

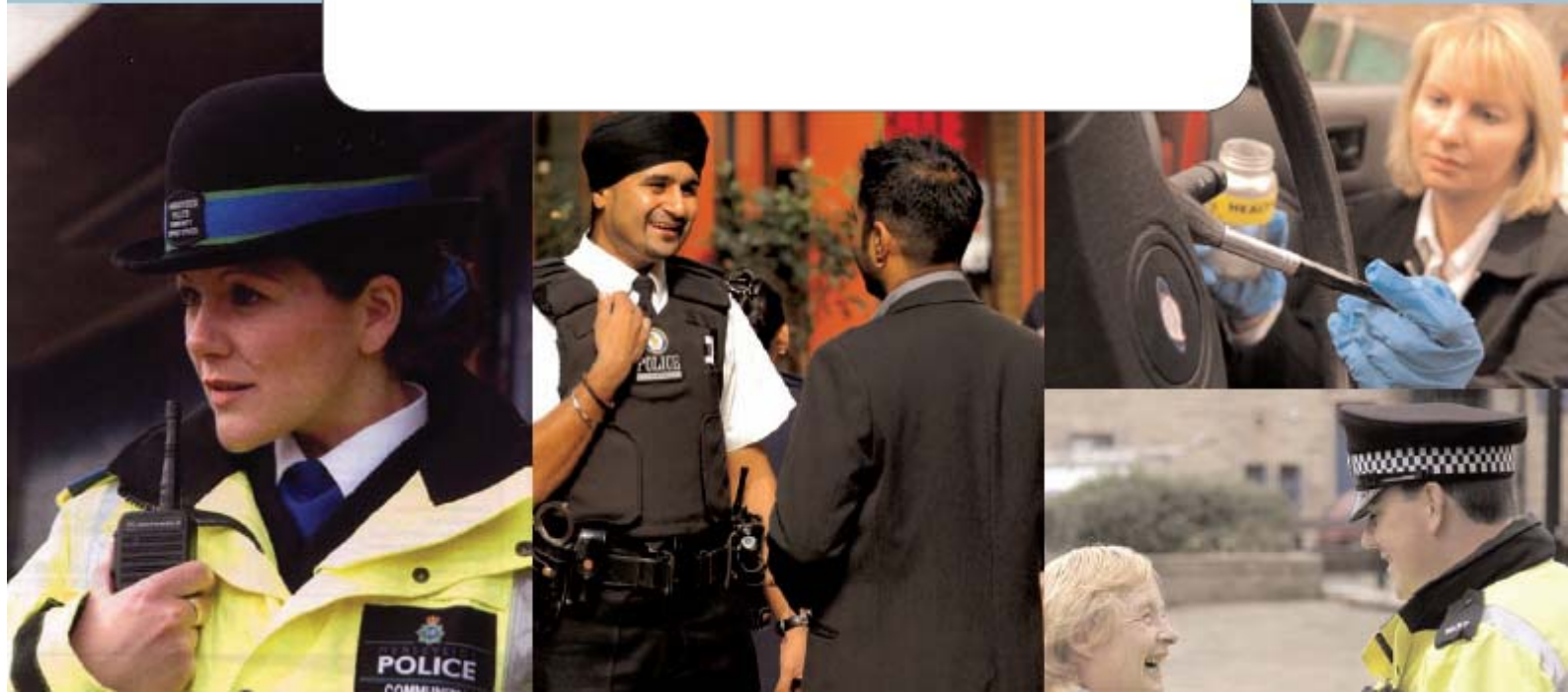
# Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary



## Thames Valley Police

### Baseline Assessment

October 2006



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### **Appendix 1 Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations**

## Introduction to Baseline Assessment

Since March 2004, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) has conducted a periodic, strategic-level performance review of each Home Office police force in England and Wales. For a range of policing activities, forces are assessed as delivering performance that is Excellent, Good, Fair or Poor. The process is known as baseline assessment (BA) and this report covers the assessment for the financial year 2005/06; performance outside this period is not taken into account in determining grades. The assessments focus on the high-level processes of police forces and their results. The assessments are undertaken by regional HM Inspectors, supported by experienced police officers and police staff on secondment.

BA is designed primarily as a self-assessment, with the degree of validation/reality-checking undertaken by HMIC dependent on a force's overall performance and the rigour of its internal assessment processes. It is important to recognise that BA is not a traditional inspection; rather, it helps HMIC focus its inspection effort where it is most needed. A formal statutory inspection may still be necessary where there is evidence of systemic underperformance and poor leadership.

In addition to the qualitative assessments contained in this report, force performance is also measured by a series of key quantitative indicators. The most important indicators are statutory performance indicators (SPIs), which are determined each year by the Home Secretary and which Police Authorities/forces must report to the Home Office. Examples of SPIs include crime incidence and detection rates, as well as relevant management information such as sickness absence and ethnic recruitment rates. Results for these SPIs are also graded using the Excellent, Good, Fair and Poor categories. These SPI grades are added to HMIC BA grades to provide a fuller picture of police performance; the joint results are published annually in October and can be found on the internet at [police.homeoffice.gov.uk/performance](http://police.homeoffice.gov.uk/performance)

Policing has undergone significant changes in recent years as the country adapts to new forms of terrorism and criminality. As policing is dynamic, so also must be the form of assessment. Dominating much of HMIC's recent thinking is the need for the service to modernise its workforce while providing better 'protective services', as identified in the *Closing the Gap* report published in 2005. On-site activity for the 2005/06 baseline concentrated on these areas, but could not – given ministerial priorities – ignore volume crime and the roll-out of neighbourhood policing. As forces and Police Authorities consider options for change to meet new challenges with constrained resources, a force-by-force balance sheet of strengths and areas for improvement is critical contextual information.

### Priority Frameworks

Seven BA areas were designated as priority frameworks for on-site validation, to reflect the need to improve protective services and deliver key policing objectives. These were:

- managing critical incidents and major crime;
- tackling serious and organised criminality;
- providing specialist operational support;
- strategic roads policing;
- protecting vulnerable people;
- neighbourhood policing; and

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- leadership and direction.

These areas were the key focus of on-site validation by HMIC staff; the first five can be loosely classified as protective services. Other frameworks were assessed primarily by desk-top reviews of the evidence submitted by forces, using the framework key issues and specific grading criteria (SGC) as an indicative guide.

### **Force Amalgamations**

Following the challenges highlighted with regard to protective services capability and capacity in the summer of 2005, all forces undertook significant additional work on options to 'close the gap'. The Home Secretary directed that business cases should be prepared and submitted by December 2005. The BA report thus reflects, in many of the frameworks, activity and effort to produce and assess options for change. It is vital to acknowledge the energy and commitment given to the prospect of a major restructuring of the service, which inevitably gave rise to some turbulence during this period.

At the end of July 2006, the Home Secretary indicated that the restructuring of forces would not be pursued at this time. The agenda to improve protective services is to be advanced by forces and Police Authorities through alternative means such as collaboration. Progress to 'narrow the gap' between existing capability and that which is needed will be assessed by HMIC in future inspection activity.

### **The Grading Process**

Forces have been graded for both service delivery and direction of travel. It is important to remember that, for most activities, delivery is measured through the use of most similar force (MSF) groups, whereby forces are compared with peers facing similar policing challenges. For direction of travel, the grade is awarded largely in respect of the force's own previous performance. A vital component of the grading process is SGC, which outlines, for each activity, what represents Excellent, Good, Fair and Poor levels of performance. The criteria were developed in conjunction with expert practitioners and Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) business/portfolio leads, who were also involved in the national moderation process to help ensure that these criteria were applied fairly and consistently.

### **Service delivery grade**

This grade is a reflection of the performance delivery by the force over the assessment period 1 April 2005 to 31 March 2006. One of four grades can be awarded, according to performance assessed against the SGC (see full list of SGCs at <http://inspectrates.homeoffice.gov.uk/hmic/methodologies/baseline-introduction/ba-methodology-06/?version=1>).

#### *Excellent*

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

- The force should be recognised, or be able to act, as a ‘beacon’ to others, and be accepted within the service as a source of leading-edge practice. Examples where other forces have successfully imported practices would be good evidence of this.
- HMIC is committed to supporting innovative forces and we would expect Excellent forces to have introduced and evaluated new ways of improving performance.

#### *Good*

Good is defined in the Collins dictionary as ‘of a high quality or level’ and denotes performance above the norm – in many cases, performance that is above the MSF average. To reach this standard, forces have to meet in full the criteria set out in Fair and most of the criteria set out in Good.

#### *Fair*

Fair is the delivery of an acceptable level of service. To achieve a Fair grading, forces must achieve all of the significant criteria set out in the Fair SGC. HMIC would expect that, across most activities, the largest number of grades would be awarded at this level.

#### *Poor*

Poor represents an unacceptable level of service. To attract this very critical grade, a force must have fallen well short of a significant number of criteria set out in the SGC for Fair. In some cases, failure to achieve a single critical criterion may alone warrant a Poor grade. Such dominant criteria will always be flagged in the SGC.

### **Direction of Travel Grade**

This grade is a reflection of the force’s change in performance between the assessment period and the previous year. For BA 2006, this is the change between the financial years 2004/05 and 2005/06. The potential grades for direction of travel are as follows.

#### *Improved*

This reflects a **significant** improvement in the performance of the force.

#### *Stable*

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This denotes no significant change in performance.

#### *Declined*

This is where there has been a significant decline in the performance of the force.

#### **Good Practice**

In addition to assessing force performance, one of HMIC's key roles is to identify and share good practice within the police service. Much good practice is identified as HMIC conducts its assessments; in addition, each force is given the opportunity to submit examples of its good practice. HMIC has selected three of these examples to publish in this report. The key criteria for each example is that the work has been evaluated by the force and is easily transferable to other forces. (Each force has provided a contact name and telephone number, should further information be required.) HMIC has not conducted any independent evaluation of the examples of good practice provided.

#### **Future HMIC Inspection Activity**

Although HMIC must continue to maintain a watching brief on all performance areas, it will become more risk-driven in its future inspection activity. Protective services will be the core of inspection programmes, tailored to capacity, capability and the likelihood of exposure to threats from organised criminality, terrorism and so on. Until its full implementation in April 2008, neighbourhood policing will also demand attention. Conversely, those areas where strong performance is signalled by SPI results, such as volume crime reduction and investigation, will receive relatively little scrutiny.

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

<b>Baseline Assessment 2006 Frameworks</b>			
<b>1 Citizen Focus (PPAF Domain A)</b>			
<b>1A Fairness and Equality in Service Delivery</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Equality of service delivery</li> <li>• Community cohesion</li> <li>• Engaging with minority groups</li> <li>• Hate-crime reduction and investigation</li> </ul>	<b>1B Neighbourhood Policing and Problem Solving</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effective mechanisms for obtaining community views</li> <li>• Responding to local priorities</li> <li>• Effective interventions and problem solving with partners and communities</li> <li>• Operational activity to reassure communities</li> <li>• Use of media to market success</li> <li>• Uniformed patrol and visibility</li> <li>• Extended police family</li> <li>• Performance in reducing fear of crime</li> </ul>	<b>1C Customer Service and Accessibility</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quality of service to victims and witnesses</li> <li>• Customer care</li> <li>• Responding to customer needs</li> <li>• Accessibility of policing services</li> </ul>	<b>1D Professional Standards</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Investigation of public complaints</li> <li>• Improving professional standards</li> <li>• Combating corruption and promoting ethical behaviour</li> <li>• Reducing complaints and learning lessons</li> </ul>
<b>2 Reducing Crime (PPAF Domain 1)</b>			
<b>2A Volume Crime Reduction</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crime strategy</li> <li>• Performance in reducing volume crime</li> <li>• Levels of crime compared with peers</li> <li>• Problem solving</li> <li>• National Crime Recording Standard (NCRS) compliance</li> </ul>			



<b>3 Investigating Crime (PPAF Domain 2)</b>		
<b>3A Managing Critical Incidents and Major Crime</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Detection rates for murder, rape and other serious crime</li> <li>• Integration with overall crime strategy</li> <li>• Compliance with Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) murder manual</li> <li>• Early identification of critical incidents that may escalate into major inquiries</li> </ul>	<b>3B Tackling Serious and Organised Criminality</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crime that crosses basic command unit (BCU) and/or force boundaries</li> <li>• Support for regional intelligence and operations</li> <li>• Asset recovery (Proceeds of Crime Act – POCA)</li> <li>• Effective targeted operations</li> <li>• Quality packages with the Serious Organised Crime Agency (SOCA)</li> </ul>	<b>3C Volume Crime Investigation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crime strategy</li> <li>• Crime recording</li> <li>• Investigative skills, eg interviewing</li> <li>• Automatic number plate recognition (ANPR)</li> <li>• Detection performance</li> </ul>
<b>3D Improving Forensic Performance</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specialist scientific support</li> <li>• Use of National Automated Fingerprint Identification System (NAFIS), DNA, etc</li> <li>• Integrated management of processes</li> <li>• Performance in forensic identification and detection</li> </ul>	<b>3E Criminal Justice Processes</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quality and timeliness of case files</li> <li>• Custody management/prisoner handing</li> <li>• Youth justice</li> <li>• Police National Computer (PNC) compliance</li> </ul>	
<b>4 Promoting Safety (PPAF Domain 3)</b>		
<b>4A Reducing Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Non-crime activities of crime and disorder reduction partnerships (CDRPs) and other partnerships</li> <li>• Use of ASB legislation, tools, etc</li> </ul>	<b>4B Protecting Vulnerable People</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Child abuse</li> <li>• Domestic violence</li> <li>• Multi-agency police protection arrangements (MAPPAs)/sex offender management</li> <li>• Missing persons</li> </ul>	
<b>5 Providing Assistance (PPAF Domain 4)</b>		
<b>5A Contact Management</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All aspects of call handling and call management</li> <li>• Initial incident response</li> <li>• Early identification of critical incidents</li> <li>• Performance in answering and responding to public calls</li> </ul>	<b>5B Providing Specialist Operational Support</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Management of central operational support</li> <li>• Police use of firearms</li> <li>• Capability for policing major events/incidents</li> </ul>	<b>5C Strategic Roads Policing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effectiveness of arrangements for roads policing</li> <li>• Integration/support for other operational activity</li> <li>• Road safety partnerships</li> </ul>

<b>6 Resource Use (PPAF Domain B)</b>		
<p><b>6A Human Resource (HR) Management</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HR strategy and costed plan</li> <li>• Key HR issues not covered in 6B or 6C</li> <li>• Health and safety</li> <li>• Performance in key HR indicators</li> </ul>	<p><b>6B Training, Development and Organisational Learning</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Costed training strategy and delivery plan</li> <li>• Key training and development issues</li> </ul>	<p><b>6C Race and Diversity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Action to promote fairness in relation to race, gender, faith, age, sexual orientation and disability</li> <li>• Performance in meeting key targets</li> </ul>
<p><b>6D Managing Financial and Physical Resources</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resource availability</li> <li>• Effective use of resources to support front-line activity</li> <li>• Devolved budgets</li> <li>• Finance, estates, procurement and fleet management functions</li> <li>• Demand management</li> </ul>	<p><b>6E Information Management</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information systems/ information technology (IS/IT) strategy and its implementation</li> <li>• Programme and project management</li> <li>• Customer service</li> <li>• Adequacy of key systems</li> <li>• Business continuity/disaster recovery</li> </ul>	<p><b>6F National Intelligence Model (NIM)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extent to which structures, processes and products meet NIM standards</li> <li>• Integration of NIM with force planning and performance management</li> <li>• Use of community intelligence</li> <li>• Application of NIM to non-crime areas</li> </ul>
<b>7 Leadership and Direction</b>		
<p><b>7A Leadership</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extent to which the chief officer team is visible and dynamic, sets and upholds a vision, values and standards, promotes a learning culture, and sustains a well-motivated workforce</li> <li>• Effectiveness of succession planning</li> <li>• Promotion of corporacy</li> </ul>	<p><b>7B Performance Management and Continuous Improvement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effective performance management structures and processes at all levels</li> <li>• Quality and timeliness of performance/management information</li> <li>• Internal inspection/audit/ quality assurance (QA) systems</li> <li>• Effectiveness of joint force/PA best value reviews (BVRs)</li> </ul>	

## Force Overview and Context

### Geographical Description of Force Area

Thames Valley Police is the largest non-metropolitan force in England and Wales, covering 2,200 square miles and serving a population of 2.1 million, with over 6 million visitors annually. It covers 16 crime and disorder reduction partnerships (CDRPs), within the areas of two county councils (Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire) and seven unitary authorities. It has five basic command units (BCUs), recently reduced from ten as part of a major restructuring initiative entitled Challenge and Change. In terms of resources, the net revenue expenditure for 2005/06 was £329.5 million. Police officer strength has continued to increase during the past financial year and in March 2006 there were 4,165 police officers (full-time equivalent), 3,150 police staff, 360 special constables and 132 police community support officers (PCSOs), assisted by some 420 volunteers.

