects of many are still to be felt. HMIC characterises forces' approach as incremental, or one step at time. This is less risky than a sudden or widespread transformation of structures or services: but it is important that the total impact of this incremental change is understood and articulated, and that the changes put in place now prepare the Service for potential further cuts under the next spending review.

6. Managing concerns and monitoring potential risks

Managing budget reductions while continuing to deliver a range of services to the public is not without risk. Forces are putting in place structural changes and new operating procedures which mean that the reduced numbers of officers and staff will be working in different ways, and possibly with different partners.

This report has provided a commentary on the extent to which the Service as a whole is managing this risk. While the collective picture is at this stage is relatively positive (although the future impact of changes being implemented now requires continued checking and monitoring), this is not uniform across all forces, as the summary of efficiency indicators attached at Annex B sets out. While acknowledging that every force is different, both in terms of its operating context and its financial challenge,[85] it is important that this inspection programme not only provides assurance on how the sector overall is responding but also flags the forces that may present a greater level of risk, or which are managing that risk less effectively.

From the data gathered in this programme, we have identified the following key risks:

- Efficiency: financial risks – for example, a force that still does not have plans to cover the entirely of their savings challenge; over-reliance on reserves in Year 4; or failure to bear down on non-pay costs.
- Efficiency: workforce and frontline risks – for example, a significantly higher than average reduction in workforce (particularly officers); failure to increase the proportion of the workforce or officers in frontline roles; or having a significant number of police officers in non-frontline roles.
- Effectiveness –for example, a force that is not reducing crime to the same extent as the national average and other similar forces, while public satisfaction is not as high as the national average.

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[85] As we discussed in *Adapting to Austerity,* different forces face very difficult financial challenges: for instance, the savings they have to make can range from less than 10% to over 30% of their budget; and they also entered the spending review from very different positions (e.g. many had already been running change programmes to reduce cost in advance of 2011/12). See HMIC (2011) *Adapting to Austerity.* Available from www.hmic.gov.uk

There are some forces where the data collected and the professional judgement of the HMIs suggest multiple concerns around the position they are in and the current plans to manage the spending review reductions. These are the Metropolitan Police Service; Devon and Cornwall Police; and Lincolnshire Police.

The Metropolitan Police Service is considered a particular concern because of the size of its outstanding savings requirement; its performance issues; and not least the fact that it accounts for one quarter of policing in England and Wales.

HMIC will continue to monitor all three forces as they work to address these concerns.

Conclusions and next steps

A year on from the publication of *Adapting to Austerity*, the Police Service is generally rising to the tough challenge posed by the spending review and taking steps to protect frontline services.

- The majority have plans in place to balance their books: 31 forces and authorities already having plans in place to save all the money they need to by 2015.

- Forces plan to reduce their total workforce by 32,400 by the end of March 2015. This includes 15,000 officers, of which at least 7,600[86] will be from non-frontline areas, resulting in a greater proportion of officers on the frontline than there were in HMIC's baseline of March 2010. A survey conducted by HMIC alongside this review suggests that on the whole the public have not noticed a change to the service they receive.

- With just under 20% of police budgets spent on goods and services (IT, facilities management, uniform and equipment), HMIC found that nationally 24% of the savings are being made from non-pay – although there is significant variation (from 8% to over 50%). One of the ways forces are making savings is through collaboration with other forces or the private sector.

HMIC found that forces are generally achieving the rest of the savings through a series of measured changes to the way they work. These are taking place to varying degrees across forces; some are not fully implemented; and the effects of many are still to be felt. HMIC characterises forces' approach as incremental, or one step at time. This is less risky than a sudden or widespread transformation of structures or services: but it is important that the total impact of this incremental change is understood and articulated, and that the changes put in place now prepare the Service for potential further cuts under the next spending review.

In our professional judgement (and having considered local context, including police cost to the tax payer), there is a risk that three forces may not be able to provide a

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[86] This does not include data from the MPS or Cheshire Constabulary.

sufficiently efficient or effective service for the public in the future. These forces are Devon and Cornwall Police; Lincolnshire Police; and the Metropolitan Police Service.

HMIC recommends that all forces and authorities consider the data and analysis contained within this report. We will continue to monitor the efficiency and effectiveness of all forces.

Annex A: Workforce map from *Demanding Times*[87]

In *Demanding Times*, we stated that 'the police front line comprises those who are in everyday contact with the public and who directly intervene to keep people safe and enforce the law'. Applying this definition, we produced the map shown below, in which roles for which there is some agreement that they are frontline are shaded in green.

Please note: In some cases roles cut across more than one category, and where this is the case the percentage split is shown.

