



SOUTH WALES POLICE

14th to 16th MAY 2007

POLICE NATIONAL COMPUTER

COMPLIANCE REPORT

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1. Executive Summary

1.1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) conducted a Police National Computer (PNC) Compliance Inspection of South Wales Police between the 14th and 16th of May 2007.
- 1.1.2 Her Majesty's Inspectors would like to acknowledge the enthusiasm of the force and also to place on record their thanks to all members of staff who contributed to this report and provided assistance during the inspection.
- 1.1.3 This report is based on views and comments obtained from strategic, PNC and customer level management and users at Force Headquarters and at one of the basic command units. These views have been supported by reality checks conducted by HMIC PNC Compliance Auditors (hereafter referred to as HMIC Auditors).

1.2 Background

- 1.2.1 South Wales is the 12th largest police force in England and Wales covering an area of 812 square miles. With 1,225,900 residents the force is responsible for almost half the population of Wales.
- 1.2.2 Cardiff, the Welsh capital and Swansea are the two principal population centres in the south of the force area. The north is principally 'the valleys', historically the base of mining and heavy industry but now an area of social change and a transient working population.
- 1.2.3 Communications are good, the main arterial routes are the M4 which dissects the force west to east, the A470 from Cardiff to Merthyr Tydfil, and the A465 from Neath to Merthyr Tydfil. There is a good rail service to the south east and the midlands. Cardiff International Airport has regular services to European and worldwide destinations primarily servicing the holiday industry. Ports at Cardiff, Barry, Port Talbot and Swansea operate ferry services to Ireland and facilitate significant trade with Western Europe.
- 1.2.4 The area covered by the force attracts more than four million tourists every year, with the Gower Peninsula, Porthcawl and Barry being popular destinations.
- 1.2.5 There are six territorial basic command units (BCUs), each coterminous with the area's unitary authorities (Bridgend, Cardiff, Merthyr Tydfil, Neath/Port Talbot, Rhondda Cynon Taff, Swansea, and the Vale of Glamorgan) and commanded by a chief superintendent or superintendent. The commanders are responsible for identifying and servicing the local policing needs within the guidelines set by the Chief Constable. The force has developed a community based policing style,

with each BCU divided into sectors (force-wide there are 54) that reflect natural boundaries and local authority wards. This type of sector policing supports partnership working with local authorities and other agencies.

- 1.2.6 The Chief Constable Miss Barbara Wilding CBE, QPM, CCMI was appointed to the force on the 1st January 2004. She is supported by a deputy, by three assistant chief officers and three directors.
- 1.2.7 The force currently employs 3335 police officers, 216 community support officers and 268 special constables. These are supported by 1708 civilian support staff.
- 1.2.8 The PNC Bureau (PNCB) forms part of the Criminal Justice Department. It consists of 14 employees who provide 24 hour cover of two persons per shift. The unit covers all aspects of PNC inputting with the exception of arrest reports which are downloaded via Niche RMS initial arrest reports from Custody and court results which are input in the respective BCU's. The introduction of NICHE in force means that the Occurrence Bureau who update the NICHE records and transfer them to PNC also have a major input into the quality of PNC data. .

1.3 **Methodology**

- 1.3.1 A full inspection against the 2005 PNC Protocols was carried out, covering the sections of Leadership, Policy and Strategy, People, Partnerships and Resources, Processes and Results.
- 1.3.2 The inspection was conducted over three stages with a final assessment being provided in line with the current HMIC Baseline Assessment grading structure of:

Excellent – Comprehensive evidence of effective activity against all protocol areas.

Good – Evidence of effective activity in many areas, but not comprehensive.

Fair – Evidence of effective activity covering some areas, but concerns in others.

Poor – No or limited evidence of effective activity against the protocol areas, or serious concerns in one or more area of activity.

- 1.3.3 The first stage of the inspection involved the force providing HMIC Auditors with documentation to support its adherence to the protocols. This was followed up by a visit to the force with HMIC Auditors conducting interviews with key staff. The visit to the force also incorporated the final stage of the inspection, which was based upon

reality checks. The reality checks included reviewing PNC data against source documents and a review of PNC policy documentation.

- 1.3.4 Using the evidence gathered during each stage of the inspection, this report has been produced based upon the European Foundation of Quality Management (EFQM) format.

1.4 Current Performance

- 1.4.1 On 27th April 2000, ACPO Council endorsed the ACPO PNC Compliance Strategy. The strategy is based upon the following four aspects of data handling:

- Accuracy
- Timeliness
- Completeness
- Relevancy

- 1.4.2 The strategy is owned by ACPO but is also reliant on other partners taking responsibility for key actions within the strategy. The partners include, HMIC, the National Police Improvement Agency (NPIA) and individual forces.

- 1.4.3 On 1st January 2005, the performance indicators of the ACPO Compliance Strategy were replaced by the timeliness standards contained within the newly published Code of Practice for the PNC. The PNC Code of Practice, developed by the National Centre for Policing Excellence and endorsed by ACPO, is a statutory code made under s.39a of the Police Act 1996 (inserted by section 2 of the Police Reform Act 2002). It provides scope for the Home Secretary to invoke statutory intervention for forces failing to comply. With regards to individual forces, a number of performance indicators (PIs) specifically for PNC data standards were set. Each force has a responsibility to achieve the standards set within the Code of Practice. The timeliness standards within the Code are as follows:

- 90% of recordable offences entered onto PNC within 24 hours of the commencement of proceedings. The commencement of proceedings being defined as when a person is arrested, reported or summonsed.
- 50% of all finalisations being entered onto PNC within 7 days of the information being received by the police. This target increased to 75% on 1 July 2005, six months after the commencement of the Code. (Courts have their own target of 3 days for delivery of data to the police. Therefore, the police are measured against an overall target of 10 days.)

- 1.4.4 In the last full month prior to the inspection, April 2007, South Wales Police input 3,407 new Arrest Summons (A/S) reports, 81.9% of these

were input within 24 hours, the national average for that month was 87.5% (Chart 1). Compared to other forces, in April 2007 the force was 38 out of the 43 forces in England and Wales.¹ The force has not achieved the national standard at any time in the past twelve months. The best performance being 87.0% in August 2006. This was one of only two occasions when the force exceeded the national average. The sharp dip in performance in February 2007 has been attributed to the introduction of Niche RMS².