### Demographic Description of Force Area

The overarching economic position of the force area is one of prosperity, with low unemployment and above average earnings, although it must be acknowledged that there are some areas of deprivation. Steady and continued economic growth is predicted. In terms of demography, the Thames Valley area is experiencing continued population growth, most notably at Milton Keynes and Aylesbury. Some 6% of the population in Thames Valley are members of black and minority ethnic (BME) communities, with a much higher proportion in the south east of the force area, particularly within the major population centres of Reading, Slough and High Wycombe.

### Structural Description of Force Including Staff Changes at Chief Officer Level

The chief officer team comprises the Acting Chief Constable, the acting deputy chief constable (DCC), acting assistant chief constable (ACC) (local policing), acting ACC (operational support), ACC (specialist operations) and the director of resources (DoR). Following the departure of the former Chief Constable to become chief executive of the National Policing Improvement Agency, the previous DCC has taken over as Acting Chief Constable; she has an extensive and intimate knowledge of the force, having first been appointed as an ACC in August 2000.

In addition to the five BCUs, there are five operational command units (OCUs): the control rooms and enquiry department, tactical support, crime support, roads policing and professional standards. Each BCU contains a number of local police areas (LPAs) whose boundaries are coterminous with those of the CDRPs and local authorities.

### Strategic Priorities

#### **1: To provide an effective and timely response focused on the needs of the citizen**

Significant efforts have been invested in the force approach to quality of service and efficiency in relation to call handling and control room operator capacity within the police enquiry centres. This is in addition to the introduction of a new workforce management system which allows flexible working patterns aligned to public demand.

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All immediate response and neighbourhood officers are now able to report crimes at the scene directly to the control room and enquiry department (CRED), increasing patrol time. There has also been a corporate approach to resource management, with BCUs adopting shift patterns aligned to times of high customer demand.

In partnership with the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), three witness care units have been set up to meet the requirements of the victims' code.

## **2: To conduct policing in a neighbourhood policing style**

Neighbourhood policing in Thames Valley went live in five neighbourhoods in May 2005, one in each of five pilot LPAs in the force area. By the end of March 2006, four of the five LPAs had implemented neighbourhood policing across their areas, with over 70 neighbourhoods now in operation force-wide.

The aim is to implement neighbourhood policing force-wide by March 2008. To 'go live' a neighbourhood has to meet specific criteria, including the ability to problem-solve proactively in partnership with community members and other local agencies. Around the force, the teams already in place have been holding meetings with community members and setting up neighbourhood action groups to deal with the issues that arise.

An established community safety accreditation scheme (CSAS) has accredited employees of the Vehicle and Operator Services Agency (VOSA) with powers to stop motor vehicles for the purpose of testing, thereby freeing-up police officers to concentrate on other core tasks.

## **3: To equip front-line staff to deliver on objectives**

Recent changes relating to the training of police probationers have led to the implementation of a new programme from April 2006 to ensure that newly appointed police officers are trained and developed during their two-year probationary period to exacting standards both in the classroom and in practice.

An ongoing and significant programme of work will continue for the next two years aimed at upgrading the facilities and capacity of custody suites. It includes a new national custody and case preparation computer system, which has been implemented at Milton Keynes.

Work continues on the use of mobile data terminals. A further trial involving 300 officers on the Oxford LPA began in January 2006. In addition, a new briefing system compliant with the National Intelligence Model (NIM) was piloted in January 2006. The new system uses a document management system to ensure that access to the often sensitive information contained in briefings is controlled.

An upgrade to the new human resource information technology (HR IT) system has been completed, ensuring that up-to-date and accurate information facilitates better monitoring and the delivery of more efficient HR processes.

Operational policing skills have continued to be enhanced by developments in the Streetcraft computer-based experiential training programme. It affords front-line officers and staff the opportunity to experience and react to imaginary scenarios in real-time.

The Government-led key worker housing scheme is in its final year and was concluded at the end of March 2006. In addition, support is available through the Thames Valley Police home ownership scheme and a deposit loan scheme.

## **4: To improve performance – getting better at what we do**

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All police officers and police staff have received details of priorities, targets and objectives through numerous communication channels. More than three-quarters have four performance development review (PDR) objectives linked to the strategy. The standardisation of formats for the presentation of performance information at force, BCU and LPA levels has culminated in an easier understanding and interpretation of complex performance information.

The principles of active investigation management (AIM) have now been mainstreamed across the force. They are intended to foster proactive supervision and support for the investigation of priority crimes.

There is an ongoing desire to achieve corporacy in governance at force and BCU levels. The Police Authority has implemented a process whereby the monitoring of performance indicators at force, BCU and LPA levels is possible in a standardised format at full Police Authority meetings, BCU committees and local area policing boards (LAPBs).

### **5: To protect the public from the risk posed by predatory offenders**

Five dedicated public protection units (PPUs) have been set up, one in each BCU. They are comprised of teams of specialist officers responsible for co-ordinating investigations into domestic violence, adult protection, the management of registered sex offenders and other dangerous offenders. Some PPU's undertake additional roles such as dealing with the adult victims of serious sexual assault, hate crimes and vulnerable and intimidated witnesses.

The Child Protection and Sexual Crimes Units (CPSCUs) for the time being remain separate from the PPU's but plans were being developed to incorporate them into the PPU's in April 2006.

A new risk assessment and management process has been rolled out for dealing with domestic violence. It requires the first attending officer to complete a list of responses to questions aimed at identifying risk indicators. The new approach is expected to have more impact on reducing serious injury and death because of the concentration of effort on identifying and reducing harm.

A significant amount of work has been undertaken to prepare for the implementation of the Bichard Inquiry recommendations, designed to ensure that police and other agencies collate, share and act upon the information necessary to protect the public.

### **6: To be ready and equipped to deal with major crimes and critical incidents**

A comprehensive review has been carried out on all existing processes for the selection, training and accreditation of firearms command roles. The entire firearms process is fully supported by accredited Bronze and Silver commanders.

The cadre of 25 accredited Silver firearms commanders now provides dedicated firearms command 24 hours a day. Command practices, operational resilience and flexibility have been further enhanced by the increased establishment of armed response vehicles (ARVs).

A high-level resilience panel now meets on a regular basis to test the response to real or imagined critical incident scenarios, identifying any gaps in capability and the consequent specialist inputs required. Critical incident training has been expanded, not just for Thames Valley staff but, importantly, for those working in partner agencies.

Opportunities are being developed to make full use of the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 (POCA), allowing the seizure of assets gained as a result of criminal activity.

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Intelligence from the community, particularly via the PCSOs, is increasing under neighbourhood policing. Staff have been trained in the assessment and evaluation of intelligence. Other community information is recorded as part of neighbourhood profiles and is gradually being incorporated into the local tasking process.

The Special Branch has taken account of the learning from the 7/7 terrorist incidents. An increase in resources provides the opportunity to develop the unit, reflecting the growth in demand for this specialist role and increased security services activity at a national level. A dedicated domestic extremism desk has been established with the main focus on the real and present threat of international terrorism. A dedicated source unit, adopting ACPO best practice, has been strengthened by the appointment of a dedicated controller. Thames Valley Police is viewed favourably nationally by other agencies in respect of these arrangements.

### **Impact of Workforce Modernisation and Strategic Force Development**

In terms of workforce modernisation, work has continued to build on the success of the groundbreaking police redeployment programme which saw 352 police officers returned to front-line policing duties during 2002/03 and 2003/04. This has involved police staff taking over roles in custody and fulfilling other operational support roles such as statement takers and investigators. Advantage has been taken of these changes during the Challenge and Change restructuring to ensure that the maximum numbers of police officers are available for operational duties. PCSO recruitment has gone well and the force is fully integrating its PCSOs into neighbourhood policing roles.

The vast majority of police staff are now employed under a redesigned reward system which is based on broad pay bands rather than narrow incremental grades. Reward is linked to contribution through the staff appraisal process, the national settlements and local market conditions. The first contribution-linked pay award was made in September 2005 and has been well received by staff and by UNISON. Thames Valley has also successfully introduced the pay and performance links for superintendent ranks, again linked to the appraisal process. Staff appraisal is central to force performance and individual objectives are closely aligned with force strategic objectives.

Looking forward, the DOR and the head of HR are members of the ACPO Workforce Modernisation business area and are members of the national group looking at shared services initiatives. The force is keen to be at the leading edge of such developments. At force level, the Challenge and Change programme is concentrating on strategic management and business support and the restructuring of the criminal justice department. This will lead to the employment of police staff case directors covering duties traditionally undertaken by police sergeants.

### **Strategic Force Development**

Restructuring has streamlined the force into five BCUs and 16 LPAs, aligning operational policing with local government boundaries and CDRPs.

A detailed internal gap analysis was undertaken to see what actions would be required in order to bring Thames Valley Police's protective services up from an HMIC level 3 (reactive capability with some proactive ability) to a level 4 (reactive capability with comprehensive proactive activity). These gaps have been documented, agreed and now form part of a detailed management plan.

It has demonstrated it fulfils most of the criteria of a strategic force as evidenced through the HMIC Closing the Gap review and will now build upon this, and through Challenge and

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Change it will seek to address the gaps, notably serious and cross-border crime and shared services, through increased collaboration.

### **Major Achievements**

A major achievement has been the implementation and delivery of the Challenge and Change programme, ensuring that the principles and processes of a strategic force are embedded in day-to-day business.

In 2005 a Gold group was set up to respond to the adverse trend in sanction detections and offences brought to justice (OBTJs), with the goal of improving volume crime investigative processes. The force has excelled in improving its overall sanction detection rate and is currently at the top of its most similar force (MSF) group.

The roll-out of neighbourhood policing will continue to be a priority in 2006/07. Neighbourhood policing teams will be introduced to 100 more neighbourhoods by March 2007. In addition, the Police Authority is planning to recruit a significant number of PCSOs. There will be 271 PCSOs patrolling the streets of Thames Valley by March 2007, with plans to take on an additional 404 the year after.

A national quality of service commitment (QoS) has been developed to identify, structure and develop all citizen focus and quality of service issues. The implementation of the code of practice for victims of crime will ensure that victims are given regular information about the progress of their cases, and given access to established support systems. There have been improvements to the way in which the force deals with contact management. A strong theme for contact management has been the development of people, workforce modernisation and the provision of high quality IT, supported by a rigorous performance framework.

### **Major Challenges for the Future**

The Government's reform agenda continues with the review by HMIC published in September 2005 which outlined the need for forces across England and Wales to become strategic police forces, able to tackle serious and organised crime, terrorism and domestic extremism while retaining effective neighbourhood policing. The debate relating to strategic forces led to the Police Authority's preference for Thames Valley to stand alone. This preference was accepted by the Government before the decision was taken to defer merger proposals. The force acknowledges that some development work must be done before it can fully meet the requirements of a strategic police force. This includes improvements to protective services such as dealing with major and cross-border and serious organised crime as well as the tackling of terrorism. The major challenge now is to develop its protective services while also delivering neighbourhood policing and achieving this within a tight budget.

In line with government priorities, the focus remains on the needs of the citizen and delivering local neighbourhood policing. Having restructured the LPAs and BCUs to become coterminous with local authorities, relationships with partners have been developed to respond in a multi-agency way to common themes such as anti-social behaviour. The force is looking to formalise and extend these practices, providing one-stop-shops for the public.

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<b>Summary of Judgements</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Direction of Travel</b>
<b>Citizen Focus</b>		
Fairness and Equality in Service Delivery	<b>Good</b>	<b>Improved</b>
Neighbourhood Policing and Problem Solving	<b>Good</b>	<b>Improved</b>
Customer Service and Accessibility	<b>Fair</b>	<b>Improved</b>
Professional Standards	<b>Good</b>	<b>Not Graded</b>
<b>Reducing Crime</b>		
Volume Crime Reduction	<b>Fair</b>	<b>Improved</b>
<b>Investigating Crime</b>		
Managing Critical Incidents and Major Crime	<b>Fair</b>	<b>Stable</b>
Tackling Serious and Organised Criminality	<b>Fair</b>	<b>Stable</b>
Volume Crime Investigation	<b>Good</b>	<b>Improved</b>
Improving Forensic Performance	<b>Good</b>	<b>Improved</b>
Criminal Justice Processes	<b>Fair</b>	<b>Improved</b>
<b>Promoting Safety</b>		
Reducing Anti-Social Behaviour	<b>Good</b>	<b>Improved</b>
Protecting Vulnerable People	<b>Fair</b>	<b>Improved</b>
<b>Providing Assistance</b>		
Contact Management	<b>Good</b>	<b>Improved</b>
Providing Specialist Operational Support	<b>Fair</b>	<b>Improved</b>
Strategic Roads Policing	<b>Good</b>	<b>Improved</b>
<b>Resource Use</b>		
Human Resource Management	<b>Good</b>	<b>Improved</b>
Training, Development and Organisational Learning	<b>Good</b>	<b>Improved</b>
Race and Diversity	<b>Good</b>	<b>Improved</b>
Managing Financial and Physical Resources	<b>Good</b>	<b>Stable</b>
Information Management	<b>Fair</b>	<b>Declined</b>
National Intelligence Model	<b>Good</b>	<b>Improved</b>
<b>Leadership and Direction</b>		
Leadership	<b>Good</b>	<b>Not Graded</b>
Performance Management and Continuous Improvement	<b>Good</b>	<b>Improved</b>



# 1 Citizen Focus (Domain A)

## 1A Fairness and Equality in Service Delivery

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Direction of Travel</b>
<b>Good</b>	<b>Improved</b>

### National Grade Distribution

Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
0	15	28	0

### Contextual Factors

Commitment to fairness and equality is clearly visible through the ongoing work of the diversity unit and the overarching desire to ensure that quality of service is paramount in defining its approach. Strengths and opportunities have been sought from the diversity board (DB), the diversity action group (DAG), the Race Equality Council (REC) and the BCU and OCU DBs in respect of all six strands of diversity.

There is clear evidence of robust investigation of all aspects of hate crime, which is examined at both the force performance group (FPG) and BCU performance groups. In addition, all hate crime is scrutinised on a daily basis at BCU tasking and co-ordination (TCG) meetings and is considered at force-level TCG.

Profiles, risk assessments and tension indicator reports are actively utilised. Following a best value review of hate crime, a revised policy is undergoing final assessment prior to approval and sign-off. There is an additional requirement that each BCU has in place a hate crime champion at senior management level.

The diversity matrix, a compilation of the wide variety of report and inspection recommendations, is project managed to ensure delivery and progress.