PUBLIC FACING				SUPPORTING PROCESSES
Visible	**Specialist**	**Middle Office**		**Back Office**
		Process Management	Process Support	
Response **Neighbourhood** Community Safety/relations Probationers ("Student Officers") **Traffic** Dogs Firearms (tactical) Mounted	Air Firearms (specialist) Marine / Underwater Surveillance Unit Ports / Special Branch / Protection / Immigration / Nationality Child / Sex/ Domestic /Missing Persons **Fingerprints** / Photographic Scenes of Crime Technical Support Unit (80%) Asset Confiscation (80%) Burglary (80%) **CID (70%)** CID – Specialist Crime Unit (70%) Drugs (80%) Fraud (80%) Hate Crime (80%) Vehicle Crime (60%) **Intelligence (40%)** Vice (70%)	Coroners Officers Operational Planning Chief Police Officers HOLMES (murder) Unit (30%) Crime & Inc Mgt (60%) Criminal Justice (30%) **Custody** **Control Room / Call Handling (60%)** Enquiry/Station Counters **Local Commanders** Professional Standards Unit (complaints about the police) (50%)	**Intelligence (60%)** Control Room / Call Handling (40%) **Criminal Justice (70%)** Criminal Records Office CID (30%) CID Specialist Crime Unit (30%) Vehicle Crime (40%) HOLMES (murder) Unit (70%) Hate Crime (20%) Fraud (20%) Burglary (20%) Asset Confiscation (20%) Tech Support Unit (20%) Professional Standards Unit (50%) Crime & Incident Management (40%) Drugs (20%) Vice (30%)	IT/Audio/Comms Corp Development **Finance** Personnel / Human Resources Press and Public Relations Property Staff Associations Buildings Drivers Staff Officers Catering Stores Supplies Training Other Admin/Clerical Vehicle Workshop/Fleet Occupational Health / Welfare

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[87] Taken from HMIC (2011) *Demanding Times*, p.19. Available from www.hmic.gov.uk

Annex B: Force-by-force key efficiency and effectiveness indicators

HMIC has put together a range of efficiency and effectiveness indicators which forces can use to compare themselves against others (see pp.72–4 for a force-by-force breakdown):

Total savings requirement as a proportion of GRE – this gives an indication of the relative savings challenge by expressing the gap as a percentage of the forces overall budget (in this case GRE, or gross revenue expenditure).

Savings and use of reserves planned as a proportion of total savings requirement – this indicates how far the force has gone in balancing its books by identifying savings and use of one-off reserves.

Use of reserves as a proportion of savings requirement in Year 4 (reliance on reserves) – shows how much the force is relying on reserves to balance the books in Year 4. (As we explain on p.16, there are risks associated with planning to use significant levels of reserves at the end of the spending review.)

Change in non-pay over the SR period –shows the extent to which the force is reducing its spend on goods and services over the spending review. The more a force saves on non-pay, the less it needs to save from pay – and so potentially the fewer workforce reductions are required.

Officer change – shows the percentage point reduction in police officers from March 2010 to March 2015. The national figure is 10 percentage points.

Staff change – shows the percentage point reduction in police staff from March 2010 to March 2015. The national figure is a 19 percentage point reduction. Forces engaged

in major outsourcing programmes between 2010 and 2015 will show a high reduction in staff.

Proportion of the workforce on the front line (projected March 2015) – shows the proportion of the workforce (i.e. officers, PCSOs and police staff) forces plan to have on the front line (as defined by the HMIC 2011 report, *Demanding Times*) by the end of the spending review period.

Proportion of officers on the front line (projected March 2015) – shows the proportion of police officers forces plan to have on the front line (as defined by the HMIC 2011 report, *Demanding Times*) by the end of the spending review period.

Proportion of the non-frontline made up of officers (projected March 2015) – this is how much of the forces non-frontline work is projected to be carried out by police officers by the end of the spending review period. To note: forces that have outsourced non-frontline services may they have very staff remaining, and therefore a greater proportion of police officers.

All crime change years ending December 2010 to December 2011 – shows the change in total crime from year ending December 2010 to year ending December 2011.

Crimes per 1,000 population year ending December 2011 – this should be read alongside the change in crime, as different forces are in different positions and have different challenges in terms of crime reduction.

User satisfaction year ending December 11 – this is data collected by forces on victim satisfaction with the whole experience of policing. Highlighted forces are those that are statistically significantly higher/lower than the national figure.