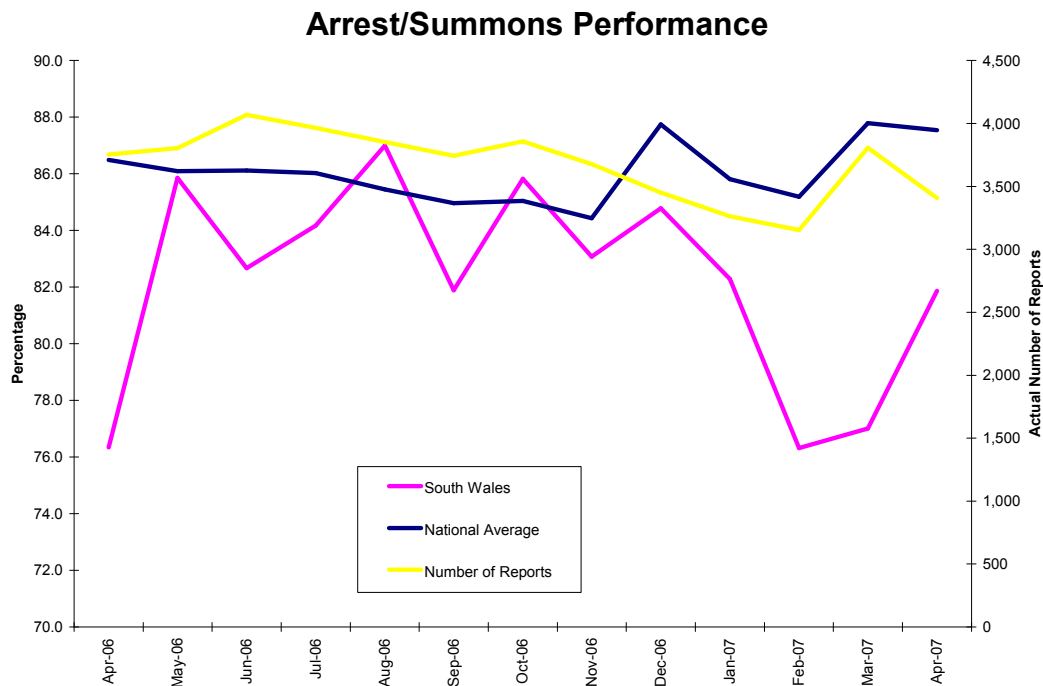


Chart 1

1.4.5 The timely finalisation of Impending Prosecutions, mainly the entry of court results has, over the twelve months from April 2006 shown consistently good performance. The national performance indicator, 75% of all finalisations being entered within ten days has been exceeded in every month with the exception of April 2007. Also with the exception of that month the target figure has been achieved in five to seven days. The relatively poor April 2007 figure puts the force 22nd out of 43 in England and Wales in that month, however this appears to be a one off bad month indeed, in July 2006 the force achieved 91.9% putting it second in the country.

1.4.6 HMIC Auditors are of the view that such consistency in performance is indicative of well established business practices and good communication with the courts. A graph illustrating the force's performance in the 12 months to April 2007 is shown below (Chart 2).

¹ This total excludes Non-Police Prosecuting Agencies.

² A computerised records management system which, for the purposes of record creation and updating, interacts directly with PNC. The Niche on-line web site can be viewed by clicking [here](#).

Disposals

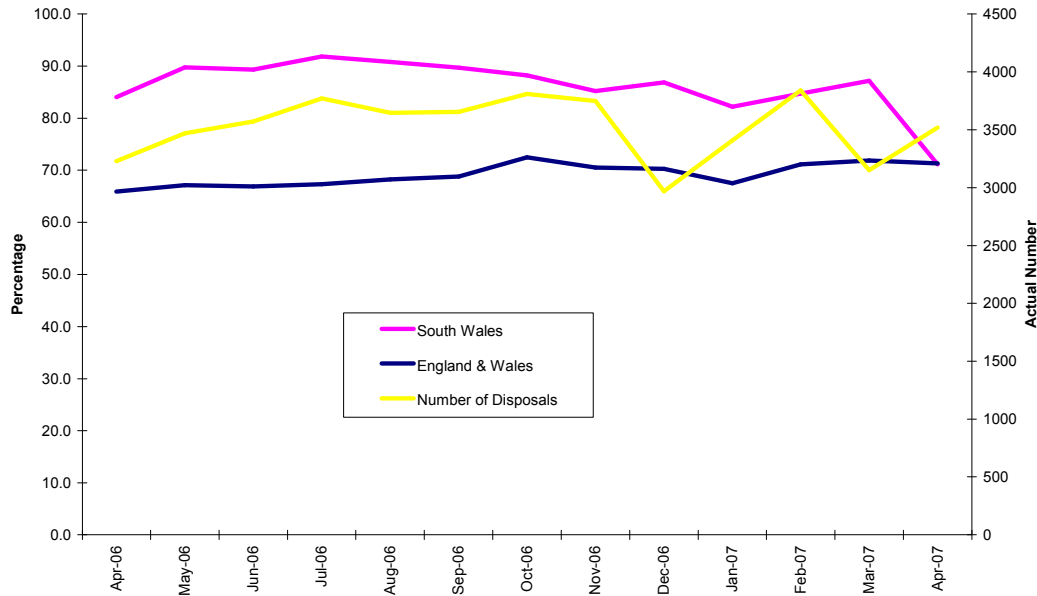


Chart 2

1.4.7 In terms of Impending Prosecutions (IPs) on the PNC, in the 12 months to April 2007 the force has shown an overall increase from 10732 to 13311.

1.4.8 The PNCB is responsible for monitoring and reviewing outstanding Impending Prosecutions. At the time of inspection the force had 1748 outstanding IP's from December 2005 which is slightly excessive for a force of this size.³

1.5 Conclusions

1.5.1 HMIC's assessment of PNC compliance within the force has been assessed as:

Poor – No or limited evidence of effective activity against the protocol areas, or serious concerns in one or more area of activity.

Some of the main points are:

- The migration to Niche RMS is being managed in much the same way as a major incident which is good practice.

³ For the purposes of comparison it should be noted that the Metropolitan police has only 3000 more IP's for this period.

- A senior officer with the relevant experience has been appointed to re-align information flows.
- There is no evidence of an officer of ACPO rank having continuing responsibility for PNC at a strategic level.
- There has been no significant data protection audit for the past three years.
- The force is not recording all Court Bail

1.5.2 The findings of this report should read in conjunction with the previous reports and recommendations relating to the PNC. The previous reports are:

- Police Research Group Report – ‘Phoenix Data Quality’, *published 1998*
- HMIC Thematic Inspection Report – ‘On The Record’, *published 2000*
- HMIC Report – ‘PNC Data Quality and Timeliness, 1st Report’, *published 2001*
- HMIC Report – ‘PNC Data Quality and Timeliness, 2nd Report’, *published 2002*

A summary of recommendations for improvement along with good practice points can be found at Appendices A and B of this report.

2. Detailed Findings and Recommendations

2.1 Leadership

2.1.1 DCC Vaughan currently holds the PNC portfolio within South Wales Police but, due to significant recent personnel changes within senior command; this can only be considered a watching brief. It has been proposed within the force that two temporary assistant chief constables will each take responsibility for PNC for a three month period. There is an appreciation that this is unsatisfactory particularly when seeking to develop long term strategic goals. Currently the day to day strategic management of PNC issues currently falls to the Head of the Criminal Justice Unit but a departmental head does not have the authority to take decisions impacting upon other areas of the force.