Within the training and development department there is a dedicated diversity trainer whose expertise and specialist skills are used in a wide range of areas relating to strategic and tactical policy-making and service delivery. A strategy covering 2005–08 and a plan for 2006/07 address race and diversity issues through learning and development.

A recommendation regarding the benefits derived from third-party reporting in respect of the six strands of diversity has been addressed by adoption of the True Vision third-party reporting system.

The diversity unit has a website, available to all staff, containing pertinent regularly updated information on all six strands of diversity. A comprehensive tactical guide to policing diversity has been published, providing background information on difference, racial, religious and other communities (all six strands), policing behaviours, the use of language and legal issues.

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Detection rates for crimes of violence committed against members of BME groups continue to rise but there is still a gap between this and the detection rate for similar crimes committed against white persons. The sanction detection rate for racially aggravated crimes has risen to 36.6%, above the MSF average. The volume of racially or religiously aggravated crimes fell during 2005/06 and matches the MSF average.

## Strengths

- Leadership on fairness and equality by the Chief Constable's management team (CCMT) continues to be dynamic and effective. There is now a clear structure for improved delivery, through the force diversity board, force diversity action group, force REC meetings and BCU diversity boards. There is a nominated hate crimes champion within the Police Authority, and each BCU has an active hate crimes champion at the senior management level.
- The diversity strategy is available to all officers and staff through the intranet and to the public through the external website. The website provides useful information about policies on stop and search, the Race Equality Scheme (RES), forced marriages and identity parades, and provides two named central contact points
- There is clear evidence of joint working with race equality councils (RECs). The street intervention and stop and search policy and the hate crimes and investigation procedure have been subject to review by the RECs. There is further evidence of joint working with the local criminal justice board (LCJB) diversity sub-group (chaired by the head of the CPS) in which Thames Valley takes an active part; an example of this is the drawing up of an action plan to address the findings of a recent survey which showed a lack of positive engagement with young people from BME groups.
- The race and diversity learning and development plan for 2006/07 has been developed to contain detailed race training for, among others, probationers, tutors, interviewers, informant handlers, crime investigators, custody staff, senior investigating officers (SIOs), PCSOs and case investigators. Training will be delivered by the dedicated diversity trainer within the training and development department.
- There is a requirement on all officers and staff to demonstrate diversity-learning within their personal appraisals. Compliance is tested by dip-checks undertaken centrally. A specific staff survey will be conducted during 2006/07 focusing on the six strands of diversity to provide information about staff awareness and understanding, and organisational culture.
- There is well developed independent advisory group (IAG) structure within the Thames Valley with transparent and genuine consultation and guidance sought from IAG members to inform tactical policing, often on a daily and weekly basis. All BCUs have their own IAGs which are regularly consulted.
- The recording of hate crimes is proactively monitored by the crime registrar. There has been an improvement in the recording, investigation and judicial disposal of hate crimes as a result of active investigation management and the central recording of all crimes by the police enquiry centres (PECs). Race and homophobic crimes are flagged on the crime system. The reference database used by the PECs and control rooms provides sound advice to operators to ensure accuracy of recording.

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- All reported hate crimes have investigation plans prepared by the BCU investigation manager. Such crimes are reviewed on a daily basis at LPA tasking meetings to ensure correct tasking and quality investigation and service. All hate crimes that amount to critical incidents are supervised through a Gold group (see 3A).
- As detailed in 1C, some 68 police buildings are open to the public and 61 were deemed to have suitable access for people with disabilities, an improvement over the previous year when 57 buildings were open to the public and only 22 were deemed to have suitable access. Language Line is well established and in use throughout the control rooms and PECs and is subject to periodic review to ensure it meets the needs of the customer.

### **Work in Progress**

- The True Vision third-party reporting system is well embedded on some BCUs and is being rolled out on the remainder. It is anticipated that this will increase the level of recorded crime.
- A diversity adviser network includes advisers in each BCU and OCU. It is being reviewed and improved to ensure there is a consistency of training and guidance, and that organisational learning is captured and put to good use.
- Following a best value review, a new hate crimes policy has been developed. It has yet to be finalised and is due for implementation during 2006/07. Care should be taken to ensure that it is fully understood and embedded within the force.

### **Areas for Improvement**

- Great strides have been made in improving fairness and equality in the way that services are delivered. Satisfaction levels for victims of racist incidents have risen as has satisfaction with general service to BME victims and witnesses. Yet with one exception, performance remains below the MSF averages.
- Each BCU now has a public protection unit that will deal with all hate crimes in addition to child abuse investigations. Full staffing has yet to be achieved at every unit; however, an example of a working unit does exist at Berkshire East BCU (see 4B).
- Some six of the 55 policies adjudged by the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) to be relevant to the race equality duty have been impact assessed and published. Other policies have been mapped against the ACPO list and prioritised for impact assessment through a newly devised process due to begin in April 2006.
- As evidenced in 6C, great progress has been made in race equality training and by the end of 2005/06 some 88% of officers and staff had been trained. Continued effort needs to be made to ensure that diversity is truly embedded within the workforce. The benefits of a diverse workforce need to be celebrated and publicised both internally and externally.

**1B Neighbourhood Policing and Problem Solving**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Direction of Travel</b>
<b>Good</b>	<b>Improved</b>

**National Grade Distribution**

Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
4	18	20	1

**National Context**

Neighbourhood Policing (NP) is a national programme and its expectations are based on national research. This framework differs from others because the grade awarded reflects the force's ability to roll out NP progressively, year on year, until its implementation date of April 2008. This focus on programme delivery and the need for continual improvement are reflected in the grades. Therefore, in this framework it is significantly more challenging for a force to maintain the same grade as last year.

HMIC has awarded an Improved direction of travel where forces are actively progressing implementation, have improved their performance and have allocated significant resources to deliver NP. As a result, most forces have an Improved direction of travel. However, this assessment has also highlighted the significant demands of the NP programme and the vulnerability of some forces that are failing to maintain the pace of implementation.

**Contextual Factors**

The neighbourhood policing (NHP) project was initiated in November 2004. The Thames Valley approach is based upon the national reassurance model and aims to deliver dedicated and identifiable teams on the ground. The NHP teams have established the three most important issues to the public in their neighbourhoods through consultation. Problem solving is seen as a joint enterprise with partners. The PCSO project has now come under the NHP umbrella so that all strands of implementation are co-ordinated.

NHP has been fully implemented in five areas and it is planned to initiate the model in 100 neighbourhood areas by April 2007. With almost 90 currently initiated, the force is well on track to meet its target. The remaining neighbourhoods constitute the final stage of the project, with a 'go live' target of April 2008. Planned implementation depends on PCSO recruitment. There is a current establishment of 132, with plans for a further 139 during 2006/07 and a further 404 by April 2008. It is recognised that this is an ambitious but necessary goal in an area of low unemployment and where wages are above the national average.

Commitment to neighbourhood policing is demonstrated by regular reviews at CCMT meetings, by chief officer visits to NHP teams and by including it in the BCU inspection process.

A key individual network (KIN) in each neighbourhood acts as the medium for local consultation and is increasingly matched against a demographic profile. Problem solving is facilitated through the neighbourhood action group (NAG) process. By the end of March

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2006, all LPA neighbourhoods had been mapped and classified as priority, enhanced or capable. This was done in agreement with partners. It reflects the risks identified in each neighbourhood and will influence the allocation of resources.

Customer service and consistent standards of quality are recognised as important ingredients in satisfactory service delivery and a dedicated, tailored training programme supports this aim, complemented by a manual that includes good practice.

Partners are included in the training programme and initial responses, such as those in Oxford LPA, suggest that this opportunity is welcomed. Furthermore, in 2005/06 a neighbourhood conference was developed for internal and external partners which will be delivered later in the year. It is recognised that neighbourhood policing must be conducted within National Intelligence Model (NIM) principles. Priorities raised by the communities themselves are added to neighbourhood profiles and resolution of these issues is used as an indicator of performance. Communities are consulted about reassurance and visibility, the result of which is a 'community-defined patrol strategy'. Work continues to refine this initiative to ensure it is within intelligence-led deployment.

The percentage of people who think the local police are doing a good job continues to rise and at the end of 2005/06 stood at 53.7%, significantly above the MSF average of 49.9%.

## Strengths

- Considerable attention and effort have been given to neighbourhood policing and problem-solving in the past year. Most obviously, Challenge and Change has reconfigured Thames Valley Police, giving greater prominence to LPAs and the neighbourhoods that constitute them. Central project management has addressed the many issues surrounding implementation and has provided a repository of information on which consistency can be built.
- A detailed project plan has been agreed with partners and contains critical paths and milestones. There is formalised review and governance with an adequately resourced support structure including a dedicated chief inspector as project manager.
- Commitment to NHP is evident in the leadership of the chief officer team and the support shown by the Police Authority. In less than 12 months, some 70 neighbourhood teams have been initiated. There is a plan to ensure that communities know the names and contact details of neighbourhood officers and teams.
- Thames Valley Police has good partner relationships and has extended this into the project. Partners are members of the project board and have secondments in the project team. This has helped in the early identification of problems and their resolution.
- Neighbourhood policing implementation revealed a number of opportunities for volunteer working. These have been fed back to the volunteer co-ordinator to enhance an already healthy programme.
- The estate budget includes provision for adaptive builds, which means that local opportunities for community placements or co-location with other agencies can be seized.

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- The process of neighbourhood mapping is complex. In particular, understanding the task, analysing the data, analytical capability and meeting the needs of partners have been challenges which have been met with intelligence and pragmatism. All neighbourhoods had been successfully mapped during the fieldwork of this assessment. They have been defined through local agreements between police, partners and communities and account has been taken of local differences.

### **Work in Progress**

- There is awareness of the need to give neighbourhood officers freedom of operation, and work has been carried out on a 'ring fence and abstraction' policy which will be completed shortly. The demands on a BCU will remain, as will the tension about how competing demands will be met. Further work needs to be done so that all levels of the organisation understand what is and what is not expected of neighbourhood officers.

### **Areas for Improvement**

- The precise aims and objectives of NHP are consistently understood throughout the organisation. The effect of this can be seen in the differing operational parameters of neighbourhood policing and the lack of meaningful performance information.
- Measures of performance are under consideration, but currently they are insufficient in several regards. They are not sufficiently mature to reflect the activity of neighbourhood officers. The emphasis on sanction detections is exerting an irresistible pull upon how officers are judged. At the same time, neighbourhood performance measures are insufficiently advanced to act as a counterweight. While national guidance will be forthcoming, this does not resolve the present situation. Benefit would be gained from a performance management system which allows the force and BCUs to measure neighbourhood policing activity, performance against agreed priorities and the effectiveness of deployment of all neighbourhood staff.
- As neighbourhood policing addresses local problems, the challenge is how this can be brought within the NIM umbrella. There is evidence that the work of neighbourhoods does not register on the tasking radar and, unless this is resolved, there is a growing potential for two separate tasking tracks to develop. There is work to be done before it can be certain that NHP teams and partnership resources are being jointly deployed via NIM.
- Despite the experience being harnessed as more neighbourhoods are launched, and the willingness to offer preparatory training, the sense of isolation within a neighbourhood team, including the NAG, should not be underestimated. Benefit would be gained from organising support networks among neighbourhood leaders, police and community as a means of sharing experiences and presenting joint solutions. This process is distinct from training and would be best applied during initial implementation.
- Until partners at a local level embrace the principles of joint responsibility and accountability inherent in neighbourhood policing doctrine, the benefits will not be realised and success will rely too heavily on the contribution of policing. This is likely to inhibit development of the scheme from area beat into true neighbourhood policing.

**1C Customer Service and Accessibility**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Direction of Travel</b>
<b>Fair</b>	<b>Improved</b>

**National Grade Distribution**

Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
0	19	22	2

**Contextual Factors**

There is evident commitment to initiatives contained within the Government’s citizen focus agenda and hard work continues to develop and maintain effective relationships with all communities. A movement towards a more co-ordinated and strategic approach to ensuring fairness and equality in service delivery will further enhance overall effectiveness.

The first stage of the Challenge and Change programme has sought to establish the foundations of delivery on the key delivery principle of neighbourhood policing and partnership arrangements. There is now a process of cultural change to ensure that proactive neighbourhood-based problem solving is viewed by staff as being as important as response policing. The recent development of PECs and BCU-based service delivery units has sought to improve customer service, satisfaction and accessibility. In terms of dealing professionally and proactively with complaints from the public, there has also been continued internal development within the quality of service unit. Customer satisfaction rates in most cases, although improving, remain below MSF averages in 2005/06 and as such have been highlighted as an area for improvement within the approach to Citizen Focus. Implementation of the force QoSC presents an opportunity to both consolidate and improve standards of customer service.

Much has been done to enhance call answering, which is now based on a comprehensive one-stop-shop approach with omni-competent staff trained to deal fully with customer needs. This features an extensive 24/7 centralised call handling and crime recording facility. There are also devolved units on each BCU to deal with and, where necessary, deploy officers to the slow-time enquiries. Centralised control rooms deploy resources to all immediate and urgent response (Grades 1 and 2) incidents. With the introduction of PECs there has been a significant movement towards increased accessibility and the consequence has been the provision of a more measured, tailored and appropriate service in respect of initial contact and initial response.

Increased deployment of volunteer staff has extended the coverage for front counters, providing an invaluable service in more rural and remote communities that would not otherwise sustain a fully staffed station duty office.

An implementation plan for the QoSC captures all quality of service and victim developments and will become part of a wide-ranging QoSC programme, sponsored by ACC (operational support) with the head of quality of service as project manager.

## Strengths

- The first strategic priority is 'to provide an effective and timely response focused on the needs of the citizen' and there is a series of actions to support this aim. A clear vision for the future will enable improvements to customer service to be realised. Citizen focus was the subject of a senior leaders forum (SLF) which addressed in detail areas including the use of customer surveys, complaints and other indicators of quality of service. All these areas are examined at the FPG.
- Some 68 police buildings are open to the public and 61 were deemed to have suitable access for people with disabilities, an improvement over the previous year when 57 were open to the public and only 22 were deemed suitable. This improvement should not be underestimated, as volunteers have had a significant impact in increasing the number of police stations open to the public and improving accessibility and quality of service.
- A quality of service unit has been established to co-ordinate effective responses to customer complaints that do not amount to formal complaints against police, aided by a force-wide tracking database. Although still being developed, good progress has been made towards ensuring that individual complaints are dealt with promptly, the pattern and profile of such complaints are analysed, and that the lessons learnt are used to improve training, policies and procedures.
- Enhancements in call management, especially development of the PECs over the past three years, have significantly improved customer service and accessibility. All call-handling staff are required to achieve a diploma in police service communications and initial investigation. Control room and PEC staff receive diversity training which has enabled them to provide a better quality of service to the cosmopolitan population. A National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) level 2 in customer service, a work-orientated qualification focusing on providing excellent customer service, is available to all staff. There are also a number of computer-based training packages available for officers and staff. Front counter staff and volunteers have attended training conferences focusing on quality of service (but see areas for improvement).
- The introduction of service delivery units has made the response to non-urgent incidents much more effective. It has freed up time for patrol officers and staff in PECs while at the same time improving the service provided to the public.
- The Thames Valley Police website provides easy access to a wide range of information. It has a comprehensive 'frequently asked questions' page and a regularly updated news and information section. There is clarity about how to make contact via the single non-emergency number (SNEN) that has been operating for some years now.

## Work in Progress

- A comprehensive programme led by ACC (operational support) incorporating all quality of service and customer plans has been drawn up and approved by the Police Authority with an aim to implement the QoSC by November 2006. Each action has a completion date and a named chief officer lead. The implementation plan draws together developments to improve quality of service including providing better access to police buildings.
- Mandatory training for officers and staff in the code of practice for victims has been



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designed and is in the process of being delivered. A new victim and witness external Internet site is being developed to allow easier access to information and services from police and partners and will be accessible from the police and the LCJB websites (see also 3E).