	Total savings reqt as proportion of 2010/11 GRE	Savings and use of reserves planned as a proportion of total savings requirement	Use of reserves as a proportion of savings requirement in Year 4 (reliance on reserves)	Change in non-pay over the spending review period	Officer change (England & Wales - 10%)	Staff change (England & Wales - 19%)	Proportion of the workforce on the front line (projected March 2015)	Proportion of officers on the front line (projected March 2015)	Proportion of the non-front line made up of officers (projected March 2015)	All crime change yrs ending Dec 10 to Dec 11	Crimes per 1,000 population yr ending Dec 11	User satis. yr ending Dec 11*
KEY: High	**High**	**High**	**High**	**High**	**High**	**High**	**High**	**High**	**High**	**High**	**High**	**Higher**
Low	**Low**	**Low**	**Low**	**Low**	**Low**	**Low**	**Low**	**Low**	**Low**	**Low**	**Low**	**Lower**
Avon & Somerset	13%	100%	**47%**	**-5%**	-12%	-9%	73%	**93%**	15%	-2%	73	**88%**
Bedfordshire	15%	100%	**0%**	-25%	-10%	-18%	73%	88%	26%	-1%	70	**81%**
Cambridgeshire	**8%**	100%	**0%**	-9%	-10%	-33%	73%	88%	27%	**-9%**	67	**86%**
Cheshire	14%	100%	**0%**	-27%	-11%	-26%	n/a	n/a	n/a	-6%	61	**86%**
Cleveland	17%	100%	8%	-20%	-15%	**-64%**	**85%**	93%	34%	**3%**	**79**	84%
Cumbria	16%	**76%**	**0%**	-15%	-7%	-27%	**69%**	90%	20%	-1%	**54**	**89%**
Derbyshire	14%	100%	**43%**	-11%	-8%	-11%	**70%**	88%	23%	-4%	63	**87%**
Devon & Cornwall	16%	100%	16%	-17%	**-17%**	-18%	76%	**85%**	**37%**	**3%**	**54**	85%
Dorset	14%	100%	**0%**	-8%	**-21%**	-25%	**70%**	87%	24%	2%	66	85%
Durham	17%	**83%**	**0%**	-20%	-9%	-22%	**79%**	92%	23%	-1%	59	**87%**
Dyfed-Powys	**11%**	100%	**0%**	-18%	**-5%**	-18%	73%	**94%**	**14%**	-2%	**42**	86%
Essex	13%	100%	**0%**	-19%	-9%	-18%	**70%**	91%	**18%**	**3%**	61	83%
Gloucestershire	15%	100%	9%	-18%	-10%	-26%	73%	87%	30%	**3%**	61	**82%**
Greater Manchester	18%	92%	**0%**	n/a	**-19%**	-22%	74%	**85%**	**36%**	-6%	**82**	84%
Gwent	19%	97%	11%	-29%	-9%	-31%	78%	91%	27%	**-11%**	74	**82%**
Hampshire	14%	98%	**0%**	-21%	-10%	-21%	71%	87%	26%	0%	71	**82%**
Hertfordshire	18%	93%	16%	-23%	-11%	-13%	73%	**95%**	**11%**	-4%	58	**87%**
Humberside	**10%**	100%	9%	-11%	**-21%**	-12%	**70%**	**85%**	24%	0%	**82**	84%
Kent	15%	100%	**0%**	-14%	-15%	**-37%**	73%	87%	30%	-4%	62	**88%**

	Total savings requirement as proportion of 2010/11 GRE	Savings and use of reserves planned as a proportion of total savings requirement	Use of reserves as a proportion of savings requirement in Year 4 (reliance on reserves)	Change in non-pay over the spending review period	Officer change (England & Wales -10%)	Staff change (England & Wales -19%)	Proportion of the workforce on the front line (projected March 2015)	Proportion of officers on the front line (projected March 2015)	Proportion of the non-front line made up of officers (projected March 2015)	All crime change yrs ending Dec 10 to Dec 11	Crimes per 1,000 population yr ending Dec 11	User satisfaction yr ending Dec 11*
Lancashire	14%	91%	20%	-16%	-15%	-2%	73%	89%	24%	-4%	69	85%
Leicestershire	18%	87%	15%	-25%	-14%	-9%	71%	88%	25%	-7%	69	87%
Lincolnshire	17%	85%	0%	-36%	-11%	-51%	84%	90%	40%	3%	65	83%
London, City of	19%	100%	0%	-29%	-16%	12%	67%	82%	36%	1%	n/a	86%
Merseyside	16%	100%	0%	-9%	-12%	-18%	76%	91%	24%	-2%	73	88%
Metropolitan Police	21%	70%	0%	-22%	-4%	-4%	n/a	n/a	n/a	-1%	105	74%
Norfolk	16%	100%	38%	-30%	-10%	-16%	72%	89%	22%	0%	50	87%
North Wales	10%	100%	0%	-17%	-10%	-11%	72%	88%	24%	2%	63	82%
North Yorkshire	12%	100%	55%	22%	-11%	-18%	73%	91%	18%	-3%	50	87%
Northamptonshire	10%	117%	0%	0%	-10%	-29%	72%	81%	36%	-3%	72	85%
Northumbria	23%	100%	11%	-36%	-17%	-47%	79%	91%	30%	-7%	55	93%
Nottinghamshire	20%	104%	0%	-28%	-13%	-31%	84%	95%	19%	-7%	74	88%
South Wales	15%	108%	0%	-7%	-9%	-13%	74%	88%	28%	-7%	71	87%
South Yorkshire	14%	103%	0%	-34%	-11%	-29%	69%	86%	25%	-2%	78	85%
Staffordshire	17%	90%	0%	-16%	-18%	-27%	75%	91%	22%	-7%	62	89%
Suffolk	13%	100%	7%	-21%	-1%	-17%	73%	89%	23%	-1%	64	82%
Surrey	12%	100%	0%	-36%	3%	-8%	80%	90%	24%	-1%	57	84%
Sussex	16%	95%	0%	-21%	-15%	-23%	65%	84%	26%	1%	62	84%
Thames Valley	12%	100%	0%	-22%	-3%	-7%	73%	90%	22%	-11%	70	85%
Warwickshire	23%	100%	0%	-38%	-17%	-20%	70%	83%	29%	6%	63	81%
West Mercia	17%	100%	50%	0%	-10%	-34%	70%	91%	18%	0%	60	85%