2.1.2 The Role of the Chief Officer

2.1.2.1 Previous reports by her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary, including the thematic report "*On the Record*" highlighted the crucial role of chief officer involvement in PNC Steering Groups. This is one of the few areas of consistency in forces who are seen as performing well in earlier inspections and its importance cannot be over emphasised. Whilst recognising the conflicting demands placed on chief officers and the constraints on their time, their role in driving PNC and data quality standards is vital to the force's overall performance in these areas.

2.1.2.2 PNC within the force has been greatly impacted upon by the introduction of NICHE and the other systems that are now integrated into NICHE. The impact of these changes has been recognised by the force and the migration to NICHE is being managed as a major incident. This is good practice.

2.1.2.3 Much of the information and data now on PNC initially starts within the force's Command and Control, Custody or Crime systems and is transferred electronically to PNC as part of the arrest data. Therefore it is incumbent on the force to ensure all staff are aware of the impact of data quality on all systems and to ensure a culture of "getting it right first time" is embedded into all areas. This message is one that has to be driven by the chief officers responsible for PNC and other IT systems in force to ensure future compliance with Management of Police Information (MOPI).

Recommendation 1

Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary recommends that, to deliver a long term, inter-departmental strategy for the force, one officer of ACPO rank has continuing responsibility for PNC.

2.1.3 **PNC Steering and User Groups**

- 2.1.3.1 HMIC Auditors have been given the PNC Steering Group (PSG) minutes from meetings in October 2006, January 2007 and March 2007. Although the Terms of Reference suggest monthly meeting, the next meeting is scheduled for June 2007 and it would appear that the force is moving to a pattern of quarterly meetings which, subject to any local unforeseen events which require immediate consideration, is appropriate.
- 2.1.3.2 The terms of reference of the PSG, as supplied to HMIC is a comprehensive document which addresses the main issues, standard agenda items and membership. The document should be updated with the frequency of meetings.
- 2.1.3.3 It is noted that, after the October 2006 meeting almost half the members have failed to attend the meetings, indeed the business managers from 'G' and 'E' divisions attended none of the meetings. Whilst operational factors will always take priority, well attended meetings are indicative of a group addressing relevant issues managed by a strong chairperson.
- 2.1.3.4 HMIC Auditors are of the opinion that the scope of the group, including the membership can be improved. For example, there is currently only one representative from a uniform division on the PSG. Divisional personnel play an integral part in delivering performance against the national targets therefore their involvement in the group should reflect the important responsibility they have in the process.
- 2.1.3.5 It could be argued that the creation of a PNC User Group could provide a current operational perspective. However it is noted that the occasional meetings of the User Group have, despite efforts to provide an interesting agenda, been poorly attended and discussed issues that were 'practitioner based and not required to be reported back to this steering group'. The functionality of PSG and PNC user groups should be complimentary but despite well drafted terms of reference detailing how the groups should interact the benefits are not being realised.

- 2.1.3.6 There is a clear understanding within sections of the force as to what is required to address PNC issues. Unfortunately PNC compliance, particularly in relation to data quality and timeliness can not be effectively managed on a day to day basis without the understanding and commitment of all officers.

Recommendation 2

Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary recommends that the current structure of the PNC Steering Group is reviewed to ensure that all stakeholders are represented. The frequency, format, content and membership of the PNC User Group should be reviewed.

2.1.4 Accountability for Performance

- 2.1.4.1 The adoption of the computerised NICHE Records Management system in March 2007 enabled an element of automation which circumvented existing data quality checks and controls. NICHE facilitates the writing of arrest data from its source directly into PNC without additional scrutiny. This has many advantages not least of which is a reduction in duplication. Such an approach necessitates that data is correct 'first time' and a larger number of inputters to the NICHE system need to be aware of their responsibilities for data that transfers to PNC which is a national system. The Tasking and Demand Management Units [TDMU] have a remit to quality assure data sent to PNC.
- 2.1.4.2 Custody Detention Officers (CDO) have responsibility for prisoner handling in a secure environment. This task was outsourced to a commercial organisation in 2003. CDO's not only receive PNC Names Enquiry training but also have training on the importance of descriptive factors and the implications of good quality data input. Particularly in this environment when the local system to PNC interface is discreet, this is good practice.
- 2.1.4.3 A number of examples were found however where inputting personnel did not understand the implications of incorrect data entry or an awareness that the data was being written to a national system. It was accepted by senior management that more rigour is required for compliance to PNC standards. A stricter regime of training, supervision and sanction where appropriate must be developed by the force.

- 2.1.4.4 There does appear to be some confusion within the force relating to how issues relating to data quality can best be resolved. Occurrence Bureau and PNCB staff highlighted instances when PNC records appear to be incorrect but have been unable to resolve the issue locally because local supervision refuse to co-operate. Clearly whilst operational imperatives are paramount the force is at risk if incomplete or inaccurate data is entered on PNC.

Recommendation 3

Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary recommends that the force review the procedures in place for awareness training and the resolution of conflict in respect of data quality issues.

2.2 Policy & Strategy

2.2.1 Security and Auditing

- 2.2.1.1 HMIC Auditors reviewed six key system security areas, these are User Access, Transaction Monitoring, Data Protection Auditing, the role of Professional Standards, Information Security and Data Protection training.
- 2.2.1.2 It was noted that the force had a comprehensive list of force policies and strategies relating to the operational use of PNC, and that these were available to all users of PNC. This is good practice.
- 2.2.1.3 A force IT Security Policy is currently in the latter stages of a review. The policy will be published on the intranet and reviewed by the Information Security officer every 2-3 months. The policy covers all systems including PNC.
- 2.2.1.4 The risk assessment methodology used is to the national standard. The force has produced a risk assessed data protection audit requirement schedule but, with the exception of a partial vehicle audit on May 2006 records in preparation for Schengen⁴, none of the work has been completed.
- 2.2.1.5 There has been no recent data quality audit on PNC. The most recent audit being on 'A' division stolen vehicles in 2003-04 and a Wanted/Missing audit in 2004. Several business cases requesting additional resources to enable additional auditing have been rejected.
- 2.2.1.6 It is accepted by HM Inspector that the force is moving quickly to re-structure its business processes to restore the quality checking element, however in the mean time there is no confidence that the quality of data being written to PNC is of the required standard and without diligent independent auditing to ensure the data quality processes currently in place are working the force is not in a position to identify recurring failures. This one element has significantly influenced the overall grade awarded.

Recommendation 4

Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary recommends that the force introduce a programme of risk assessed data quality audits based on the ACPO Data Protection Manual of Guidance, the results of which will inform the change programme by identifying organisational deficiencies.

⁴ The part of the agreement relating to information sharing with European partners.