### **Areas for Improvement**

- In addition to the national customer surveys, a major annual public attitude survey is conducted with the results broken down to CDRP level, and good use has been made of tailored surveys to inform specific projects. There is scope, however, for better analysis to identify areas for improvement. The results of such analysis should be combined with information from other sources to create action plans to rectify the causes of dissatisfaction.
- There is an absence of mandatory customer service training for all officers and staff. Comment has been made about training that is available 'voluntarily' but it is evident from the survey results above that significant improvements are still to be made, not least in keeping victims informed of the progress of cases. While there are witness care units supporting those whose cases are progressing to court, and BCU crime and incident management units using the crime recording system (CEDAR) to keep victims informed, it is clear that this is not working well and the force has agreed an upgrade to CEDAR to help improve the service (see also 3C and 3E).
- Managers are expected to reflect quality of service in staff appraisals and ensure evidence is recorded to inform assessment. Group interviews of police officers reveal concerns that insufficient weight is given to this element of appraisals as opposed to achieving sanction detections. There is a need for managers and supervisors to clarify the importance and balance of each organisational objective in officers' appraisals (see also 1B and 7B).
- There is recognition that the use of voicemail needs to improve. There should be clarity about its use and monitoring to ensure calls are not lost in the system. This is of particular importance as the force rolls out neighbourhood policing and ease of contact with named officers is required (see also 1B).

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**1D Professional Standards**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Direction of Travel</b>
<b>Good</b>	<b>Not Graded</b>

**National Grade Distribution**

Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
2	16	25	0

**National Position**

In view of the recent focused inspection activity of professional standards departments across the country, the grade allocated in the national moderation process and publication of the reports in January 2006 will be applied for the purposes of baseline assessment.

The inspections were conducted using a substantial framework of questions under EFQM4 (European Foundation for Quality Management) headings. This framework of questions was forwarded to forces in line with normal baseline methodology, requesting self-assessment and submission of relevant evidence and supporting documentation. This material was then analysed and followed by HMIC inspection teams visiting forces to carry out validation checks and supplementary interviews of key staff and stakeholders. The baseline inspection reports include recommendations as well as areas identified for improvement.

Evidence was gathered, consolidated and reported upon in individual force baseline assessment reports which can be found on the HMIC website:

[http://inspectrates.homeoffice.gov.uk/hmic/inspect\\_reports1/baseline-assessments.html](http://inspectrates.homeoffice.gov.uk/hmic/inspect_reports1/baseline-assessments.html)

## 2 Reducing Crime (Domain 1)

### 2A Volume Crime Reduction

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Direction of Travel</b>
<b>Fair</b>	<b>Improved</b>

#### National Grade Distribution

Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
1	18	20	4

#### Contextual Factors

An overview of British Crime Survey (BCS) comparator crime performance against targets set is published daily by the business information unit on the intranet and each Wednesday wider information is published as part of the crime meeting information. Monthly summaries are also produced.

The crime reduction strategy is directed by the annual policing plan and the six-monthly strategic assessments that include updates from the crime reduction officer and BCU-based assessments on current crime themes and trends. The crime meeting, chaired by the DCC, reviews performance on a four-weekly basis to co-ordinate responses and share good practice at LPA level.

CDRPs are now engaged in a joint review process involving the force, the Police Authority and the Government Office for the South East (GOSE). It reviews performance at force level and the performance of individual CDRPs, highlighting areas of good performance and tackling poor performance by shared good practice.

There was a 2.7% reduction in the number of BCS comparator crimes during 2005/06 compared with the previous year. Total recorded crime for the same period has also been reduced by 5% (2,802 crimes). Some 13 out of the 16 LPAs have recorded reductions in crime but currently only four are achieving their annual reduction targets. In spite of continued and sustained reduction – there have been reductions in domestic burglary (down 3%), vehicle crime (down 6%) and robbery (down 2%) – the force has not kept pace with reductions in other forces in the MSF group. Furthermore, there has been a 5% rise in recorded violent crime. Of particular note is a 17% (778 crimes) increase in domestic-violence-related wounding, which may have arisen from improved quality of service developed by the domestic violence project that has increased reporting. For each indicator, Thames Valley Police has higher recorded crime rates than MSF averages.

#### Strengths

- ACC (SO) provides the proactive lead for volume crime reduction and is supported by a detective superintendent who acts as crime manager. The crime manager plays

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a key role through a comprehensive and structured crime reduction programme. A dedicated chief inspector, who leads on both street crime and domestic burglary and also acts as the situational crime reduction officer, is supported by an experienced detective sergeant.

- The recording of crimes on to the CEDAR crime system is sound and carried out centrally by the two PECs that service the five BCUs. It is routinely audited by a highly skilled central team ethically led by an individual with many years' experience who also sits on several national committees (see also 3C).
- Structured performance management through the performance group and the crime meeting holds BCU, LPA commanders and crime managers to account, highlights crime trends and themes and shares good practice. Crime reduction is co-ordinated at levels 1 and 2 TCG meetings and central resources are tasked at level 2 meetings, while roads policing resources are targeted at both levels. It is evident from group interviews of officers and police staff that crime reduction is strongly embedded and features highly as part of their working day.
- There is a strong partnership working ethos at all levels. A joint police, Police Authority and GOSE-led CDRP performance review meeting has recently been set up that assesses the effectiveness of each partnership. It also addresses some of the areas for improvement detailed in the 2004/05 HMIC baseline assessment.
- Comprehensive evidence has been supplied of targeted and co-ordinated crime reduction initiatives and campaigns such as Safer Streets (violent crime campaign), Operation Hangover (Alcohol Misuse Enforcement Campaign/AMEC alcohol-related violence initiative), Operation Robbery, and schools interventions. A strategy for tackling alcohol-related violence has been established with a complementary 21-point delivery plan. An alcohol strategy group (consisting of an inspector from each of the 16 police areas) oversees implementation of the delivery plan. The strategy is designed to tackle alcohol-related violence, particularly assaults, public disorder and criminal damage.
- A consistent approach is being applied to the training of constables, sergeants and inspectors during mandatory training for the NHP teams. A seven-stage process delivers a basic understanding of the SARA (scanning, analysis, response, assessment) problem-solving model which is woven into the training documentation and student materials. The process places a heavy emphasis on working with partners and the local community to produce local action plans through NAGs and other local partnerships.
- Crime reduction officers and external partners are routinely involved in the tasking process at LPA and BCU levels to deliver planned joint actions to reduce local priority crime.

### **Work in Progress**

- Safer schools partnerships (SSPs) are being rolled out across the five BCUs in line with national guidance. Schools have been graded red, amber or green through a profiling tool developed by the local policing directorate using police and partner data. This is allowing LPAs and BCUs to plan and target SSP officer deployment with partners to ensure improved impact and performance.

### **Areas for Improvement**

- The application of the NIM must underpin all resourcing and deployment and failure to capture and record community information and intelligence regarding matters such as anti-social behaviour and criminal damage will have an adverse impact. The phased introduction of local area agreements (LAAs), where the emphasis is on solving local problems with local solutions, will place a heavy burden upon partnership agencies in dealing with public demand. There is also a need to identify and implement a corporate intelligence mapping system which highlights problem areas and provides the necessary intelligence to instigate a joint tasking approach.
- The joint performance review of CDRPs should be tasked with squeezing as much joint activity as possible from all partners, as some LPAs and CDRPs have seen an increase in low-level crime (criminal damage and auto-crime) but have limited resources and capacity to carry out problem profiling with local authority partners.
- It is anticipated that the introduction of NHP will have, in the medium term, an impact on the levels of recorded crime, but this needs to be closely monitored as part of a suite of indicators for assessing the effectiveness of NHP.
- Currently there is limited capacity to provide co-ordination of crime reduction at force level. Targeted involvement of the crime reduction officer at the monthly crime meetings will further improve co-ordination and dissemination of crime reduction initiatives and sharing of good practice.

### 3 Investigating Crime (Domain 2)

#### 3A Managing Critical Incidents and Major Crime

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Direction of Travel</b>
<b>Fair</b>	<b>Stable</b>

#### National Grade Distribution

<b>Poor</b>	<b>Fair</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Excellent</b>
5	17	17	4

#### Contextual Factors

The major crime unit (MCU) exists to investigate the most serious of crimes in the categories of homicides and stranger rapes. Other serious crimes are also investigated by the unit if it is felt that the use of a major incident room is necessary. Categories A+, A and B murders will automatically fall within the remit of the unit. Crimes in action which are in progress (for example, a kidnap for ransom) will also fall within the remit.

Other crimes, such as other homicides, attempted murders, stranger rapes and other crimes deemed to be critical incidents, may be investigated by the unit but will be the subject of direct tasking by ACC (SO) or the detective chief superintendent. SIOs frequently provide tactical advice and guidance to BCUs and other headquarters departments and a healthy inter-departmental relationship exists. In the year under review, a detailed assessment of the major crime function was carried out, leading to significant additional resources to be phased in over the next three years.

MCUs are dispersed to four locations. Response to major crime presents some difficulties during on-call periods, as officers are required to respond across the Thames Valley. The accommodation itself falls short of what is needed and BCU facilities are called into use. The force is aware of these challenges and has considered the options available; financial constraints have limited the scope for immediate improvement.

The terrorist events of 7 July 2005 required a response to direct intelligence and consequently tested operational planning and resilience processes. This period afforded an opportunity to examine and review current practices and procedures. Lessons learnt helped to fashion best practice advice and an extensive training programme was initiated. Officers are being trained in identifying critical incidents and the standard operating procedure for responding to critical incidents has been redrafted. The training programme has included joint training with partners in the management of major incidents which has been well received by partners and has reinforced the sense of joint responsibility.

Particular attention has been paid to resilience in dealing with any major or critical incident, ensuring the right skills are available and command structures are effective. A key ingredient in this process is the resilience panel and notification of resilience states to stakeholders. Training for police officers during Streetcraft training sessions have, in the last year, included an appreciation and understanding of action required in emerging critical

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incidents. The programme benefits from the force's previous experience when it addressed how to improve first-line response to victims of domestic violence.

Staff have received computerised 'live-time' training on how to effectively co-ordinate and respond to major disasters. Critical incident policy is documented and readily available. A register of critical incidents is now being maintained to capture and share good practice and learning points.

Intelligence-related IT issues have been identified, and are being addressed through the Cross-Regional Information Sharing Project (CRISP), the NIM action plan and the Bichard action plan. A programme manager has recently been appointed to improve capability to collate and share intelligence for the IMPACT programme. Systems are not yet inter-operable. This includes the availability of HOLMES (Home Office Large Major Enquiry System) intelligence, as detailed in last year's assessment. However, an attempt to address this has encountered problems associated with confidentiality and the need for a secure network. This issue has been referred to the national forum, and a significant area for improvement still exists pending national guidance.

Capacity to provide 24-hour strategic and tactical advice exists with effective call-out procedures for specialist support, including major crime and firearms. There is a range of major crime specialists available such as SIOs and firearms specialists, including tactical advice and a Silver firearms cadre. Procedures are regularly used and tested.

There is sufficient dedicated and trained specialist staff to meet demand. There is a dedicated firearms capacity with the capability to meet the full range of tactical options. The number of ARVs on patrol increased in 2005/06 and there is clear evidence that current resources are sufficient to meet demand. Performance during 2005/06 indicates a significantly lower level of life-threatening crime and gun crime. The major crime group meets current demands and additional resources have been allocated in a planned programme to bring the force up to the level required in a strategic force.

Effective partnerships, including training, are integrated into the management of critical incidents. IAGs, key individuals and support networks are regularly consulted and used in the direction of incidents.

A risk management group is in place and a risk register is maintained. Current and future demand profiles for critical incidents and potential threats have been drawn up. A wide-ranging review of firearms responses in 2004 led to considerable change including a comprehensive assessment of the firearms threat.

## **Strengths**

- Critical incident policies and standing operational procedures are readily available and kept current. Particular attention has been paid to the initial management of incidents and these enhancements have been supported by an extensive training programme. A resilience panel meets to ensure that the force has sufficient trained officers to meet its needs.
- Over the last year, considerable energy has been devoted to the management of critical incidents. A range of subject areas has received attention, such as policy; identification, management and review of critical incidents, resilience, training and accreditation.

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- Training for critical and major incidents has included partner agencies and other emergency services and this enables an integrated response.
- Community impact assessments (CIAs) are completed for all major and critical incidents. A weekly CIA is produced and circulated with a copy sent to the national communities tensions team.
- The response to the threat posed by animal rights extremism has demonstrated the capacity and capability to manage critical incidents. There is also an effective, consistent, critical incident response which minimises the effect on BCUs while maximising consistency, resilience and organisational learning.
- Good practice is followed by conducting post-incident debriefs which are fed into crime and operational forums. With regard to major crime, a crime 'master class' is held quarterly on specific areas of work or particular incidents. It is presented by outside speakers who have been selected for their experience and expertise. Care is taken to focus the presentations on those elements of an incident which have relevance to the force and therefore contribute most to organisational learning.
- A live intelligence cell has been formed in the control room and this is linked to a further intelligence bureau within the FIB. By these means, quick-time analysis is available to commanders at firearms and other incidents, including crimes in action.

### **Work in Progress**

- An improvement plan drawn up for the investigation of kidnap and other crimes in action has been partly implemented.

### **Areas for Improvement**

- While the management of major and critical incidents has been improved, the focus of attention has been on reacting swiftly to such incidents and managing them effectively across Bronze, Silver and Gold levels. The profile of critical incidents has been greatly raised and consequently they are more likely to be identified early. Incidents which do not readily identify themselves as critical at the outset should also be capable of being captured by systems and processes or professional judgement (see also 5A and 5B).
- While there is some evidence of IT inter-operability, for instance in a limited capacity for cross-system searching using Crystal software, inter-operability of intelligence systems remains an issue for development.
- There are as yet no formal processes for assessing the performance of major crime teams. Performance for 2005/06 indicates higher than MSF average instances of murder and attempted murder per 10,000 population and a lower than average detection rate for both crimes, although only one recent homicide remains undetected. Further work should be undertaken to incorporate indicators into team performance.
- There is a lack of analytical capability to analyse trends in major crime. Consideration should be given to the full range of precursor crimes and the results fed into the strategic assessment.
- While forums such as the 'master classes', which are voluntary and well attended, and operational debriefs present opportunities to share learning, the force will want



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to satisfy itself that the lessons learnt consistently and formally lead to auditable organisational learning.

- There is recognition of the need to have the capability to review major crime, and a review team has been established. However, during the inspection year, this team was not staffed. The benefits of such a team and the learning to be gained have not therefore been harnessed.
- While additional resources have been allocated to major crime investigation, it is clear that they will come mainly from BCUs. There are therefore competing needs for the organisation: that of the major crime teams for additional staff, and that of BCUs to maintain investigative experience. The implementation plan has not yet been fully worked through. It should be detailed, unequivocal and balance both needs.
- Facilities dedicated to the four major crime teams vary considerably. The force and Police Authority are alive to this situation but, in 2005/06, major investigations have relied on BCU accommodation and this is an area for improvement.

**3B Tackling Serious and Organised Criminality**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Direction of Travel</b>
<b>Fair</b>	<b>Stable</b>

**National Grade Distribution**

Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
7	21	13	2

**Contextual Factors**

The specialist operations department possesses a range of resources to tackle serious and organised criminality. Level 2 assets include an organised crime group comprising both a detective and a surveillance capability; two intelligence support teams (ISTs) with both conventional and technical capacity; an urban surveillance unit; a technical support unit; an undercover unit specialising in test purchase and decoy work; a witness protection unit (WPU); a hi-tech crime unit; and an economic crime unit. The force's capacity and capability to tackle serious criminality was demonstrated in the tactical response to a terrorist incident in Aylesbury following the 7/7 outrages.