	Total savings requirement as proportion of 2010/11 GRE	Savings and use of reserves planned as a proportion of total savings requirement	Use of reserves as a proportion of savings requirement in Year 4 (reliance on reserves)	Change in non-pay over the spending review period	Officer change (England & Wales - 10%)	Staff change (England & Wales - 19%)	Proportion of the workforce on the front line (projected March 2015)	Proportion of officers on the front line (projected March 2015)	Proportion of the non-front line made up of officers (projected March 2015)	All crime change yrs ending Dec 10 to Dec 11	Crimes per 1,000 population yr ending Dec 11	User satisfaction yr ending Dec 11*
West Midlands	17%	100%	**36%**	-27%	-12%	-21%	**79%**	90%	31%	**-7%**	76	**86%**
West Yorkshire	**20%**	100%	22%	-28%	-14%	-32%	**79%**	**94%**	19%	-1%	**84**	**85%**
Wiltshire	**11%**	100%	**0%**	-13%	-10%	-16%	76%	91%	19%	-5%	55	83%

*Forces highlighted are the highest and lowest five forces, except where there are more than five forces in the top or bottom of the range. The exception is user satisfaction, where the forces highlighted are those which are higher/lower than the nation figure to a statistically significant degree.

Annex C: Methodology

This report is based on information gathered from all 43 police forces in England and Wales, covering how police forces and authorities are developing and implementing plans to respond to the budget reductions set out in the spending review settlement. We have taken reasonable steps to collect and verify data, being mindful of the burden that detailed checking would impose. We have only made statements in this report when the data is robust enough to support them.

What data has been used?

- The data used in this report was provided to HMIC by police forces.

- The data was collected from forces in February 2012. Anything that did not add up or looked unlikely was verified with forces. Forces' own data was provided back to forces for checking.

- Baseline workforce data is taken from data submitted by forces to the Home Office as part of their annual data return.

Finance data

- Forces provided HMIC with financial data covering their funding gap, savings plans, funding gap (after savings) and use of reserves. This data was provided in real terms for each individual year of the spending review period.

- In order to make comparisons with the funding gap in *Adapting to Austerity* (£1.9bn in 2010/11 prices), the financial challenge has been provided in both cash prices and 2010/11 prices (deflated using HM Treasury deflators dated March 2012); all other financial data is provided in cash prices.

- In order to give the savings requirement over the spending review period (a measure of the financial challenge faced by forces), we summed the planned savings in each individual year (2011/12, 2012/13, 2013/14 and 2014/15) and the funding gap after savings (2014/15), as provided by forces.

- The outstanding gap is the funding gap (after savings) as provided by forces.

- Pay savings include salaries and overtime.

- Non-pay savings include temporary and agency costs, injury and ill health costs, other employee costs, premises, transport, supplies and services, third party payments, and capital financing.

- Reserves are used to balance the books in individual years. In reserves data a negative figure denotes an addition to reserves

- Metropolitan Police (MPS) data is included in the national financial figures.

- Greater Manchester Police (GMP) was unable to provide their planned savings figures separated between pay and non-pay. Therefore all figures and charts which show the split between pay and non-pay savings do not include GMP, including pay savings as a percentage of pay expenditure etc.

Workforce data

- Workforce figures are provided as full time equivalents (FTEs) apart from the special constabulary data (provided as a headcount).

- Baseline data was submitted by forces to the Home Office as part of their annual data return. This is based on actual people in post as at 31st March 2010.