- 2.2.1.7 Transaction Monitoring throughout the force is undertaken by the Data Protection department. Five transactions are selected at random and those that can not be justified by reference to other computerised systems are queried with the originator. If no response is received to the first reminder the originators supervisor is informed. Additionally if there is no response from the supervisor the issue is referred to the Professional Standards Department. This involvement of local supervision is good practice.
- 2.2.1.8 The force owns PNC Guard, a software application designed to remotely monitor and validate user access to PNC. Evidence suggests that this application is the responsibility of IT support and its potential is not being realised due to a perceived problem identifying individual users to ensure accountability. This is despite the fact that the PNCB maintains a database of users for just this purpose. An application like PNC Guard can deliver an enhanced level of security in real time and release resources to carry out other functions.

Recommendation 5

Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary recommends the responsibility for and use of PNC Guard be reviewed by the force with a view to realising its full potential.

2.2.2 PNC Security

- 2.2.2.1 The Professional Standards Unit oversees the management of PNC misuse within the force. Queries requiring further action are referred to the department. In 2006 thirty two queries were referred, to date this year ten have been referred.
- 2.2.2.2 The force Business Development department undertakes environmental scanning. Any changes to working practices as a result of a change in the law or other external factors are fed to the appropriate department. The Data Protection Officer and Information Security Officer advise as appropriate.
- 2.2.2.3 In respect of PNC authority levels, operational personnel are trained to enquire on the system via a web browser. As stated, user access levels are created/updated and monitored by the PNCB based upon information from training department indicating that the individual has successfully completed a course. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the system in use works well but in the view of the HMIC Auditors it does not have the necessary independent element. It is suggested that this function be transferred to a department where the independence can be guaranteed. Whilst the process for managing user access is robust, HMIC Auditors are of the opinion that the force will gain further

assurance that all User IDs are current and relevant if the list of IDs is subject to an independent check. Whilst not questioning the integrity of the staff currently involved in the administration of User IDs, the process is currently being managed by staff who also have operational access to the PNC. This creates an additional risk to the organisation therefore, the independent audit, or dip sample of User IDs will minimise this risk

Recommendation 6

Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary recommends that in order to gain assurance that all PNC User IDs are current and relevant the force should review its procedures and areas of responsibility and also ensure an independent audit or dip sample of the of the User IDS is carried out on an annual basis

2.2.3 Recording Commencement of Proceedings

2.2.3.1 Operational staff were in general aware of the timeliness targets for Arrest Summons and Fixed Penalty Notices for Disorder (PND's) to be recorded on PNC. However HMIC Auditors were given anecdotal evidence that PND's for recordable offences were being placed in a basket in the custody suite and left there as no one knew what to do with them.

2.2.3.2 HMIC Auditors were also made aware of failures within the Custody area caused by staff releasing the prisoner without creating their offences on NICHE. This was detected when results were received from the courts for offences that had not had the initial arrest summons created on PNC. There were also examples of multiple offences and bail being created on NICHE and only one offence being transferred to PNC. Additionally there were reports of court results being received for offences that had been marked up as No Further Action (NFA) on the NICHE system.

Recommendation 7

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that the force reviews its processes and recording of offences within the Custody area to ensure robust processes are in place to record all offences accurately and in a timely manner. Staff must be trained to the correct level of awareness to ensure they understand the impact of poor quality, incomplete and incorrect data on the integrity of PNC

2.2.3.3 When an offender recorded as Wanted on PNC is arrested the Arresting Officer is required to notify the PNCB to ensure that a

'Detained' report is entered onto PNC. HMIC Auditors were made aware of several instances when staff failed to do this causing a failure to cancel warrants, and bail and Wanted /Missing reports being missed or not dealt with at the appropriate time.

Recommendation 8

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that the force reviews its processes and recording of Detained reports on PNC to ensure robust processes are in place to record all occurrences accurately and in a timely manner. Staff must receive training to ensure they understand the impact of failing to carry out a force procedure and the consequences thereof.

2.3 People

2.3.1 Marketing, Awareness and Maximising the Potential of PNC

- 2.3.1.1 Throughout the inspection HMIC Auditors were made aware of the high regard all force personnel had for the PNCB. The PNCB was recognised throughout the force as being a centre of excellence with professional and committed staff who were exceptionally helpful and willing.
- 2.3.1.2 During meetings and focus groups HMIC Auditors noted variable levels of awareness amongst officers and staff of the potential of PNC and its functionality and operational usefulness. Officers that had recently completed their probationary period and specialist officers who had recently attended training courses were predictably most knowledgeable, whilst core operational officers were less so, indicating that the marketing of the benefits of PNC had missed a significant core group of operational officers.

Recommendation 9

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that the force review its PNC marketing strategy to ensure it is effectively updating core operational officers with the relevant information they require to carry out their duties effectively.

- 2.3.1.3 HMIC Auditors noted that Control Room and PNCB Staff were aware of the Violent and Sex Offenders Register (ViSOR) and understood what is required when they check out a PNC nominal and find they are also a ViSOR subject. However there was less awareness amongst operational officers. It was noted that ViSOR can be quickly accessed for reference purposes by appropriately trained personnel at all times. This is good practice.
- 2.3.1.4 Additionally awareness of operational officers for both Vehicle Online Descriptive Search (VODS) and the Names File Queries Using Extended Search Techniques (QUEST) was uneven with most officers having heard of the systems but unable to give an explanation of what it might do for an investigation they were involved in.

Recommendation 10

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that the force review its marketing strategy to ensure core operational officers are aware of the benefits of VODS, QUEST and ViSOR.

- 2.3.1.5 It is common practice for operational officers to request urgent PNC checks to be carried out by Control Room staff. As all control room staff are not PNC trained this could, during busy periods, result in a delayed response and a reduced level of operational support.
- 2.3.1.6 There was evidence that none urgent PNC queries could not be quickly resolved as only a limited number of police station front office and custody staff are PNC trained. Officers found it necessary to ring round the front office, Control Room and finally the PNCB. HMIC Auditors were advised that the hours of Station Enquiry staff were in the process of being reduced so this could impact with extra calls to Control Room and PNCB staff.

Recommendation 11

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that the force review the availability of staff trained to carry out both urgent and non-urgent PNC checks to ensure operational officers can carry out their duties effectively.

- 2.3.1.7 Modus Operandi details are added to the NICHE record by the Occurrence Bureau staff, it is of some concern that the staff had not been trained on how to construct an MO or instructed as to what points needed to be included to ensure the information on the record was operationally useful. This was leading to a backlog of work in the Occurrence Bureau with staff having to "cleanse" records before being able to release the information to PNC. Additionally many of the staff in the Occurrence Bureau were waiting for their PNC training and were not fully aware of the implications of the work they were carrying out.

Recommendation 12

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that the force review its training of Occurrence Bureau staff to ensure they can carry out their duties effectively and to improve workflows and processes within the organisation.

2.3.1.8 The force currently have just one case on PNC Crimelink⁵ the national level two cross border system for unsolved cases. Throughout the force there was little awareness of PNC Crimelink and its capabilities.