Thames Valley Police has embraced HMICs protective services review plus other 'level 2 gap' work and has conducted a detailed review of level 2 resources. While it possesses experienced and equipped resources dedicated to tackling level 2 criminality, it is committed to further expansion. It has secured additional finance and will have substantial growth in specialist operational capability and capacity over the next two years. One key development will be the separation of the undercover unit and the WPU into larger and separate entities each managed by a sergeant. There will also be significant staffing increases to the organised crime group, ISTs and the hi-tech crime unit.

The review has addressed accommodation issues. Although resources do not presently allow the force to accomplish its ideal accommodation configuration, several enhancements have been agreed. They include co-locating covert teams in one purpose-built premises by October 2006 which will bring substantial benefits for joint resourcing, planning and service delivery.

Level 2 assets are tasked through the NIM process, being allocated by way of the level 2 TCG which is held fortnightly. This process tackles level 2 crime in two ways: first, by combining BCU and specialist operational resources in operations such as Operation Hanger; second, by utilising level 2 operations that are exclusively conducted by headquarters resources, as in Operation Havoc.

The level of life-threatening crime and gun crime per 1,000 population within the Thames Valley has fluctuated over the past three years. During 2005/06 the force was significantly below the MSF average with a long-term projection that indicates a fall in such crimes.

A large number of covert operations have been undertaken in the past 12 months, including some in collaboration with other forces, such as Operation Grafton and Operation Haul.

New tactics, strategies and approaches to further combat organised criminality are being actively developed.

### Strengths

- The Chief Constable is the ACPO national lead on the NIM, and ACC (SO) chairs the force tasking and regional tasking meetings. Strategic TCG meetings held twice a year are chaired by the Chief Constable. Sound links between regional and force control strategies are managed well in a complex environment where there are borders with nine other police forces and four ACPO regions.
- During the year 2005/06, it has been necessary to investigate cross-border offences and criminal networks that impact within and outside the area. Capability and capacity have been demonstrated to support cross-border investigation and ACC (SO) ensures integration with regional issues. There is a well-equipped and well-developed technical support unit to exploit technical opportunities in the investigation and disruption of criminal networks. The force has supplied comprehensive evidence of its operations used to tackle serious and organised crime and disrupt criminal networks.
- A good understanding of the extent of level 2 criminality is apparent. Operations across a range of criminality have been undertaken following threat assessment and NIM products, and in support of the control strategy and strategic assessment. There are effective links with national agencies (now known as the Serious Organised Crime Agency/SOCA) resulting in two specific operations.
- Threat assessments have included groups involved in violence and gun crime within drug markets, and groups involved in high-value dwelling burglaries, and there are specific operations to tackle these threats.
- There is an effective intelligence-sharing structure with neighbouring police forces and other agencies. Sound joint working with Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) and the Immigration and Nationality Directorate (IND) has facilitated improved sharing of intelligence. Comprehensive evidence has been supplied of joint operations with these agencies and forces in the South East region.
- There are experienced and appropriately equipped resources dedicated to tackling level 2 criminality, with nationally accredited training, a dedicated surveillance capability and specific units to deal with major crimes such as kidnapping and murder. Details of the range of services are contained in the contextual factors above. Predicted and extraordinary demands can be met across specialist areas and no major operation has been curtailed in the past year.
- There is active participation in the regional TCG. Generally, these have been bilateral operations both with police forces inside the region and other adjoining forces. Evidence has been provided as part of this assessment of significant proactive targeting on a regular basis.
- There is evidence of some monitoring and evaluation to gather management information on impact, including local targets. Level 2 activity is evaluated at force tactical TCG (TTCG). Scrutiny of performance occurs at performance group and in-line management review. Measures of performance include arrests and use of resources assessments from activity-based costing. Where activity is linked to a

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BCU problem profile, local outcomes are included.

- Osman policy is in place and acted upon when appropriate, ensuring appropriate risk assessments of the vulnerability of witnesses and potential victims.
- Adequate resources are in place to pursue opportunities to seize criminal assets and disrupt activity, including BCU and departmental managers, and financial investigators within the professional standards department (PSD). Nominated individuals attended a financial managers' course in March 2006. An intelligence officer produces packages based on suspicious activity reports for BCU and specialist staff. There are close links with the Assets Recovery Agency and evidence of the use of powers from POCA in strategic and tactical planning. Presentations on asset recovery are made to BCU officers. There is a well-resourced economic crime unit and in excess of 70 confiscation orders are recorded.

### **Work in Progress**

- Although there is knowledge of level 2 criminality as described above, there is still work to be done to map organised criminal networks and gain a better appreciation of the task ahead.
- There are few SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Timely) performance targets in the 2005/06 annual policing plan relating specifically to tackling serious and organised crime, the focus being on increasing asset recovery above the level achieved during 2004/05. The 2006/07 plan does improve on this target with a measurable objective to recover at least £1.9 million of criminal assets from processing 89 court orders.

### **Areas for Improvement**

- While there are significant dedicated resources to tackle level 2 demands, capacity will have to increase for emerging threats such as people trafficking. A regional intelligence cell, once operational, will also add to the tasking profile. This is well understood and a plan for expansion is in place. It is important, at this time, when resources are stretched, that the plan is seen through to execution.
- While performance management is well developed for forensic management and there are clear performance indicators (PIs) for the economic crime unit, in other areas the picture is less robust. PIs for serious and organised crime are limited, as is the monitoring and evaluation of operations. For example, current yardsticks depend heavily upon arrest figures at the conclusion of operations. A more sophisticated suite of PIs is required. In support of a performance regime, there are benefits to be gained from a comprehensive range of harm indicators applying to particular communities, with evidence of monitoring and responding to signal crimes.
- The dedicated WPU has been in place for several years as part of the undercover unit. The resources allocated to it have not been sufficient to meet demand, leading to the secondment of temporary staff – not an ideal solution. It is pleasing to note that a growth bid has now been accepted that will increase the unit to one detective sergeant and four detective constables. Recruitment for these posts is under way and will be completed before the end of 2006/07 when the unit will become stand-alone.

**3C Volume Crime Investigation**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Direction of Travel</b>
<b>Good</b>	<b>Improved</b>

**National Grade Distribution**

Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
3	20	16	4

**Contextual Factors**

The sanction detection rate increased significantly in 2005/06, from 18% to over 27% in the 12-month period, and is now well above the MSF average. Individual crime detection rates also increased over this period, most notably for domestic violence, domestic burglary and BCS crimes.

The weekly Gold sanction detection meeting has now developed into a four-weekly force-level crime meeting chaired by the DCC. The investigation process is supported by the crime manager and the detections manager and championed at BCU level by crime managers. Minimum standards of investigation have been refined. Managers are held to account at the monthly force-level performance group and BCU performance groups. These meetings are supported by excellent data provision and have action-driven agendas. Areas of good practice are promoted; clear targets are set and are subject to continuous monitoring. Immediate tasking for remedial action takes place when falls in performance levels are identified. Themed independent auditing of critical areas of investigation feeds the performance regime. See 3D regarding the important and improving contribution made by the forensic investigation unit (FIU).

AIM sets minimum standards for all aspects of volume crime investigation. Officers are encouraged to prepare their own investigation plans which are subject to supervisory review within 72 hours. Further reviews are required at key stages and include an escalation policy, bringing unresolved cases to middle then senior management attention within the BCU. The results of independent audits carried out with a view to identifying areas for improvement are fed back to the detections manager. This process is transparent as all action plans, including specific time-based actions which are allocated to named individuals and supervisory reviews, are recorded in the investigation management module (IMM) of the crime recording system. This enables performance at force, BCU, team and even individual levels to be scrutinised. The detections manager and his team provide training and constant support to BCUs, tailored to the needs of each audience.

**Strengths**

- Clear direction has been set for some time by the CCMT about the need to improve crime detection. A robust performance management regime is in place, with the force performance group underpinned by BCU performance groups (see also 7B). Monthly crime meetings involving the crime managers, department heads, and LPA

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and BCU commanders are followed by a meeting for the crime managers. All crime managers are held accountable for performance within their units. The meetings review and evaluate recent crime investigation operations, identifying effective tactical options and sharing good practice.

- This drive for improved sanction detection rates has led to continuous and sustained performance improvement. By the end of 2005/06, the overall sanction detection rate was 26.6%, well above the MSF group average and far exceeding the annual policing plan target of 21% or 42,500 offences. Sanction detection rates for domestic burglary improved by 6% to 16.8%, above the MSF average. While the sanction detection rate for robbery has fallen slightly to 22.9%, it is still above the MSF average.
- The 2004/05 baseline assessment commented upon the effort that has gone into improving crime investigation processes and structures. There is a central system of recording crimes through the PECs for both victim - and officer-reported crime (see also 5A). This centralisation has gone some way towards standardising recording practices and improving recording. For example, the ethnicity of over 90% of victims is now recorded. The crime system also provides an investigation module to maintain a record of investigation which, coupled with the minimum standards for investigation set out in the AIM process, has encouraged consistency and facilitated audit to ensure standards are being maintained.
- In the absence of IT systems that can talk to each other, the potential of the current systems has been exploited through the use of the Crystal secondary investigation facility. This can search and recover data held within the core IT systems and has been used to link offences (see Areas for Improvement).
- A central automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) team can be tasked at level 2 meetings to assist BCUs in the investigation of crime. During 2005/06 the team made a significant number of arrests, including 23 for robbery, 496 for theft and burglary, 332 for drug offences and 300 for vehicle crime.
- Awareness training for the use of asset recovery powers continues to both BCU and department teams. A financial managers' course has been completed by 20 police officers. During 2005/06 there were seven cash seizures amounting to £128,000 forfeited and a further 21 amounting to £556,000 are being progressed.
- The Crime Registrar is well known and highly visible, having gained a reputation for his ethical stance on crime recording and classification. He acts as the final arbiter in both the internal crime audit process and in the interpretation of the Home Office Counting Rules (HOCR).

### **Work in Progress**

- A full implementation of the professionalising the investigative process is being progressed as a priority project. A formula for the allocation of tiered interview training and the Initial Crime Investigators' Development Programme aims to ensure parity for BCUs in the development of a range of suitably qualified staff. There is a need to ensure that the formula encompasses all investigative elements on BCUs, in particular PPU's, most of which do not have sufficient experienced or accredited investigators (see also 4B).

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### Areas for Improvement

- In spite of positive comments above, the sanction detection rate for vehicle crime fell to 9.8%, just below the MSF average of 10.0%. Following a continuous rise until November 2005, the rate began to fall. Analysis should be undertaken to see if there is any link with problems experienced with fingerprint identification during December 2005 and February 2006 (see Section 3D).
- Consideration should be given to adding thefts from motor vehicles and vehicle interference when the control strategy is next reviewed as these offences amount to 12.8% of all crimes committed. The overall detection rate is lower than the MSF average and the FIU is not being tasked to forensically examine motor vehicles, so detection opportunities are being missed (see also Section 3D).
- The National Crime Recording Standard (NCRS) crime recording audit published in June 2006 graded data quality as Fair and Deteriorated, following a Good grade the previous year. This is disappointing for Thames Valley Police as the grade awarded does not reflect the tremendous effort that has been made to address the quality of investigation and service delivered to victims of such crimes. Management arrangements for auditing were graded as Good. The HMIC detection audit carried out in 2006 gave the force an overall Fair grade with vulnerabilities identified in the recording of detections in the categories of cautions and offences taken into consideration (TICs).
- Positive comment about the Crystal secondary investigatory capability has been made above and in Section 5A. However, this should be seen only as an interim solution ahead of the introduction of a data warehouse facility that will aid the investigation process.

## GOOD PRACTICE

<b>TITLE:</b> Improving sanction detection performance through integrated investigative processes and use of Performance Development Reviews (PDRs)
<b>PROBLEM:</b> Thames Valley Police have a very young and inexperienced workforce which extends through to the sergeant rank.
<b>SOLUTIONS:</b> Over the past year significant performance improvements have been brought about by a variety of initiatives which have been adopted as corporate policy. The most striking of these is an increase in the all crime sanction detections from 41,416 to 50,062 (up by 8,646) against a reduction in all recorded crime from 192,306 by 4,211 to 188,095 (down 2%). The sanction detection rate has improved, during 2005/06, from 21.54% by 5.08% to 26.62%. During the same time period recorded crime, falling into the BCS crime category, is down from 111,047 by 2,903 to 108,144. A reduction of 2.7%.  The force crime recording system has been enhanced by the development of an investigation management module (IMM) which requires the active supervision of crime investigations. At its inception, its use was required for specified crime investigations only. This included violent crime, hate crime and crime with a named suspect. Many local policing areas (LPAs) have already adopted its use for all crime and this will become a requirement as of 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2006.  IMM requires an action plan to be recorded for each investigation within 72hrs of

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receipt of the report. The objectives were twofold; to educate the whole workforce as to lines of enquiry and actions required to satisfactorily complete an investigation; and to ensure the active involvement of supervisors to drive the investigations process. In many LPAs, the scarcity of sufficiently experienced sergeants necessitated the creation of a new role of active investigation managers (AIM), with selection being based on ability and knowledge rather than rank.

An escalation policy of supervisory review seeks to ensure investigations are expeditiously progressed and that evidential opportunities are exploited to the full. Supervisory reviews are intended not only to be both supportive and directive to the officer in charge of the investigation (OIC) but also to review the quality of the supervisory input. If the crime remains undetected and not filed, an escalation of ranks becomes involved in the review process. In brief:

- An action plan is created within 72hrs by the OIC, sergeant or AIM;
- 7 days thereafter sergeant reviews paperwork and updates the action plan;
- If still not filed and undetected after 28days – inspector review;
- After 42 days – LPA commander review;
- After 76 days – crime managers review on behalf of the BCU commander; and
- After 90 days – the BCU commander may be challenged about progress at force performance group.

**OUTCOME(S)** Data accuracy has been dramatically improved along with the minimum standards for bulk crime investigation which now includes secondary investigations on suspects, offence locations and on victims.

Volume crime investigation has improved but the major challenges that remain are to improve the quality of investigation action plans and supervisory reviews over the next year.

It has also been a key aim to align the PDR process to plans and priorities and above all a process that acts as a vehicle to drive crime performance, through focusing on compliance with the investigative processes detailed above.

All staff are fully engaged with the PDR process and there is an increasing understanding of the value of engagement in the process across the organisation. There are clear links between PDR objectives and actions in the force and local delivery plans. By way of example, key staff throughout the organisation were set an organisational level objective to personally contribute to improve sanction detection performance

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**3D Improving Forensic Performance**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Direction of Travel</b>
<b>Good</b>	<b>Improved</b>

**National Grade Distribution**

Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
3	16	21	3

**Contextual Factors**

The FIU comprises three departments: forensic services (scenes of crime and forensic submissions), imaging (the fingerprint development and photographic laboratories), and the fingerprint bureau. The current establishment is 157 (full-time equivalent (FTE)), all of whom are police staff. Of this total, 71 are scenes of crime staff, of whom 53 are (full) scene attending staff. Scenes of crime offices are located in ten areas across the five BCUs and there are resources are aligned to the volume of crime on each area and the mix of urban or rural crime. All operational staff in the three departments work shifts giving cover from 8 am to 10 pm. In addition, there is a call-out rota for all units enabling the FIU to provide resilience for all types of work.

ACC (specialist operations) chairs the South East region forensic group which means that not only is he constantly aware of emerging issues, he is also in a position to challenge and compare the FIU against the performance and service provision in other forces. This constantly stimulates and motivates the FIU management team to consult others and share ideas and processes.