- Data provided by forces is based on projections as at February 2012 for the 31 March in each of the years in the spending review period.

- Baseline data is made up of the number of FTEs in post (therefore vacant posts are not included). Projections include vacant posts.

- Baseline data includes the "Other" ADR function, which includes staff absent from duty due to maternity / paternity leave, career break, full time education or suspension, and those on long-term leave (sickness, compassionate, special and unpaid). Some forces have chosen not to include "Other" or some components in their projections.

- Frontline, non-frontline, and back office data is allocated according to the model from HMIC (2011) *Demanding Times* (see Annex A).

- The MPS and Cheshire Constabulary were unable to give frontline and non-frontline workforce projections beyond March 2013. Therefore they are not included in relevant analyses.

- Surrey Police's projection data collected in February 2012 has exposed some discrepancies in their baseline data and therefore should be treated with caution.

Availability data

- Forces provided police officer and PCSO strength data as at 06 February 2012 for all functions and all visible functions. The strength data was provided as full time equivalents (FTEs).

- There were two exceptions to this: Essex provided their data for the week commencing 19 March 2012 because of mitigating circumstances; and Leicestershire provided their data for the week commencing 23 January 2012 because of mitigating circumstances.

- The visible functions, as defined in *Demanding Times*, are based on Home Office Annual Data Requirement functions (ADR601): Response; neighbourhood; roads policing; firearms; community safety / relations; dogs; mounted; and probationers (student officers).

- The eight visible functions are defined as:

  - Response: *Police Officers & PCSOs who are predominantly assigned to 24/7 response policing, this also includes task force/support group/territorial patrol but does not include traffic and motorway patrol or members of dog sections.*

  - Neighbourhood: *Police Officers & PCSOs who are predominantly employed in Neighbourhood Policing Teams including those in supporting roles.*

  - Roads Policing: *Police Officers & PCSOs who are predominantly employed on motor-cycles or in patrol vehicles for the policing of traffic and motorway related duties. This includes police officers employed in accident investigation, vehicle examination and radar duties.*

  - Firearms: *Police Officers & PCSOs who are predominantly employed in the use of firearms either as tactical advisors, trainers or in the provision of firearm support to operational incidents.*

  - Community safety/relations: *Police Officers & PCSOs in e.g. schools liaison, crime reduction, youth offender teams, CCTV, crime prevention and architectural liaison officers dealing with repeat victimisation, visual aids unit etc.*

  - Dogs: *Dog handlers including those employed for general policing, drugs and explosive detection duties.*

  - Mounted: *Police Officers & PCSOs who predominantly conduct mounted patrol duties.*

- Probationers: *Police (Student) Officers within their first year of training only.*

• Many forces have officers who perform a dual role that covers both roads policing and firearms. Therefore to ensure that all forces data for these two functions is comparable we have combined the two functions to create a 'Roads policing and firearms' category.

• All strength figures are provided as FTE. The number of Police Officers and PCSOs available are provided as headcounts.

• Availability data was collected as a headcount at three times: 09:00 Monday; 19:30 Wednesday and 00:30 Saturday. The data is a snapshot of the people on duty at that time.

• Availability is defined as the percentage of all police officers and PCSOs who are in visible functions and on duty and available for the public at three different times of the week: Monday morning at 09:00, Wednesday evening at 19:00 and Saturday morning at 00:30. It aims to provide an indicative 'snapshot' which can both give the public a sense of where the police are, and act as a proxy for productivity.

• Availability is calculated as:

$$\frac{\text{Number of Police Officers and PCSOs in visible functions on duty at that time}}{\text{Total Number of Police Officers and PSCOs in that force}}.$$

• For individual functions, availability is calculated as:

$$\frac{\text{Number of Police Officers and PCSOs in that function on duty at that time}}{\text{Total Number of Police Officers and PSCOs in that function in that force}}.$$

• Average availability is calculated as:

$$\frac{\text{Average Number of Police Officers and PCSOs in visible functions on duty across the three time periods}}{\text{Total Number of Police Officers and PSCOs in that function in that force}}$$

• Cheshire Constabulary does not have a separate response function and therefore include all of the response function within the neighbourhood function; thus their neighbourhood function appears inflated and they are excluded from response function calculations.

• Devon and Cornwall Police was unable to breakdown their availability data by function and only provided strength data. The visible categories are not categories that the force uses to organise its staff, but they have provided the figures based on the actual role performed by these groups of staff.

• Not all forces were able to provide special constabulary headcount data. Forces with missing data are: West Mercia; Staffordshire; Durham; and Devon and Cornwall.

- Some forces do not have either probationers, mounted or community, and are therefore excluded from these calculations.