2.3.1.9 PNC Crimelink is currently being reviewed nationally by ACPO and once agreement is reached the force should embrace the national guidelines

2.3.2 PNC Training

2.3.2.1 PNC Training is currently provided partially by Training Department personnel who deliver PNC Enquiry courses and partially by NPIA who train the PNC Update courses. It is planned that all PNC training will be carried out by the Force Training Department in future. The force currently have six fully accredited PNC trainers, three of whom can also deliver VODS and QUEST training,

2.3.2.2 The force does not currently have a PNC or IT Training Strategy to ensure qualitative and cost effective PNC training that takes into account the demands of operational policing and the impact of IT projects.

2.3.2.3 No Training Needs Analysis (TNA) is carried out to ensure roles are receiving the correct levels of PNC training, consequently the force is not in a position to ascertain whether the training given is insufficient or excessive.

Recommendation 13

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that the force implements an over arching PNC/IT Training strategy incorporating short, medium and long term issues to ensure it is delivering effective and cost efficient PNC Training.

2.3.2.4 Due to the implementation of NICHE, all PNC training apart from that designated as "critical need" had been suspended until at least September 2007. It was acknowledged that at the time of the inspection at least 24 people with a "critical need" for PNC enquiry training were on the waiting list, all of which were either Control Room or Occurrence Bureau staff. This was having a detrimental effect on efficient working the Force Occurrence Bureau in particular.

⁵ At the time of this report this functionality module of PNC is not mandated by ACPO.

Recommendation 14

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that the force review its PNC training plan and provision of PNC Training and that in future early consideration of the impact of IT projects on the IT Training section is taken in to consideration within the early stages of planning.

- 2.3.2.5 All PNC courses are delivered in a classroom environment and have a formal assessment with a pass mark of 75%. If a student fails the assessment trainers are allowed to use their discretion on deciding whether the student is retrained, or just revisits part of the course.
- 2.3.2.6 The force do not currently offer refresher training for PNC users, however a change in the Control Room staff shift pattern is planned and on the new pattern it is planned to give all Control Room staff two days of refresher training between November 2007 to March 2008. This will be a one day PNC Names refresher course and a one day Vehicle and Property refresher course.

Recommendation 15

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that the force review its PNC Training and offers refresher training for all staff requiring it.

- 2.3.2.7 HMIC Auditors found that there is no corporate policy in relation to which individual members of staff, or which positions within the organisation require PNC training. Approval for PNC Training is provided at BCU level, however, with no corporate policy, there is a risk of staff in certain roles on one BCU being offered training places, whilst staff in similar roles on a different BCU being refused. This does not affect any staff who have training approved because once it has been approved, the PNC training is delivered, however, there is a risk that inconsistencies exist in the criteria being used in each BCU when decisions are being made.

Recommendation 16

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that in order to provide a more efficient and fair approach to the delivery of PNC Training, South Wales Police develop role profiles to define the levels and types of training for each role.

- 2.3.2.8 The force does not carry out a full evaluation to ensure that what is being taught in the classroom is transferring effectively to the workplace. Currently the force does carry out a level one evaluation as per the Kirkpatrick model⁶ but do not follow this up with level two and level three evaluations to measure transference of effective skills to the workplace, consequently the force cannot be sure the training they deliver is of the correct level, quality and effectiveness.

Recommendation 17

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that South Wales Police considers an expansion of training evaluation to include all levels of the Kirkpatrick model to ensure training is effective and skills taught are being transferred to the workplace.

- 2.3.2.9 Data Protection and Computer Misuse issues are covered in every PNC Course by the PNC training staff. Students sign a form to say they understand and acknowledge their responsibilities in relation to these issues. The signed forms are sent to the Data Protection Office where they are filed and retained.. The creation and central retention of this documentation is good practice.

⁶ Donald L Kirkpatrick Professor Emeritus, University of Wisconsin developed the Four Levels of Learning Evaluation which has been widely adopted throughout Police Training. It covers 1-the reaction of the student, 2- the learning and increased knowledge and skills, 3-behaviour and transference of learning, 4-results.

2.4 Partnerships and Resources

2.4.1 Relationship with the Courts and Other Organisations

- 2.4.1.1 The force has five petty sessional court areas within its boundary. There are also two Crown Courts at Swansea and Cardiff. Liaison with the courts is good, each magistrates clerk specialises in separate business areas facilitating a well informed consistency of approach. Inputting staff report a good response from the courts to ad hoc queries.
- 2.4.1.2 Court results are input at BCU area level. The validated results for local courts are printed in the police premises. The exception to this is Bridgend where the court results print is collected manually. Crown Court results are input with information from the Xhibit computerised system although, when results do not reflect the original charge it would be useful to have the indictment with the result. Whilst the statistical results indicate that the process is working well, the force should be aware that a number of forces have benefited from a centralisation of this function.
- 2.4.1.3 Any issues relating to PNC if not resolved informally are referred to the PNC Steering Group from where any further appropriate escalation is monitored.
- 2.4.1.4 There was no evidence of staff from other organisations particularly the force's criminal justice partners attending the Steering Group. Real benefits have been gained in other forces when the group is given the benefit of an external perspective on day to day operational matters. (See Recommendation 2)
- 2.4.1.5 Anecdotal evidence suggested that the Immigration Service did not always notify the police of the commencement of proceedings and court results in a timely fashion. Any matters so arising that can not be resolved at the practitioner level should be escalated to the PNC Steering Group for action.
- 2.4.1.6 A Single Non-Emergency Number (SNEN) is in use in the force. This is restricted to Cardiff BCU and is manned by Cardiff council personnel who record low level crime and incident information. The unit takes approximately 500 calls a day which are entered on NICHE and which in some cases are also transferred to PNC.. Data generated by the unit is checked in the Occurrence Bureau.

2.4.2 Service Level Agreements

- 2.4.2.1 The force has a number of local service level agreements these detail agreed working agreements with, amongst others the Courts, Immigration Service and the Department of Work and Pensions. This is good practice.
- 2.4.2.2 Of particular interest is an agreement with the courts that sensitive information is transmitted by secure e-mail and not facsimile as in the past. This initiative markedly improves the security of such transmissions, maximises the potential of modern technology and is good practice.

2.5 Processes

2.5.1 **Creation and Update of Arrest Summons (A/S) Reports**

- 2.5.1.1 The creation of Arrest/Summons (A/S) reports in South Wales Police requires the custody officer to download the initial arrest from the NICHE system with the details required to create a skeleton record on PNC⁷. This is later updated by the force to a full record status, Occurrence Bureau staff add the MO to each record and the officers ensure a PNC1 form is submitted to the Occurrence Bureau to create the descriptive details of the offender. After the arrest has been disposed of by the Custody staff, the record is quality assured by the TDMU.
- 2.5.1.2 At the time of the inspection the Occurrence Bureau was experiencing large backlogs due to issues with the quality of data that was being added to NICHE and which would later transfer to PNC. Anecdotal evidence suggests that this was as a result of insufficient numbers of staff being trained in NICHE, a lack of training in NSPIS Command and Control which feeds into NICHE and also a lack of awareness of what was required for a good quality record on PNC.