The FIU has made very significant progress in implementing accurate performance measurement systems. Combined with a positive attitude to measurement and improvement, this has enabled in-depth examination of factors impacting upon forensic success and soundly based improvement initiatives. Reducing the amount of DNA recovered from scenes to improve efficiency is a prime example. Applying better submissions guidelines and reviewing and monitoring performance against them have resulted in the same number of identifications from fewer samples. This approach has the added bonus of savings on analysis and the results have been shared with other forces.

All unit heads are involved in key national projects. Tripartite activity between the FIU, the CPS) and the forensic service provider resulted in the early publication of draft guidelines on charging following a DNA identification. The Thames Valley model has subsequently been taken forward nationally.

Incorporation of the NIM model includes the attendance of FIU staff at all levels throughout the tasking process. This has enabled the unit to focus on volume crime hotspots identified by BCUs and to put in place response plans, as well as nominating co-ordinators for larger level 2 operations. The early involvement of the FIU in this area results in clear forensic strategies that can be communicated fully within the FIU and to its customers. Close working with officers and formal liaison at structured meetings, such as the crime managers' meeting and force performance group, ensures that issues affecting service delivery are

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identified and progressed at an early stage. The excellent knowledge and skills of the staff in the department are recognised force-wide, along with their dedication and commitment.

### **Strengths**

- A strong strategic lead is given by ACC (SO) who chairs the regional group described above and is the Thames Valley Police forensics champion. He is proactive in driving the comparison of MSF performance to identify external good practice and in seeking to improve internal forensic processes by forging strategic alliances. The scientific support manager is an experienced individual who has been in post for five years and has brought in many improvements to forensic support in Thames Valley.
- An integrated approach has been adopted to forensic management strategy, clearly linking this activity with crime policies, process improvement and performance management arrangements. Problem-solving and accountability mechanisms are evident at the performance group, forensic performance group, crime meetings and Police Authority performance meetings. The FIU is represented at LPA, BCU and level 2 TCGs. It has a structured approach to supporting force-wide NIM processes.
- The department has a comprehensive performance management system that enables problem solving with crime managers, identifying factors that impact favourably or adversely on forensic success rates, and unit managers are held to account for performance in a robust fashion. Good practice has been shared with other forces and in turn has been imported following the use of benchmarking data.
- Active involvement in key national projects has led to the force gaining a reputation among its peers of being challenging and proactive in seeking performance improvements and using new technology. Tripartite activity with the FIU, CPS and the forensic supplier has informed national guidance on the processes for staged reporting of forensic evidence.
- A three-year contract with a forensic supplier has realised efficiencies, improved the processing of forensic submissions and enhanced the monitoring of costs and forensic returns. Costs are constantly assessed against outcomes. For example, a recent force study reviewed the benefits of forensic processes for criminal damage and arson as costs had escalated; adjustments were made.
- The early take-up of the scientific work improvement model (SWIM) has led to more detailed process mapping and has highlighted the reason for backlogs and the time taken to process exhibits through laboratories. This is further evidence of how the department works collaboratively with crime managers to solve problems and identify solutions that are then put into practice on BCUs.
- Favourable feedback has been received from the CPS policy directorate regarding developments around the revised evidential codes of practice and staged reporting, which have resulted in Thames Valley Police having a very low level of forensic disputes at court.
- The FIU is achieving all forensic performance targets set by the force. Timeliness has been added to traditional attendance and identification targets. Outcomes are now measured in greater detail and a project has been initiated to identify the reasons for variation in the rates of conversion from evidence samples to detected crimes. The contribution made by the FIU and its staff to the increase in sanction detection rates is significant. Considerable improvement has been made in scenes

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of crime officer (SOCO) attendance rates leading to more consistency across all BCUs (see also Areas for Improvement).

- For the period April to December 2005, performance data supplied by the Police Standards Unit indicate a lower recovery level with the same level of identifications; this results in a higher identification-to-recovery rate. This can be viewed as a more effective use of finance and resources (see Areas for Improvement). Furthermore, the conversion rates for both fingerprints and DNA matches for total detections are above the MSF average.
- The results of considerable work at a national level by the head of the FIU examining DNA sample attrition rates has been shared with the Home Office. It shows the force to be in the top quartile for DNA samples loaded to the national database. The FIU trains all new custody staff and provides follow-up training if there are any performance issues. Furthermore, FIU staff attend custody user group meetings. FIU staff have also been involved in the testing and implementation of the new custody computer system to ensure that all forensic-related matters are covered and that forensic benefits can be gained from the new technology.
- All forensic staff, collision investigators and intelligence-gathering staff have access to digital imaging, and specialist staff have access to 360-degree imaging.
- All recruits are DNA-sampled at stage 1 of their training, a process managed by staff from the training and development department. Currently 97% of officers are on the police elimination database (PED), whereas the Home Office believes the correct figure to be 82%. This disparity is attributable to marriages and anomalies with the spelling of some names and attempts are being made to rectify this.

### **Work in Progress**

- The recent performance of the IDENT1 system for the searching of outstanding fingerprint marks has been a cause for concern and has had an impact on identification rates. Thames Valley Police is actively pursuing this matter at a national level while ensuring issues are effectively communicated internally.
- The Locard system now has a fully functioning remote module, WebSoc. Investment in this system, along with the necessary hardware and remote working accessibility, would achieve a significant change in working practices. If this were to be combined with a central repository for exhibits and their onward transfer, the goal of SOCOs attending scenes for their entire shift could be realised and further efficiencies gained.
- There is a need to expand the use of digital imaging, image transfer and data transfer through technological improvements. This would result in the following: remote working from scenes with enabled digital transfer of marks directly to the National Automatic Fingerprint Identification System (NAFIS); the transfer of digital images directly to officers to save time and use of consumables; the digital transfer of footwear and fingerprint lifts from scenes of crime units to FIU departments; a digital link to the national pathology IT framework for improved service during major crime investigations; and the transfer of digital images and updating of evidence to the 360-degree imaging tools. This would allow investigators force-wide to have relevant access to the investigation file and to receive immediate updates. Automated data exchange for DNA submissions via the forensic service provider would create timely updates and create efficiencies. This could facilitate faster

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communication of forensic identifications to BCUs and again achieve a significant increase in efficiency – work is scheduled to begin in July 2006.

- A forensic intelligence analyst has been appointed within the FIB. The responsibilities and activities of this role need to be clearly defined and fully integrated within the FIU in order to ensure that all forensic intelligence links are identified and shared across the Thames Valley.
- There is a need to align scenes of crime and FIU resources according to the five BCU structures to improve resilience and performance with respect to outcomes. This would also facilitate a clearer process for the allocation of jobs to staff. Work has begun on one BCU with an anticipated completion date of November 2006 and long-term plans are in place for the remainder.
- There is a need to improve the central forensic intelligence process and include the co-ordination of footwear analysis. Furthermore, a dedicated approach is required to manage the anticipated increased volume of footwear recovery in custody and at scenes and its use as intelligence and evidence. A post has been advertised and is due to be filled before the end of 2006.

#### **Areas for Improvement**

- Thames Valley has a low level of crime scene attendance for all crimes when compared with its peers. For example, theft from motor vehicles is not a priority crime and is not in the control strategy and this is reflected in the low level of scene attendance: 6.2% of thefts from a motor vehicle and vehicle interference. Consideration should be given to this crime category when the control strategy is next reviewed as this type of offence amounts to 12.8% of all crimes committed.
- There is a need to improve scenes of crime resource management, remote access to Locard and command and control for SOCOs. Many forces graded Excellent use a dedicated forensic resource management unit (control room) to ensure timely and effective attendance at crime scenes, a high standard of forensic advice to victims and a flexible resource process that complies with the NIM by allowing local priority tasking. Such a model within Thames Valley would enable staff to be aware of all potential forensic scenes and improve attendance rates and times. It would also allow for a better management of scenes of crime resources. Officers currently attend an average of 500 scenes per year, significantly less than the expected 600—1,000 per annum. Once implemented, significant efficiencies would be realised and linked into the force efficiency plan.
- Notwithstanding the positive comments made in Strengths, above, there is a need to improve the forensic awareness of the CPS trials unit through the tripartite process so as to improve the understanding of evidence potential, for scenes of crime and laboratory staff, and an awareness of the limitations and potential of forensic results. This will improve the detection rate and OBTJ in addition to leading to a more relevant and targeted use of forensic funds.

**3E Criminal Justice Processes**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Direction of Travel</b>
<b>Fair</b>	<b>Improved</b>

**National Grade Distribution**

Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
0	15	27	1

**Contextual Factors**

The LCJB is becoming an effective strategic driving force for the criminal justice reform programme, helped by strong team players who have shown that they can deliver change and improvement. ACC (specialist operations) is an effective chief officer lead. Excellent relationships are being developed with the CPS whose representatives play an active part in the force's criminal justice processes.

The appointment of a business change manager has raised the profile of realising efficiency savings within the criminal justice programme and including them in the efficiency plan. The role is expanding to include the wider criminal justice reform agenda owned by the LCJB. The performance framework in the criminal justice arena is becoming well established, with data from the Compass system being available down to BCU level. The range of criminal justice data available is extensive. The LCJB has created a performance delivery group (PDG) to identify and drive improvement.

Establishment of a warrants database, Cobweb, has led to the lowest-ever level of outstanding failing to appear warrants. Warrants are now transferred electronically between the courts and the police. The Thames Valley LCJB prolific and priority offender (PPO) lead has taken best practice into work with the Hampshire scheme in developing rehabilitation. Operation Iris in Oxford remains a beacon scheme for PPOs.

The Thames Valley Police youth strategy has been in place since March 2004 and reflects both the ACPO youth strategy and 'Every Child Matters: Change for Children'. Nationally, it is regarded as a leading force, and has been represented on the ACPO youth issues group for many years. There is also frequent contact with the youth justice board.

Youth offending team (YOT) managers are consulted and included at every opportunity. No decisions are taken regarding processes for dealing with children and young people without consultation with the appropriate YOT manager. The Every Child Matters agenda has been enthusiastically embraced and there is a project to ensure implementation is consistent across the nine local authority areas. It is particularly important to have a single, auditable process for the referral of young people at risk or in need.

**Strengths**

- The LCJB is becoming an effective strategic driving force for the criminal justice reform programme. It is chaired by the Chief Crown Prosecutor and the Chief

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Constable is an active member. They are helped by strong team players who have shown that they can deliver change and improvement.

- ACC (SO) provides an effective chief officer lead for criminal justice processes linking the LCJB with headquarters criminal justice, BCUs and partner agencies. The head of criminal justice has responsibility for all criminal justice issues and the criminal justice reform programme within Thames Valley.
- The criminal justice department plan, the criminal justice programme and the LCJB delivery plan have been dovetailed to provide a more cohesive and co-ordinated response. The department has been restructured and is now more focused on developing corporate policies and implementing work required by the LCJB delivery plan. Local criminal justice boards have been set up on each of the five BCUs.
- Excellent relationships are being developed with the CPS. CPS representatives have been attending weekly Gold meetings established to improve detection rates, and are active participants at the monthly FPG meeting, helping reinforce joint responsibility for OBTJ targets. During 2005/06 Thames Valley brought 51,683 offences to justice, 13,005 more than the target set. Furthermore, the target to achieve a sanction detection rate of 21% or 42,500 offences by the end of 2005/06 was comfortably exceeded.
- The appointment of a business change manager has raised the profile of realising criminal justice benefits within the criminal justice programme and the role is expanding to include the wider criminal justice reform agenda owned by the LCJB. The LCJB target to increase to 47% by the end of 2005/06 the percentage of people having confidence in the criminal justice system has been exceeded, and has reached 50%.
- The business change manager is maximising the benefits to be realised from outsourcing the custody jailor function. For example, jailors now input police national computer (PNC) information on to the custody computer system which saves officer time. During 2005/06 this was expected to have saved 7,083 hours for police officers and 12,500 hours for staff in the PNC bureau, all of which has been reported through to the force efficiency planners.
- The performance framework in the criminal justice arena is becoming well established, with data from the Compass system being available down to BCU level. Experience on the street crime initiative has ensured familiarity with the use of the joint criminal justice performance management system, and a one-page list of performance indicators helps to identify priority areas where performance improvement is required. The LCJB has created a performance delivery group to identify and drive improvement. Examples include an improvement in the number of ineffective crown court and magistrates' court trials. The targets were not to exceed 16% and 22% respectively; by the end of 2005/06, the rates had fallen to 16.9% for all trials.
- The establishment of a warrants database, Cobweb, leading to speedier and more effective warrant execution and disposal, received positive feedback from the Home Office last year and has resulted in the lowest ever level of outstanding warrants for failure to appear at court during 2005/06. The warrant database automatically interfaces with the video witness system and places the most up-to-date photograph on the wanted information sheet. The target of a reduction to no more than 1,863 outstanding warrants was exceeded, with some 1,811 outstanding at the end of 2005/06.

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- Following HMIC feedback in 2005, staff have been moved to file quality units to support statutory charging, and a new corporate criminal justice model is being developed whereby criminal justice staff are moved to BCUs to support case- and file-building. There is a great deal of evidence to illustrate that criminal justice line supervisors are using the staff appraisal process to manage staff effectively, with many examples of poor performance and sickness being addressed. Individuals have a good understanding of what is expected of them.
- The service provided to victims and witnesses in the criminal justice process is a real strength. A witness care unit (WCU) under the No Witness, No Justice initiative was running successfully at Reading, six months ahead of the national timetable, and innovatively includes a witness service post within the structure. Two more units have gone live in Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire (but see Areas for Improvement).
- Following HMIC feedback in 2005 and recommendations from the bureaucracy task force, prisoner intervention units have been established. It is intended that this will improve detection rates, increase victim satisfaction and improve case progression and file quality. This work is closely related to the corporate criminal justice model.
- Investment in custody facilities involves expanding existing suites in four locations and refurbishing other sites. CCTV is being installed in all suites within the next 12 months. A feasibility study is testing a mixed economy of medical provision within the custody suites with a view to enhancing current medical support arrangements.
- A pilot scheme has recently commenced to test persons arrested for acquisitive crime, drug-related crimes and begging, to ascertain if they are Class A drug users. Those whose tests are positive will be required to attend a drug misuse assessment.
- A high level of funding and resourcing is provided to YOTs when compared to national averages. There is a standard policy for BCU engagement with YOTs and all management boards are attended by senior BCU representatives. A standard operating procedure for reprimands and final warnings is in place and compliance is audited.
- Thames Valley is the lead force for restorative justice and has a high number of trained officers in this field of work who train other officers and agencies nationally; they also contribute to youth justice board training packages. The Thames Valley LCJB is a national pilot site for conditional cautioning, which embraces restorative justice principles.
- Seconded to the YOT will not be abstracted except in extreme circumstances, and then only with advance notification to the YOT manager. All YOT sites have a computer terminal with access to the TVP intranet and appropriate systems. A YOT manager sits on the LCJB and chairs a youth issues sub-group.
- TVP currently has 40 full-time 'safer schools' officers, who are covering either single schools or school clusters, delivering the four aims of safer schools partnerships. The safer schools model originates from Thames Valley, which is represented on the national safer schools steering group. The local policing directorate includes a youth specialist and a schools specialist. All BCUs have a partnership manager and several have an additional youth specialist.

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## Work in Progress

- Meaningful key performance indicators for prisoner handling are being developed, based upon the Centrex custody doctrine.
- While working relationships with the CPS have improved and the statutory charging scheme has been rolled out, file quality has not improved. A corporate criminal justice model is being piloted on one BCU, one aim of which is to improve file quality by transferring this task from front-line staff to dedicated specialists.