Face-to-face access points data

- Forces provided HMIC with data regarding how many face-to-face access points they had, and how many they are planning to have in future years of the spending review period.

- A police station has been defined as "*a clearly identifiable police building which is solely or predominantly for the use of police officers and staff but does not provide front counter services.*"

- A front counter has been defined as "*a police building open to the general public to obtain face to face access to police services.*"

- A shared access point has been defined as *"somewhere where 'front counter' services are routinely provided at a non police location."*

- Police stations: not all forces were able to provide future projections. Where future projections were not provided, the data was in-filled using the latest year's worth of data available.

    - 2012/13 to 2014/15 were in-filled using 2011/12 data for Greater Manchester, Gwent and West Mercia; and

    - 2013/14 to 2014/15 were in-filled using 2012/13 data for: Dyfed-Powys, Essex and Cheshire.

- Front Counters: not all forces were able to provide past data or future projections. South Wales were unable to provide past data, so have been removed from analysis over time.

Where future projections were not provided, the data was in-filled using the latest year's worth of data available.

    - 2012/13 to 2014/15 were in-filled using 2011/12 data for: Dyfed-Powys, Gwent, Greater Manchester, West Mercia

    - 2013/14 to 2014/15 were in-filled using 2012/13 data for: Cheshire

- Shared access points: not all forces were able to provide past data or future projections.

Two forces were unable to provide data for any years: Humberside and South Wales

Where forces were unable to provide past data, they have been removed from analysis over time.

- No data for 2009/10: Avon and Somerset, Hertfordshire; and

- No data for 2009/10 to 2010/11: Greater Manchester.

Where future projections were not provided, the data was in-filled using the latest year's worth of data available.

- 2012/13 to 2014/15 were in-filled using 2011/12 data for: Dyfed-Powys, Gwent, Greater Manchester, Gwent, Kent, Metropolitan Police, West Mercia, West Midlands, West Yorkshire; and

- 2013/14 to 2014/15 were in-filled using 2012/13 data for: Essex, Cheshire.

User satisfaction

- These data come from local user surveys conducted by all police forces and provided to the Home Office on a quarterly basis.

- The latest available data has been used (for the year ending December 2011) and are being published here as a first release. This data is outside the scope of National Statistics.

- User satisfaction data includes the views of surveyed victims who have had contact with the police in connection with burglary, vehicle crime and violent crime. The figures represent the percentage of these victims who are satisfied with the service provided by the police.

- The user satisfaction with the overall service provided by police (whole experience) is made up of:
  - making contact with the police (ease of contact);

  - action taken by the police (actions);

  - being kept informed of progress (follow-up); and

  - treatment by staff (treatment).

- As the user satisfaction data is derived from sample surveys, the percentage of victims satisfied figures are estimates only. As such, not all differences between the percentage of victims who are satisfied are statistically significant.

- A statistically significant difference at the 95% confidence level means that the difference is unlikely to have occurred by chance.

Crime statistics

- The crime statistics used in the report are the latest figures (for the year ending December 2011) published by the Home Office as National Statistics.
- For details on the crime categories used and the underlying data, see the Crime and Policing Comparator on the HMIC website (www.hmic.gov.uk).

HMIC survey data

- HMIC also sought an independent input on the perspective of the public. Quantitative research was conducted with members of the public from across England and Wales to ascertain their knowledge and tolerance the changes forces are making. This work comprised a telephone survey of 1322 members of the public, including 400 members of the public in areas with either the largest or smallest reductions to understand if their experience differed to the main group.

- To explore more fully the public's views we also undertook further qualitative research.   This involved independently conducted focus groups in four police regions, with locations selected. 12 mini groups were conducted overall (three people of similar age and class in each), three 3 in each region. A full methodology and results are published separately.

Annex D: Force-by-force workforce reductions (broken down by officers, PCSOs and staff)