Recommendation 18

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that the force develop a more efficient process to transmit data from NICHE / NSPIS Command and Control to PNC. Error rates and issues with data quality currently experienced are causing duplication of effort in order to attain performance targets.

2.5.2 **Updating of Court Results**

- 2.5.2.1 The force currently updates relevant data from court registers onto the PNC in a timely manner; this includes disposals, remands, and adjournments however, with the exception of bail relating to domestic violence offences, they do not update court bail conditions.
- 2.5.2.2 Magistrates Courts data is received by the force is a number of different formats, Cardiff Court results are received via the Magistrates Court Service (MCS) printer in the Cardiff office and as a hard copy register delivered via courier in the Bridgend office. Bridgend has been experiencing some delays with adult court registers regularly taking 3 or 4 days to arrive.
- 2.5.2.3 Crown Court results are received on the same day in the Cardiff court resulting office however the results of the Bridgend area were taking up

⁷ A skeleton record contains basic information sufficient only to identify the offender. The investigative potential of PNC requires a full data entry including descriptive information.

to 7 days to arrive due to being posted onwards from the Cardiff Resulting Office. Liaison by the force over this issue means that the registers are now faxed to Bridgend and this appears to have resolved the issue.

Recommendation 19

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that the force ensures all court bail conditions are updated onto PNC.

- 2.5.2.4 Outstanding Impending Prosecutions (IP's) are followed up by the PNCB on receipt of the monthly Daily Activity File (DAF) report. Most queries are resolved by liaison with the courts. However despite the force managing the IP's on a monthly basis, there is a reliance on the experience of operators deciding when to delete outstanding records. The force does not have any formal procedures relating to the management of old outstanding IP's, e.g. if the PNCB believes a warrant should be withdrawn it is based on the experience of the PNCB staff who have no guidelines or process maps to consult.⁸

Recommendation 20

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that the force considers and reviews the process and procedures to produce formal documentation and guidelines for the outstanding impending prosecutions decision making process.

2.5.3 Ad Hoc Intelligence Updates

- 2.5.3.1 The process for inputting ad hoc intelligence onto the PNC requires an officer to contact the PNCB by memo, email or fax. Anecdotal evidence provided suggests that updates received by the PNCB tend to come from C, E divisions and Prison Liaison Officers only with other divisions supplying very few updates. This is also true of updates relating to Persistent Young Offenders (PYO's).

Recommendation 21

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that the force review and revise procedures for the collection and transmission of ad-hoc data required for PNC update.

⁸ Warrant management procedures are outside the remit of this report. The Criminal Justice System – Getting Defendants to Court (GDC) manuals offer guidance on this matter.

2.5.4 Data Quality

- 2.5.4.1 At the time of the inspection South Wales Police had recently introduced NICHE Record Management System, NSPIS Command and Control and the subsequent integration of the majority of its major IT systems. This means that PNC is no longer updated by a small core of specialist PNC updaters in the PNCB and Court Resulting sections, but by large numbers of staff throughout the force in the Custody Suites, Control Room, Occurrence Bureau and the 101 Bureau. In most cases these new updaters are not directly updating PNC but are entering data into other systems that later feed into PNC without further scrutiny. There is a clear understanding by many individuals in the South Wales force that data quality was of great importance to PNC, however this awareness was not found throughout the force with staff in some key areas unaware of the impact they were having on both local and national systems such as PNC.
- 2.5.4.2 HMIC auditors conducted reality checks to determine the quality of data that is subsequently input to PNC. This was achieved by obtaining a court register and comparing the details to the PNC record and by carrying out QUEST searches on South Wales data.
- 2.5.4.3 One full court register from Bridgend Magistrates court 1/5/2007 was checked. The following errors were noted: no bail conditions were entered, a disqualified driver offence had been resulted with the court disposal but the Disqualified Driver Page (DD) had not been created. A remand had been added to a record but the conditions of the remand had not been added. A further 3 minor errors were noted.
- 2.5.4.4 A QUEST search was carried out on Names records created by South Wales Police since the introduction of NICHE. Twenty six records were found females with a beard, these all contained the description of goatee beard. This was later identified as an imputing error on NICHE. There were also over 2000 records of women being recorded with a description of "close shaven".
- 2.5.4.5 A further QUEST search revealed 11 individuals under the age of 7 with 4 having PNCID numbers within a year of the date of birth, 7 records showed an alias date of birth within a week of the date of process, these were provided to the force to check the data and amend the records.

2.6 Results

- 2.6.1 Prior to the introduction of NICHE and the integration of the other major IT systems in South Wales the force were consistently close to attaining the target of 90% for imputing Arrest/Summons (A/S) updates on to PNC within 24 hours. In the last full month prior to inspection the force only managed 81.7% within the required timeframe.
- 2.6.2 South Wales were regularly achieving the 75% target prior to April 2007, however with the inception of NICHE the force suffered a dip in performance, much of this is attributed to the number of queries the resulting staff are dealing with due to results from the courts not matching what is recorded on PNC.
- 2.6.3 Impending Prosecutions have shown a steady rise in the 12 months prior to the inspection increasing by 2579 within that time.

APPENDIX A – SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SOUTH WALES POLICE

Recommendation 1

Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary recommends that, to deliver a long term, inter-departmental strategy for the force, one officer of ACPO rank has continuing responsibility for PNC.

Recommendation 2

Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary recommends that the current structure of the PNC Steering Group is reviewed to ensure that all stakeholders are represented.

The frequency, format, content and membership of the PNC User Group should be reviewed

Recommendation 3

Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary recommends that the force review the procedures in place for awareness training and the resolution of conflict in respect of data quality issues.

Recommendation 4

Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary recommends that the force introduce a programme of risk assessed data quality audits based on the ACPO Data Protection Manual of Guidance, the results of which will inform the change programme by identifying organisational deficiencies

Recommendation 5

Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary recommends the responsibility for and use of PNC Guard be reviewed by the force with a view to realising its full potential

Recommendation 6

Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary recommends that in order to gain assurance that all PNC User IDs are current and relevant the force should review its procedures and areas of responsibility and also ensure an independent audit or dip sample of the of the User IDS is carried out on an annual basis

Recommendation 7

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that the force reviews its processes and recording of offences within the Custody area to ensure robust processes are in place to record all offences accurately and in a timely manner. Staff must be trained to the correct level of awareness to ensure they understand the impact of poor quality, incomplete and incorrect data on the integrity of PNC

Recommendation 8

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that the force reviews its processes and recording of Detained reports on PNC to ensure robust processes are in place to record all occurrences accurately and in a timely manner. Staff must receive training to ensure they understand the impact of failing to carry out a force procedure and the consequences thereof.

Recommendation 9

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that the force review its PNC Marketing strategy to ensure it is effectively updating the core operational officers with the relevant information they require to carry out their duties effectively.