## Areas for Improvement

- In 2005/06, some 88% of arrest and summons reports were entered on to the PNC within 24 hours, just below the national target. An action plan is in place and performance is improving. Timeliness for PNC court resulting fell below target towards the end of the year, partly because many more offences have been brought to justice. Action is required to reverse this fall in performance, which appears to be due to the time it takes courts to notify police.
- The quality of witness care in the units in Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire needs to improve to meet minimum standards, while Reading has resilience issues to address. Increased effort is required to ensure the workforce completes the vulnerable witness workbook and No Witness, No Justice so that the completion rate, which stands at 71% and 31% of officers and staff respectively, improves. A project manager is rolling out compliance with the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victim Act. While strong partnership arrangements exist with CPS charging lawyers to ensure cases are brought to justice, domestic violence investigators are concerned that the courts do not always treat offenders with the gravity warranted and bail decisions are not always communicated to those investigators who also act as victim liaison officers (see also 4B).
- In 2005/06, the average number of days for a persistent young offender to wait from arrest to sentence varied from 63 during the first quarter to 91 in the last. This performance variance will need to be addressed if the 71-day target is to be met consistently.
- File quality continues to fail to reach the 80% target set for files to be fully satisfactory or sufficient to proceed. In some BCUs, performance was as low as 30% during some periods of 2005/06.
- The PPO premium service protocol needs to be updated and agreed with partners – thereafter, adherence to the protocol should be monitored and appropriate action taken regarding non-compliance.
- Further consideration should be given to the alternative disposal arena with a focus on street bail, penalty notices for disorder (PND) and restorative justice, to form a comprehensive package of measures.
- One BCU held a performance group with a theme of youth justice, a procedure to be encouraged on other BCUs. The internal website is being developed to enhance the availability of information on child and youth issues and processes. The Police Authority has initiated a best value review on youth justice and engagement during 2006/07 to address these and other issues.



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## GOOD PRACTICE

### **TITLE 3E Focus on Forensic Performance Management**

**PROBLEM** Whilst internal and external performance reports enable some degree of national comparison for forensic management, previously the data sets failed to provide the opportunity for detailed scrutiny and understanding of performance data at all levels within force.

**SOLUTIONS** To improve the level of forensic performance management and improvement in TVP, the forensic intelligence unit (FIU) department implemented the 'Crystal' reporting tool to interrogate the 'Locard' case management system. Core key performance reports were identified, linked to the current Home Office general data return, but focusing on scenes of crime office/fingerprint individual staff as comparators. This first set of data was used in a routine forensic management meeting whereby it was decided to adopt the format and style of 'Compstat' (a forum for challenging local performance) with quarterly formal performance meetings. The audience was extended all FIU managers, practitioners, crime managers and BCU staff. The four meetings over the last year have seen the audience grow to over 30 and the chair change from the scientific support manager to ACC (specialist operations), with the attendance of the head of crime support, the force crime manager and the detection superintendent. The Police Standards Unit have attended and presented at one meeting and have reported very favourably on this initiative and its associated accountability, commending this approach to other forces.

The presentations focus on attendance, indents and outcomes with respect to detections at an individual level. Timeliness of actions by scenes of crime units, SOC, the chemical laboratory and the bureau at both individual and team level are put under close scrutiny as is the conversion of forensic identifications at BCU and SOC office level. The scientific work improvement model supported by PSU gave the foundation for many of these reports, as this gave us opportunity to measure the impact of the time taken for the forensic identification on the likelihood of detections and TIC.

The attendance of all relevant parties empowers this forum to openly identify cross-discipline issues and put in place action plans. Examples of the actions addressed in the last year are as follows; Disparity of recovery of DNA and low DNA hits to recovery, poor timeliness of submission of exhibits to the laboratories and bureaus, identification of jobs and tasking of scenes of crime officers via service delivery Units, timeliness of NAFIS/suspect and elimination searching across the bureau teams, individual outcome performance targets linked directly to PDR, difference in performance quality and timeliness between laboratory units. All of these matters have been addressed and continue to be reviewed

### **OUTCOME(S)**

Through this process one scenes of crime unit was able to see a 15% increase in scene attendance and another has increased its DNA identifications to recovery from 8% to 36%. The laboratory has reduced its backlog from 10 days to commencement within 1 day of receipt in volume crime, internal despatch systems have been reviewed and amended, the process of printing lifts has been moved back to the bureau to address timeliness and an operation converter project has commenced within the two BCUs where performance in this arena is poor.

In addition to the benefit that all of these has had on sanction based detections and the

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more effective use of resources, much closer working relationships and shared understanding have been forged between the FIU units and with BCU staff.

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## 4 Promoting Safety (Domain 3)

### 4A Reducing Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Direction of Travel</b>
<b>Good</b>	<b>Improved</b>

#### National Grade Distribution

<b>Poor</b>	<b>Fair</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Excellent</b>
<b>0</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>0</b>

#### Contextual Factors

The strategic implementation of restorative justice interventions, combined with the appropriate use of ASB legislation, has contributed to Thames Valley Police being at the forefront of modern day anti-social behaviour policing. A strong emphasis remains on partnership consultation and the development of effective and locally recognised protocols and procedures which have the flexibility to meet public and government expectations positively.

Strategic focus has been placed on addressing the four main areas of improvement identified by HMIC during the 2004/05 baseline assessment.

A template that outlines ASB protocols has been implemented force-wide in the form of a menu of tactical options based on good practice in Thames Valley and elsewhere. A more consistent approach towards tackling ASB has been achieved by raising the profiles of ASB co-ordinators at both BCU and LPA levels through proactive involvement in the NIM and TTCG processes.

The introduction of the 'pyramid of interventions', whereby offenders and their families are given multi-agency support to help them avoid moving up the scale towards more serious legal sanctions, is now well recognised by partners and is identified as good practice by other forces across the country.

BCS survey data for 2005/06 indicate that the fear of burglary, vehicle crime and violent crime for residents within the Thames Valley is just below the MSF averages. Criminal damage per 1,000 population continues to be well below the MSF average. In spite of successes in tackling ASB, however, the BCS indicates a slightly higher public perception of anti-social behaviour than the MSF average.

#### Strengths

- ACC (local policing) is the chief officer responsible for the strategic co-ordination and implementation of anti-social behaviour and partnership policy and procedures. In spite of several changes in the person holding this post, strong strategic leadership has been sustained.

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- ASB has been an integral part of strategic assessments, control strategies and in BCU tactical assessments.
- In response to an area for improvement in the 2004/05 baseline assessment, a comprehensive menu of tactical options has been produced. It provides clear strategic and practical guidance to officers and staff involved in tackling ASB. It covers initial reporting, all the way through to a corporate approach to recording evidence in a diaries, applying Acceptable Behaviour Contracts (ABCs), consultation on ASB, and application for Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs). This document will be reviewed and updated regularly.
- ASB training was an important element of the previous probationer training regime and will continue to be so in the new IPDLP training. Information regarding ABCs and ASBOs is included in the Streetcraft manual. PCSOs receive training commensurate with their role. Local training is undertaken by ASB co-ordinators who also act as tactical advisers to officers and PCSOs. There is evidence of a clear understanding by officers and PCSOs of the powers and tools available to tackle ASB. Good use has been made of powers to tackle the anti-social use of motor vehicles, in particular the enforcement of these powers by PCSOs.
- All ASB co-ordinators have attended Together seminars hosted by the Home Office which have been used to develop local policy and procedures. Both operational officers and co-ordinators use the Together action line and most have also attended Respect Academy events.
- Officers and staff on BCUs and LPAs are continuing to become more skilled and efficient with regard to tackling ASB by introducing local initiatives in consultation with other agencies, helped by the more proactive role now being played by ASB co-ordinators. Practical examples include: the strategic and creative use of ASBOs – eg as control measures in relation to rave organisers; and the strategic use of ASBOs in relation to racial and homophobic incidents. The pioneering work undertaken by the force linked to restorative justice, mediation and diversionary methods continues to be used before the formal use of ASB powers.
- Multi-agency information-sharing protocols are in place and signed up to throughout the force. Thames Valley Police maintains a policy of sharing information with all relevant agencies to enable the effective investigation and solving of crime and anti-social behaviour (see 6F: National Intelligence Model).
- Local and national media are used to celebrate success in tackling ASB and 'crack house closures'. A recent example involved two crack house closures in Reading – successful multi-agency operations.

### **Work in Progress**

- The development of the Cobweb database will provide a corporate means to record all ASB orders, ABCs, injunctions, and other ASB intelligence. It will provide front-line officers with easy access to the information they need and managers will have more complete and accurate performance data. This remedial work was anticipated to be completed by the end of March 2006.
- More consistent resourcing of ASB co-ordinators across all BCUs needs to be developed through the formulation and introduction of a generic job description, and work in relation to this is currently under way.

### **Areas for Improvement**

- Partnership working within Thames Valley continues to improve with joint partnership working to develop localised ASB strategies; ASB initiatives delivered through joint tasking processes occur on some LPAs but this needs to be extended across all of them. Regular problem-solving forums are held at CDRP level throughout the force. There is broad multi-agency representation at the meetings which are facilitating full and frank information and intelligence sharing and multi-agency discussion and tasking. Community intelligence is beginning to be fed into NIM processes but this is still an area for development (see also 6F: National Intelligence Model).
- The phased introduction of agreements with local communities to solve local problems with local solutions will place a heavy burden upon partnership agencies to deal with public demand. The inability to capture intelligence concerning low-level anti-social behaviour could adversely affect service delivery and compromise community reassurance.
- There is also a need to identify and implement a corporate intelligence-mapping system which highlights problem areas and provides the necessary intelligence to instigate joint tasking.

**4B Protecting Vulnerable People**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Direction of Travel</b>
<b>Fair</b>	<b>Improved</b>

**National Grade Distribution**

Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
8	32	3	0

**National Position**

This framework replaces two frameworks used in 2005 – Reducing and Investigating Hate Crime, and Crimes against Vulnerable Victims – which covered hate crimes (predominantly racially motivated), domestic violence and child protection. Following consultation with practitioners and ACPO leads, a single framework was introduced for 2006 with four components: domestic violence; child protection; the management of dangerous and sex offenders; and vulnerable missing persons. Hate crime is captured in framework 1A. It is therefore inappropriate to compare this framework with last year’s results; the direction of travel reflects HMIC’s judgements about changes in domestic violence and child protection, and the work that forces could evidence in the other two areas, for example that they had improved their structures, processes and resources.

The four areas are discrete but share a common theme – they deal with vulnerable victims where there is a high risk that an incident can quickly become critical, and where a poor police response is both life threatening and poses severe reputational risks for the force. For this reason, the grade is an overall grade capped at the level of the weakest area of performance. Aggregating four components to a Fair grade – which is defined as being an acceptable level of service – when HMIC (and in many cases forces themselves) recognises that at least one area merits a Poor would be unsafe.

**Contextual Factors**

In the past year, a public protection programme has commenced with significant work streams: domestic violence (DV); sex offenders; child protection; and missing persons. Major changes accompany this programme including a reorganisation that has seen public protection placed within BCU responsibility, an increase in staff, additional supervision and amended policies and procedures. External guidance and good practice have been incorporated, including ACPO guidance, HMIC inspection recommendations, and National Centre for Policing Excellence (NCPE) codes of practice. In recognition of the importance of effective joined-up inter-agency working, agreed working practices are being developed with probation, social services and county council staff. A full programme of domestic violence training for specialist and non-specialist staff is under way, covering investigative interviewing; a risk assessment model; an intelligence-led positive intervention procedure; and more use of specialist partner agency staff. This has led to sharing of information between partners and a one-stop-shop approach.

Improvements to the policing of DV have included a risk assessment model, new methods of review and engendering a better understanding of the subject by staff. Thames Valley

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Police points to an increase in arrest and detection rates as measures of success. The arrest rate has increased from 30% in 2003/04 to 83% in 2005/06. The detection rate has increased from 20% to 51% in the same period against a recorded DV crime volume of 12,000 in 2002/03 rising to 25,000 in 2005/06. The number of specialist DV staff in the PPU's has been increased significantly. Child abuse investigation units are being devolved to BCUs. A separate part of each PPU has responsibility for sex offenders and child abuse cases.

An improved referral system for child abuse cases in line with recommendations from the Climbié report includes a facility to receive referrals on a 24-hour basis and greater availability of specialist advice. The response now also incorporates active investigation and full engagement with partner agencies. Multi-agency public protection arrangements (MAPPA), working in partnership with probation and social services, are characterised by close co-operation, joint scrutiny and training for staff. Management of level 3 MAPPA cases is supported by timely decision making, risk assessment, intelligence and resources to deal with individual cases. At the same time, a number of shortcomings are being addressed, such as administrative support and attendance at meetings, given that five BCUs support 12 MAPPA groups. The response to missing persons has also been improved by introducing a revised procedure and developing a database giving real-time access to investigators across BCU boundaries.

These changes took place during 2005/06 and many improvements are still bedding in or are yet to be fully implemented. Protecting vulnerable people is therefore in transition and the full benefits are yet to be realised.

### **Strengths**

- ACC (SO) provides intrusive leadership on public protection issues. He is a member of a number of groups, including the multi-agency DV strategy group, and chairs the DV project and the public protection programme boards. The crime manager co-ordinates actions arising from strategic decisions and makes sure they are incorporated into existing plans and priorities.
- BCU DV units have extensive involvement with multi-agency groups. Protocols for investigation have been agreed specifying the intervention that can be expected of each agency and which cases are appropriate for single agency intervention. In Oxfordshire, the unit has collaborated with the DV co-ordinator, creating a champions' initiative across the county. It is intended to extend this initiative across all five BCUs.
- Thames Valley Police has been at the forefront of improvements in the investigation of DV and is dealing with this business area positively. The project manager and co-ordinator have been involved in the development of national guidance and the force has trialled initiatives on risk assessment and unit structures. Recent incidents have highlighted the need for vigilance in this area to protect victims, and the Police Authority has a member delegated to monitor activity.
- Considerable reorganisation has occurred in the last year as PPU's are established on BCUs and staffing has been increased. Within DV, for instance, officer numbers have increased from 35 to 85. A risk assessment model has been implemented and an intelligence-led positive intervention policy on DV has been adopted.
- Reorganisation of PPU's has also seen an increase in supervisory levels in child abuse cases and there is a dedicated professional lead on policy, legislation and MAPPA at force level. An enhanced referral system has been introduced, in line with the Climbié recommendations. Referrals are received in the police enquiry units with

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access to specialists and full partner engagement. Dedicated referral managers are in place on BCUs and feedback from victims, CPS and partners has been positive.

- MAPPA processes with partners are working well in areas of co-operation, joint scrutiny and joint training. Management of level 3 MAPPA cases is aimed at achieving timely decision-making and securing sufficient resources for individual cases.

### **Work in Progress**

- A review of policy and procedure for missing persons was completed in March 2006. A pilot scheme in Oxfordshire uses a database which will be extended to the other BCUs by October 2006. This should provide a more effective procedure for recording, risk assessment, tactical options, supervisory responsibilities and review. Nevertheless, links to the PPU should be put in place so that any links with child abuse or domestic abuse, especially in relation to young missing persons, are identified. The system will rely on the commitment of officers in its completion. There is a need to ensure that the PEC and investigating officers address reports of missing persons with the requisite seriousness and urgency. An auditable process of review will be required.