	Police Officers		Police Staff		PCSOs		Workforce	
	Change	Percentage Change	Change	Percentage Change	Change	Percentage Change	Change	Percentage Change
Avon & Somerset	-405	-12%	-165	-9%	-39	-9%	-608	-11%
Bedfordshire	-122	-10%	-158	-18%	-28	-24%	-309	-14%
Cambridgeshire	-146	-10%	-352	-33%	-14	-7%	-512	-19%
Cheshire	-241	-11%	-397	-26%	-15	-6%	-654	-17%
Cleveland	-267	-15%	-457	-64%	-27	-14%	-751	-29%
Cumbria	-88	-7%	-226	-27%	-6	-6%	-320	-15%
Derbyshire	-174	-8%	-153	-11%	0	0%	-327	-9%
Devon & Cornwall	-616	-17%	-371	-18%	-2	-1%	-989	-17%
Dorset	-308	-21%	-274	-25%	-8	-5%	-590	-22%
Durham	-137	-9%	-200	-22%	-3	-2%	-340	-13%
Dyfed-Powys	-55	-5%	-127	-18%	66	79%	-116	-6%
Essex	-325	-9%	-386	-18%	-83	-19%	-793	-13%
Gloucestershire	-125	-10%	-189	-26%	-24	-16%	-337	-15%
Greater Manchester	-1520	-19%	-927	-22%	-14	-2%	-2461	-19%
Gwent	-126	-9%	-251	-31%	0	0%	-377	-16%
Hampshire	-387	-10%	-506	-21%	-10	-3%	-902	-14%
Hertfordshire	-236	-11%	-217	-13%	-9	-3%	-462	-11%
Humberside	-436	-21%	-200	-12%	-64	-20%	-700	-17%
Kent	-570	-15%	-979	-37%	-43	-11%	-1592	-23%
Lancashire	-550	-15%	-41	-2%	-18	-4%	-609	-10%
Leicestershire	-313	-14%	-114	-9%	-36	-15%	-463	-12%
Lincolnshire	-138	-11%	-472	-51%	0	0%	-610	-27%
London, City of	-135	-16%	38	12%	-36	-69%	-133	-11%
Merseyside	-552	-12%	-401	-18%	-118	-25%	-1071	-15%
Metropolitan Police	-1410	-4%	-641	-4%	-1226	-26%	-3276	-6%
Norfolk	-162	-10%	-182	-16%	-15	-5%	-359	-12%
North Wales	-162	-10%	-104	-11%	105	67%	-161	-6%
North Yorkshire	-167	-11%	-213	-18%	-15	-8%	-395	-14%
Northamptonshire	-134	-10%	-346	-29%	-30	-18%	-509	-19%
Northumbria	-730	-17%	-977	-47%	-182	-42%	-1889	-28%
Nottinghamshire	-305	-13%	-513	-31%	63	23%	-755	-17%
South Wales	-292	-9%	-240	-13%	175	52%	-358	-7%
South Yorkshire	-327	-11%	-698	-29%	11	4%	-1014	-18%
Staffordshire	-395	-18%	-375	-27%	-25	-11%	-796	-21%
Suffolk	-14	-1%	-166	-17%	-6	-3%	-186	-8%
Surrey	49	3%	-166	-8%	48	21%	-68	-2%
Sussex	-467	-15%	-502	-23%	-23	-6%	-992	-17%
Thames Valley	-119	-3%	-196	-7%	-46	-9%	-362	-5%
Warwickshire	-170	-17%	-157	-20%	-21	-15%	-347	-19%
West Mercia	-235	-10%	-581	-34%	1	0%	-816	-19%
West Midlands	-1061	-12%	-772	-21%	-24	-3%	-1857	-14%
West Yorkshire	-813	-14%	-1138	-32%	-4	0%	-1955	-19%
Wiltshire	-119	-10%	-158	-16%	4	3%	-273	-12%

Planned reduction (FTE) from 31 March 2010 to 31 March 2015 as provided by forces to HMIC in February 2012. To note: Since submitting these numbers, Gwent Police has updated them: by March 2015 they now plan to have 240 PCSOs, a change of 100 and an increase of 71%. This does not affect the national (England and Wales) figures shown here.

Annex E: Examples of how forces are delivering efficiency and effectiveness savings

Effect on the front line: Kent Police – local policing model

Kent has implemented a comprehensive new policing model programme. Involving 3,500 officers and staff, this comprises an Operational Model, Support Services, and Non Pay Initiatives. The programme was developed following external and internal stakeholder consultation, demand and resource analysis, and reviews of existing processes and structures.

Neighbourhood policing remains at the heart of the model, with the role of neighbourhood officers widened and officer numbers determined through demand modelling. Response teams adopt borderless principles and respond to the highest priority calls only. An appointment system is now in place for cases where urgent response is not needed. Some operational support functions such as investigation management and criminal justice have also been centralised.

The force is able to point to improved early outcomes which include:

- Improved visibility: there are over 200 personal appointment visits each day which would previously have been dealt with by phone.
- Improved response times: all victims of crime are seen within 72 hours, unless they themselves are unavailable.
- Improved overall victim satisfaction: this is a direct result of managing calls and public expectation more efficiently.
- A greater percentage of officers are now in public-facing roles, whose shifts reflect demand.
- Sustained crime reduction and improved sanction detection levels.

Effect on the front line: Nottinghamshire – Project Aurora

Nottinghamshire has established a partnership with Nottingham City Council to deliver 'a single, integrated, uniformed enforcement service' for Nottingham. The Aurora programme brings together the City Council's community safety resources with those of the police. Each neighbourhood team is now co-located with the council's staff. As

well as anti-social behaviour and community protection officers, the teams now include representatives from environmental health, trading standards, parking enforcement, taxi licensing, food safety and the prostitution task force.