Recommendation 10

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that the force review its marketing strategy to ensure core operational officers are aware of the benefits of VODS, QUEST and ViSOR.

Recommendation 11

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that the force review the availability of staff trained to carry out both urgent and non-urgent PNC checks to ensure operational officers can carry out their duties effectively.

Recommendation 12

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that the force review its training of Occurrence Bureau staff to ensure they can carry out their duties effectively and to improve workflows and processes within the organisation.

Recommendation 13

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that the force implements an overarching PNC/IT Training strategy incorporating short, medium and long term issues to ensure it is delivering effective and cost efficient PNC Training.

Recommendation 14

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that the force review its PNC training plan and provision of PNC Training and that in future early consideration of

the impact of IT projects on the IT Training section is taken in to consideration within the early stages of planning.

Recommendation 15

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that the force review its PNC Training and offers refresher training for all staff requiring it.

Recommendation 16

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that in order to provide a more efficient and fair approach to the delivery of PNC Training, South Wales Police develop role profiles to define the levels and types of training for each role.

Recommendation 17

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that South Wales Police considers an expansion of training evaluation to include all levels of the Kirkpatrick model to ensure training is effective and skills taught are being transferred to the workplace

Recommendation 18

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that the force develops a more efficient process to transmit data from NICHE / NSPIS Command and Control to PNC. Error rates and issues with data quality currently experienced are causing duplication of effort in order to attain performance targets.

Recommendation 19

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that the force ensures all court bail conditions are updated onto PNC.

Recommendation 20

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that the force considers and reviews the process and procedures to produce formal documentation and guidelines for the outstanding impending prosecutions decision making process.

Recommendation 21

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that the force review and revise procedures for the collection and transmission of ad-hoc data required for PNC update.

APPENDIX B – SUMMARY OF GOOD PRACTICE - SOUTH WALES POLICE

- The migration to NICHE RMS is being managed in much the same way as a major incident. (Page 11)
- Custody Detention Officers (CDO) have responsibility for prisoner handling in a secure environment. This task was outsourced to a commercial organisation in 2003. A CDO not only received PNC Names Enquiry training but also has training on the importance of descriptive factors and the implications of good quality data input. Particularly in this environment when the local systems to PNC interface is discreet. (Page 13)
- The force had a comprehensive list of force policies and strategies relating to the operational use of PNC, and that these were available to all users of PNC. (Page 15)
- Transaction Monitoring throughout the force is undertaken by the Data Protection department. Five transactions are selected at random and those that can not be justified by reference to other computerised systems are queried with the originator. If no response is received to the first reminder the originators supervisor is informed. This involvement of local supervision is good practice. (Page 16)
- ViSOR can be quickly accessed for reference purposes by appropriately trained personnel at all times. (Page 19)
- Data Protection and Computer Misuse issues are covered in every PNC Course by the PNC training staff. Students sign a form to say they understand and acknowledge their responsibilities and the signed forms are sent to the force Information Security Officer who files and retain the documentation. Central retention of this documentation is good practice. (Page 23)
- The force has a number of local service level agreements these detail agreed working agreements with, amongst other the Courts, Immigration Service and the Department of Work and Pensions. (Page 24)
- By agreement with the courts, sensitive information is transmitted by secure e-mail and not facsimile as in the past. This initiative markedly improves the security of such transmissions and maximises the potential of modern technology. (Page 25)

APPENDIX C – ‘ON THE RECORD’

THEMATIC INSPECTION REPORT ON POLICE CRIME RECORDING, THE POLICE NATIONAL COMPUTER AND PHOENIX INTELLIGENCE SYSTEM DATA

QUALITY – RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 9 (Chapter 5 page 86)

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that all forces produce position statements in relation to the 1998 PRG report recommendations on Phoenix Data Quality and the ACPO Compliance Strategy for the Police National Computer. He further recommends that forces produce a detailed action plan, with timescales, to implement their recommendations. The position statements and action plans together with progress updates should be available for audit and inspection during future HMIC PNC Compliance Audits and inspection of forces. Forces should send copies of action plans to HMIC's PNC Compliance Audit Section by 1 February 2001.

Recommendation 10 (Chapter 6 page 104)

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that forces urgently review their existing SCAS referral mechanisms in the light of the above findings. These reviews should include verification with SCAS that all force offences fitting the SCAS criteria have been fully notified to them, and updated. This process should be managed by forces through their in-force SCAS Liaison Officers.

Recommendation 11 (Chapter 7 page 111)

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that the marketing, use and development of national police information systems is integrated into appropriate force, local and departmental, strategic planning documents.

Recommendation 12 (Chapter 7 page 112)

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that where not already in place, forces should establish a strategic PNC Steering Group. This group should develop and be responsible for a strategic plan covering the development, use and marketing of PNC and Phoenix.

Recommendation 13 (Chapter 7 page 118)

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that all forces conduct an audit of their present in-force PNC trainers to ensure they have received nationally accredited training. Any individuals who have not been accredited as PNC trainers by National Police Training should not conduct in-force PNC training.

Recommendation 14 (Chapter 8 page 145)

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that forces ensure that each Phoenix inputting department develops an audit trail to register the return of substandard PSDs, via line supervisors, to originating officers. The system developed should include a mechanism to ensure the prompt return of PSDs.

forces should also incorporate locally based audit trails, monitoring the passage of returned PSDs between line supervisors and originating officers.

Recommendation 15 (Chapter 8 page 146)

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that forces develop clear guidelines to cover their expectations of officers on the return of incomplete or substandard PSDs. This guidance should be communicated to all staff and regular checks conducted to ensure compliance.

Recommendation 16 (Chapter 8 page 148)

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that forces should develop a system to ensure that all ad-hoc descriptive and intelligence updates registered on local force systems are automatically entered onto the Phoenix system. The policy should clearly outline whose responsibility it is to notify Phoenix inputters of any descriptive changes. forces should also ensure that the policy is marketed to staff and that regular checks are conducted to ensure compliance.

Recommendation 17 (Chapter 8 page 150)

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that forces develop a formal system to ensure that a proportion of each member of Phoenix inputting staff's work is regularly checked for accuracy. forces should also consider the benefits of measuring other aspects of their work including speed of entry and compliance with policies. Performance outcomes should be evidenced in staff PDRs.

Recommendation 18 (Chapter 9 page 164)

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends, where not already present, that forces develop risk assessed force Data Protection Officer audit programmes.

Recommendation 19 (Chapter 9 page 164)

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that forces integrate PNC and Phoenix data quality compliance into their performance review and inspectorate programmes for BCUs and specialist departments.

Recommendation 20 (Chapter 9 page 165)

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that PSD performance statistics should be incorporated in routine force performance information. The statistics should identify omissions and errors in individual fields, in particular, descriptive information. Appropriate accountability measures should be established to ensure that any performance shortfalls identified are addressed.