This has provided neighbourhood teams with a better understanding of community issues and priority areas; a fuller range of powers for dealing with issues; improved sharing of information; better deployment of resources; better visibility of officers; increased understanding of ASB and crime issues; and a better problem solving approach to issues (through tasking and coordination). The city has seen significant reductions in crime and anti-social behaviour and improved perceptions of anti-social behaviour.

As well as resulting in better partnership working, Project Aurora has also led to the development of Vanguard Plus. This is a multi-disciplinary team (made up of police, probation, the city council and the youth offending team) to tackle guns, gangs and knives. The work focuses on an early intervention approach with gang members.

Impact on service to the public: Surrey Police – shared service access points

Following an Operational Policing Review and public consultation exercise in Surrey, a decision was taken to replace outdated, expensive and poorly used police buildings and relocate neighbourhood teams in local council offices to provide more and better access for the public.

During a six-month public consultation, local people were asked how and where they would prefer to engage with police officers. They found overwhelming support in favour of meeting local officers in places and at times that best supported the life patterns of local residents. Most of all, people wanted to meet officers whilst they were on patrol: therefore, local bases to patrol from / around was important. Additionally, footfall surveys of visitors to police front counters (conducted by an independent company) supported the finding that few local people met with local officers at local police stations.

The force report that as a consequence of co-location with council staff they have developed more effective partnership working in order to tackle anti-social behaviour and helped reduce serious criminality. Additionally, increasing their presence in neighbourhoods, with a greater range of engagement opportunities and shared access points for the public, contributed to the delivery of an improved policing service.

Impact on service to the public: Lancashire Constabulary – management of crime investigation

Lancashire have redesigned their CID and public protection functions to create a new value for money policing model for the management of serious, series and complex crime. Process mapping had identified duplication and overlap. New processes were designed, with some functions (including some safeguarding and coroner's duties) transferred to police staff. A comprehensive analysis of over 100,000 crimes enabled them to build an investigative demand profile. This allowed them to optimise the allocation of investigative constables to ensure that supply matched demand and resources were allocated proportionate to risk.

The force believes that the new model will provide a better balance between local reactive CID and public protection teams. There are clearly defined criteria for investigation, under which public protection units will deal with every report of rape and serious sexual offence, thus ensuring a quality and consistency of service to all victims and a determination to bring offenders to justice. The central Multi Agency Safeguarding Hubs (MASH) will provide a consistent pathway for the protection of vulnerable people, improving risk management and partnership working whilst removing demand from territorial divisions. The management of Dangerous and Sexual Offenders will be removed from territorial divisions by the formation of two centrally governed hubs. The new model has resulted in marginally increased costs (£189K): but the force believes that it will lead to a significant increase in both the quality and effectiveness of the service.

Transforming efficiency: South Wales Police – IR 3 resource mapping tool

South Wales has introduced IR3+, which operates similar to a satellite navigation system. The technology enables the force to better respond to community needs through ensuring it has the right people in the right place at the right time. It is fitted into all force vehicles and airwave sets to allow the actual position of a vehicle or individual to be monitored at all times. The system provides live time management information to supervisors and control room to improve service delivery and the most efficient use of resources.

The system enables control room staff to see where all available resources are in relation to the incident and allocate the nearest most appropriate resource, rather than default to waiting for the response officers in the area to become available.

Incident response times have improved by almost 10% since its introduction. They are also recording an increase in neighbourhood officer patrol time (from 33% to 69%). The force is also able to show better response times and greater visibility, reduced fleet costs resulting from lower mileage, less fuel and better utilisation of vehicles.

Transforming efficiency: Dyfed-Powys Police – bespoke intelligence system

Dyfed-Powys Police has recently introduced their own bespoke Intelligence System which interacts with new briefing and tasking applications for all operational staff across the force area. The force's in-house IT team developed the systems (in collaboration with operational staff) with minimal additional investment. It comprises three key products: an intelligence system; a briefing and tasking system; and a new operational mapping system. All three are brought together in a web-based application making it accessible to front line officers when and where it is needed.

The new applications mean that staff are briefed and tasked to be in the right place, at the right time, and in possession of the right information to make informed decisions and to maximise their impact and visibility within communities. They were designed by the people who use them in order to enhance interoperability between applications and to maximise the operational use of the significant datasets kept by the force. Interactive, web-based mapping tools enable otherwise complex data sets to be represented graphically, allowing officers to present and collate data to build intelligence profiles and to help identify common trends in nominal behaviour.

The system has been well received by staff. The force reports an increase from 500 to 1000 intelligence logs per week since it was introduced.