APPENDIX D – PRG REPORT

“PHOENIX DATA QUALITY” RECOMMENDATIONS

- National performance indicators and standards for timeliness of input, data fields to be completed, quality assurance requirements and the provision of training should be agreed by ACPO and promulgated to all forces.
- Achievement against and compliance with these indicators should be audited after a period of 12 months, perhaps through the inclusion in the scope of HMIC audits.
- Senior officers take an active and visible role in policing compliance with agreed standards within their own force.
- ACPO performance indicators should be reflected in force policy or standing orders (or the force equivalent). Guidance should include the responsibilities of officers at each stage of the process e.g. for the provision of source documentation, for approval, time taken to pass to input bureaux, and the bureaux' responsibilities for data entry and quality control.
- Line and divisional managers, as well as chief officers, should be held accountable for compliance with these standards. This could be achieved through inclusion in divisional efficiency assessments, and through the publication and dissemination of performance statistics throughout individual forces and nationally.
- Source documentation should be common across all forces, if not in design, in the information requested. A national format, stipulating a hierarchy of fields to be populated, should be developed.
- Programme(s) geared to raising awareness amongst operational officers and line managers of the potential benefits of Phoenix in a practical sense and their responsibilities of the provision of data should be developed. To ensure all officers have an opportunity to benefit from these programmes, consideration should be given to inclusion of a 'Phoenix awareness' module in probationer training, promotion courses and divisional training days.
- Best practice in administrative arrangements and organisational structures should be widely distributed. Internal working practices and organisational structures should be streamlined to remove any redundancies.
- Greater computerisation of the transfer of results from courts direct to Phoenix should continue to be developed. In the shorter term, the

Police Service is likely to retain responsibility of the input of court information. To minimise the resource burden on the Police Service in this interim period, the police and courts should work to ensure recognition of each other's requirements and to minimise any inconsistencies in their respective working practices.

- In the first instance, this might be achieved by ACPO highlighting to Magistrates' Courts and to the Crown Court, perhaps through the Trials Issue Group, the importance of Phoenix records to the integrity of the criminal justice system as a whole. Liaison meetings could usefully be established to introduce greater consistency in working and recording practices between the courts and police forces e.g. for recording data. In the first instance, this could be pursued locally, perhaps through the court user group. Issues considered by such meetings might include supplying additional information (such as Arrest / Summons numbers) to the Magistrates' Court system and to automated transfer of court registers.
- Consistent practice and performance is also required from the courts. Recommendations referring to performance indicators and standards, audits and monitoring, senior level commitment, common recording practices, awareness of system customers and administrative 'best practice' could equally apply to the courts. Mirroring the responsibilities of Chief Constables for their force, the Court Service and the Magistrates' Court Committee should be accountable for the performance of courts.
- Consistent practice in advising custody details, including transfers and releases, is required. This includes consistency in advising CRO numbers to maximise the number of complete records. The police and prison services should liaise to encourage greater understanding and acknowledgement of each other's requirements.

APPENDIX E – 1ST PNC REPORT

POLICE NATIONAL COMPUTER DATA QUALITY AND TIMELINESS – RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation One (Paragraph 5.2)

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector recommends that ACPO nationally review the position and priority of PNC within the structure of portfolio holders to reflect both the technical and operational importance of PNC.

Recommendation Two (Paragraph 5.11)

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector draws renewed attention to Recommendations 11 to 20 of *'On the Record' (2000)*, and recommends that all forces develop appropriate systems, overseen at a senior level, to ensure that they are implemented.

Recommendation Three (Paragraph 5.19)

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector recommends that PITO review, as a matter of urgency, the supplier/customer relationship between PNC and forces, particularly in relation to the marketing of PNC functionality, and the type, frequency and validity of management information reports produced.

Recommendation Four (Paragraph 5.29)

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector recommends that Her Majesty's Inspector (Training), in consultation with PITO and National Police Training, conducts a review of the quality and availability of accreditation training for PNC trainers and the extent to which they are subsequently employed in forces.

Recommendation Five (Paragraph 5.31)

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector recommends that discussions take place between ACPO, PITO and other relevant stakeholders to examine what opportunities exist for a short term 'technology solution' for the inputting of Court Results, either involving NSPIS applications currently in development, or an interim solution.

Recommendation Six (Paragraph 5.34)

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector recommends that renewed and re-invigorated discussions should take place between relevant stakeholders to, (a) Ensure that local systems are in place to maximise co-operation with the courts to achieve their respective 72 hours targets and, (b) Work towards Magistrates' Courts and Crown Courts assuming full responsibility for inputting all case results directly onto PNC.

Recommendation Seven (Paragraph 6.10)

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector recommends that following appropriate consultation with relevant stakeholders, a national inspection protocol for PNC data quality and timeliness be introduced.

Recommendation Eight (Paragraph 6.12)

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector recommends that following appropriate consultation with relevant stakeholders, the Secretary of State should consider using his powers under Section 5 of the Local Government Act 1999, to require all police authorities to institute a Best Value Review of processes to ensure PNC data quality and timeliness. Such review should be conducted against a common template and terms of reference.

Recommendation Nine (Paragraph 6.14)

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector recommends that in consultation with the Standards Unit and other stakeholders, HM Inspectorate should urgently review their current PNC audit responsibilities in the light of the findings of this report, with a view to adopting a more proactive stance in relation to force performance, data quality and timeliness.

Recommendation Ten (Paragraph 6.16)

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector recommends that in consultation with other stakeholders, ACPO IM Committee initiate research with a view to encouraging mutual support between forces for out of hours PNC data entry purposes.

APPENDIX F – 2ND PNC REPORT

POLICE NATIONAL COMPUTER DATA QUALITY AND TIMELINESS – RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1

The Home Office should lead and co-ordinate an urgent re-examination of the current PNC strategy and standards with a view to producing national binding performance and compliance criteria to which all relevant stakeholders and partners are agreed and committed.

Recommendation 2

ACPO nationally and Chief Constables locally must ensure that the national standards for PNC operation, resourcing and training are fully integrated into local Information Management Strategies and recognised as an important part of operational service delivery. This area must receive sustained high-level support through a 'champion' at chief officer level.

Recommendation 3

PITO should be tasked to consolidate the force 'profiling' approach as used in the inspection into the routine statistical returns provided to forces. PNC statistics should then be integrated into the mainstream suite of management information/indicators that inform decisions at force and BCU levels.

Recommendation 4

HMIC should be tasked to establish a risk-assessed programme of monitoring and inspection that is able to respond quickly and effectively to deviations from accepted standards. This programme should include;

- remote monitoring of performance (PITO profile statistics)
- regular collaboration and contact with force PNC Managers
- proportionate programme of visits and inspections
- targeted interventions to respond to identified problems

Recommendation 5

The Home Office should establish a structured process for addressing and remedying any significant and persisting deviation from the agreed national standards (see Recommendation 1). This process should identify the respective roles of HMIC, Police Standards Unit and police authorities. It should set out the escalation of responses, which might include an agreed action plan, re-inspection, Intervention, and ultimately withdrawal of facility.