### **Areas for Improvement**

- The concentration of public protection assets on BCUs will undoubtedly deliver benefits. The disciplines of offender management, vulnerable adult abuse, domestic abuse, child abuse, hate crime and missing persons will be brought together in the Public Protection Units, but for the present this is not the case. Until separate units are able to co-locate and thereby establish integration and better communication, problems of information sharing and risk assessment will remain.
- Although Thames Valley Police is proud of its intelligence-led positive intervention policy in DV and the procedures which support it, it is not fully understood by officers and staff. While the intention is to select the right menu of responses relevant to the circumstances, it is largely interpreted as a positive arrest policy. As arrests are used as the principal measure of effectiveness, significant challenges remain in implementing this policy as intended.
- The implementation of PPUs on BCUs is still in its early stages and challenges remain. For instance, the designation of DV staff as investigators has been a disincentive for reporting officers to capture best evidence before handing over an arrested person. Expansion of staffing in DV units has stretched the ability of BCUs to respond and also necessitated the retention of staff who would otherwise have moved on. These issues have not been resolved.
- Training varies across the five BCUs. Training on risk and sex offenders and practice guidelines is offered freely by the probation service but take-up has been patchy. The working party is establishing a standard programme for staff. This is welcome and the MAPPA manager, a senior probation officer, will arrange a formal programme. Nevertheless, this relies on funding by each BCU and therefore central direction will be required to ensure consistency and compliance.
- The accountability framework for PPUs focuses on BCU line management and does not obviously link to the head of crime support and the chief officer lead. This imbalance would be rectified, at least in part, by clarification of minimum standards across all command units enforced centrally. The MAPPA co-ordination manager



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has established a working party to set standards for public protection officers. This should be followed by a mechanism to ensure that BCU commanders conform to the standards.

- While reviews of MAPPA files held on BCUs is completed on a rota basis, jointly between police and probation with feedback to users, there is limited performance information as a basis for holding managers to account. A review of MAPPA practice took place in 2005/06 and amendments are included in a new protocol which is expected soon. A chief inspector or superintendent is expected to jointly chair each MAPPA meeting with a probation officer and while this is generally the case, there is variation across the force. Further mechanisms for compliance and oversight are required, especially in the newly devolved regime.
- There is much work to be done to consolidate the gains already under way. The MAPPA co-ordination manager has only recently been seconded to the force on a temporary basis and common standards, interpretation and staffing have yet to be achieved. The focus has been on registered sex offenders (RSOs) and not violent offenders and only recently has work been done to measure the workload for each MAPPA. This will be a useful basis for determining staffing levels. Of particular concern to a number of stakeholders is the lack of administrative support, as each BCU is different – in some areas it is shared with the probation service while in others the BCU takes responsibility.
- Public protection resources have been augmented in an environment of tight budgets and competing demands are pressing. It would be tempting to conclude that sufficient resources are now in place. Yet role responsibilities have increased along with staffing levels. Adult protection is a new and growing area of business. Staff workload includes oversight of substantial numbers of risk assessments; dealing with DV arrests; and responsibility for a high-risk caseload per officer. Further work is needed to establish a sound rationale for staffing levels which takes account of workload and resilience.
- There is recognition of the need to gather, record and share information in order to make effective assessments and decisions, and to take effective action. At present a number of initiatives have begun but are not yet fully in place. For instance, training in risk assessment and risk management is planned; recruitment of a BCU analyst for PPU work (to review occurrences against MAPPA profiles and to establish links and precursor incidents) is under way. There is a relatively good referral and minute-taking system for meetings; however, more information sharing could take place prior to meetings so that joint management plans are presented to the chairs. All referrals should be reviewed by the MAPPA manager or probation service forensic psychologist. Those that are reviewed are returned with comments, but there is no system to review whether or not the comments or advice have been acted upon.
- Role responsibility now includes investigation and this presents a risk to its capability. In one sample, the majority of DV investigating officers were not trained detectives. There is an expectation that creating a PPU will allow crossover of investigators between child abuse and DV in periods of peak demand. The opportunities are very limited in practice. These issues should be included in the implementation review.
- New policies and procedures have been implemented. Fundamental organisational change has occurred. There is some way to go, however, before it can be certain that the policies are working as intended, that procedures are being correctly

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followed or that implementation issues are being managed. A detective chief inspector (DCI) has recently taken up post and this is a welcome addition.

- While procedures require a structured approach to quality control of investigations, the monitoring and oversight role at force level is insufficiently robust at present. The new post of DCI is intended to fill this gap and a clear process of review and monitoring should be prepared in order to ensure compliance.

## 5 Providing Assistance (Domain 4)

### 5A Contact Management

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Direction of Travel</b>
<b>Good</b>	<b>Improved</b>

#### National Grade Distribution

Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
1	18	20	4

#### Contextual Factors

The control room and enquiries department (CRED) OCU is a devolved business unit. It represents a substantial commitment to delivering a quality of service to the public. A virtual contact centre on two sites, supported by two control rooms, it demonstrates a robust, effective approach to contact management. Thames Valley Police prides itself on its innovation and continuous improvement, aiming for delivery of the highest quality of service.

Considerable progress has been made in recent years based on a programme of work commenced in 1999 that saw the complete reorganisation of contact management and service delivery to the public and operational officers. A strong theme has been the development of people, workforce modernisation and the provision of IT, supported by a rigorous performance framework. The department has built on the many strengths identified in the 2005 baseline assessment, addressed the areas for improvement and is delivering a consistent, high-quality service. Call-answering performance has achieved high levels, exceeding all the targets of the National Call-Handling Standards (NCHS).

The CRED was assessed for the second time in November 2005 for Investors in People (IIP) status and the challenging standards were again met, confirming the continued commitment to staff development as a cornerstone of delivery. The next goal is to meet the diverse needs of the community through the Royal National Institute for the Deaf (RNID) Charter Mark, and work to meet these standards is well advanced. In 2005/06 the Police Authority invested £900,000 in additional staff for the PECs. The approach to the virtual contact centre has been to provide a full and appropriate response to a public caller at the first point of contact. Staff within the PECs are trained to be omni-competent and deal with all calls from the public utilising skills-based routing. This approach means there is no requirement for a separate crime recording bureau, ensuring maximum benefit from the contact centre staff and minimal transfer of public calls.

The past year has seen the introduction of modern and innovative methods of resourcing. Workforce management software has been installed to assist in closely matching resources to demand, although further work needs to be done to implement this fully. A flexible working package has been introduced that dispenses with shift patterns and replaces them with a number of options and preferences for staff, offering considerable benefits for staff and the organisation. Thames Valley Police seeks full compliance with NCHS and the recommendations of other key publications, such as the HMIC thematic First Contact.

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Thames Valley Police is exceeding all NCHS call-answering targets with an impressive performance. Some 94.7% of 999 calls are answered within the target time of 10 seconds. The percentage of primary non-emergency calls answered within the local target time of 20 seconds is 88.8% (the national target is 90% in 30 seconds – Thames Valley achieves 94.4%). The percentage of secondary non-emergency calls answered within the local target time of 40 seconds is 93.6% (the national target is 60 seconds). The average wait time for secondary non-emergency calls is 17 seconds with a low rate of abandonment of 2.8%. This performance reflects a very prompt service to people in the Thames Valley.

## Strengths

- Contact management is a fundamental part of service delivery. The first strategic priority is 'To provide an effective and timely response focused on the needs of the citizen' and a series of actions or activities support this aim. Strong commitment from the Police Authority and the CCMT has been demonstrated by continued investment with an extra £0.9 million in 2005/06. The inclusion of five actions in the force delivery plan to support contact management and regular personal visits from both Police Authority members and the CCMT reflect that commitment.
- ACC (OS) is the contact management champion at the CCMT and during the past two years he has overseen significant improvements in contact management. The CRED is well led by the OCU commander and his deputy and is well supported by a strong senior management team that continues to drive performance improvement and raise levels of service to both internal and external customers. A full range of support services is available within the department and there are contact centre managers in each of the PECs. The CRED and its senior management team are highly visible at both BCU and department levels, marketing the services that can be delivered and seeking feedback on how they can be improved.
- The use of customer feedback to improve contact management was an area for improvement in the 2004/05 baseline assessment and significant improvements have been made. A detailed review of survey data is undertaken at the monthly CRED performance focus meeting and any areas for improvement are fed into the CRED quality improvement meeting. Findings from customer surveys are also used to inform induction programmes for new staff and to brief existing staff. The annual policing plan monitoring report regularly reviews public satisfaction for contact management. Internally, CRED surveys its own staff for ideas and feedback to improve all aspects of the service delivered.
- The contact management strategy fully incorporates all aspects of the NCHS, including demand management, call processes, service delivery and people management. All staff have access to the strategy via the intranet and have personal objectives linked to the strategy and the department plan.
- There is a strong approach to people management as evidenced by the successive achievement of the liP award. The CRED has its own human resource manager and team as well as a team devoted to training. There are high levels of staff appraisal compliance, an embedded training prioritisation board, structured training and career development, management training, an independent annual stress audit, strong internal communications and an effective reward system. A system of exit interviewing for staff leaving CRED is reviewed at the monthly performance group meeting.

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- The OCU has a costed recruitment plan which takes account of monthly and seasonal demand and staffing fluctuations and is linked to the devolved budget. A comprehensive learning and development (L&D) plan seeks to meet organisational, group and individual training needs and is linked to the overall force learning and development and HR strategies. There is a monthly training prioritisation board (TPB) meeting which has been viewed in the past by HMIC as good practice. The CRED has its own training capability with tutors at control rooms and enquiry centres. Team leaders at control rooms and PECs act as mentors for new and existing staff. The training and tutoring delivered is subject to review at regular intervals and is adjusted according to the feedback given. Six award ceremonies were held during 2005/06 where the head of the department presented commendations and other awards.
- An efficient, one-stop virtual contact centre on two sites with omni-competent staff capable of dealing with all public calls (emergency and non-emergency) and crime recording delivers substantial economies of scale. Staff are subject to further training called PEC-craft which is a development of the Streetcraft model referred to in earlier HMIC baseline assessments of Thames Valley Police. PEC-craft is aimed at ensuring that the NCHS are met.
- PEC and control room staff have full access to force IT systems, with some necessary exceptions. An intelligence check unit at Abingdon services both control rooms. It operates 24/7 and is able to search all IT systems using Crystal reporting which then allows the operator to inform officers attending incidents of person and address history. Operators in the PECs and control rooms have access to a reference database and 'live link', the networked briefing system.
- The department has a comprehensive performance management regime with a real-time, daily, weekly and monthly performance framework linking to TVP performance group. A data quality and audit team assesses all key standard operating procedures and all data-recording quality issues such as the National Standards for Incident Reporting (NSIR) and NCRS, reporting to a departmental quality improvement meeting. Officer-reported crime (direct from crime scenes) is fully embedded into day-to-day business, freeing up a significant amount of police officer time.
- The involvement of Thames Valley as 'expert' or adviser in contact management is evident with direct contact with New Zealand and the Republic of Ireland. The heads of CRED and the Access to Service programme were invited to New Zealand in November 2005 and their attendance, advice and guidance proved valuable. In February 2006, the Republic of Ireland contact management team and consultants visited Thames Valley – they are implementing office- reported crime and will move to central call handling on the Thames Valley model.
- Significant attention has been paid to diversity issues with audit checks on service to those with English as a second language; progress is being made towards achieving the RNID Charter Mark.
- The structure for contact management in Thames Valley has been designed to provide maximum flexibility and resilience, with call answering capable of being handled on four sites, control room despatch on two sites, and call taking at a further two sites. There are at least two servers for IT applications and the ethos of omni-competence of staff contributes to the robust approach. Rigorous business continuity and disaster recovery plans are in place to ensure continued service to the public

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and officers. They include written plans covering power and IT failures as well as loss of people through illness.

### Work in Progress

- While training in the management of critical incidents has been rolled out to all sergeants and inspectors, it has not included police staff working in control rooms and PECs. This has been recognised and is being addressed by amending PEC-craft to enable staff to better recognise critical and potential critical incidents.
- EISEC (enhanced information services emergency calls) and CLI (caller line identity) have not yet been fully deployed in call answering.

### Areas for Improvement

- Notwithstanding the positive comments above concerning the costed recruitment plan, the CRED does not have a costed human resource strategy linked to the Thames Valley Police HR strategy.
- While team leaders at control rooms and PECs act as mentors for new and existing staff (see Strengths), this process is not formalised and the use of tutors and mentors has not been formally evaluated.
- Although there has been a reduction in sickness for the fifth year in a row (the average number of hours lost during 2005/06 for police officers was 105.8 and for police staff was 107), there is still scope for further improvement. The force averages were 57.3 and 74.1 respectively.
- There is recognition that better use could be made of voicemail by officers and staff. This is of particular importance for keeping in contact with victims and witnesses and is also an important component of NHP.
- Thames Valley could improve the content on its website with regard to contact management. Some of the material is becoming dated. 'Improving our call handling service to you' does not appear to have been refreshed since April 2004. Furthermore, the website is a good medium for celebrating the success in contact management.

## GOOD PRACTICE

<b>TITLE: 5A Contact Management – Matching resources to demand</b>
<b>PROBLEM</b> The matching of resources to demand has always been a challenge to the police service. Traditionally the approach has been to introduce a new shift pattern, perhaps with variable start times and overlapping shift. However, these traditional approaches have been unable to take full account of the complexity of resourcing. Rigid shift patterns cannot take account of variable skills profiles, seasonal variations and key known event that draw in additional resources. They are also unable to adapt rapidly to a changing economic or legal environment, such as the relaxation of licensing laws.
<b>SOLUTION</b> The control rooms & enquiries department (CR&ED) has introduced measures to be able to meet the requirement to match resources, skills and demand. The three key elements essential for modern resourcing are:- IT, flexible working arrangements and clear forecasting and scheduling procedures.

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2005 saw the procurement of workforce management software capable of the complex management of resources. 'pipkins vantage point' provides the IT capability that enables the role of the forecaster to continually forecast demand throughout the year looking up to 15 months ahead. Forecast is based on previous history of skill requirements by time of day, day of week, seasonal trends and other forecast demand based on history and prediction. Forecasting is also used for short term changes, such as the prediction of the effect of severe weather warnings, again based on history. This is essential to effectively manage performance.

The second key element of modern resource management is truly flexible working arrangements. In conjunction with Unison and with the support of the Police Federation, a flexible working contract has been developed that dispenses with the concept of a shift pattern. Staff are advised of their weekend rest days 12 months in advance, notification of hours of work including weekday rest days are notified at 12 weeks and minor adjustments are made at four weeks. Workforce management, based on parameters performs the complex task of scheduling staff against the predicted demand forecast and skill requirements. The contracts also contain an element of annualised hours with the average working hours being extended by two hours per week in the three summer months, and reduced by two hours during the three winter months of less demand.

**OUTCOMES** There are clear organisational benefits for this approach but benefits also exist for staff. All annual leave and other time off is requested from staff desktops via a web browser with immediate reply. Staff can elect for options and preferences. Options include length of meal break where staff can elect and be guaranteed any set length of meal break they chose between thirty minutes and two hours. Preferences are **not** guaranteed but the IT takes the preference into account when scheduling shifts. For example, staff can set a preference of start time. Other benefits for staff include guaranteed matching shifts for those who car share, two elective guaranteed rest days per year and on-line shift swap facilities.

This approach has revolutionised resourcing within the contact centre environment with substantial efficiency gains providing evidence for the need of similar modernisation for operational police officers. The devolved overtime budget has been reduced £300,000 (40%), greater efficiency in resourcing and less disruption to staff.

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**5B Providing Specialist Operational Support**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Direction of Travel</b>
<b>Fair</b>	<b>Improved</b>

**National Grade Distribution**

Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
0	23	19	1

**Contextual Factors**

There has been significant investment in improving the response to firearms incidents and the approach to handling such incidents has been overhauled following increasing demand and learning from previous events. The national firearms code of practice is fully complied with and there is a comprehensive threat and risk assessment process. Changes made to firearms response include improvements to resilience (the number of ARVs has been increased to five), and to tactics (a two-person tactic for saving life has been introduced). There is also better weapons availability and a fully equipped command vehicle. Average attendance time to incidents has fallen from 22 minutes to 12.

Investment has been made in a modern firearms range including drive-on facilities. This also provides an opportunity for income generation by selling 'down-time' in range use. There is considerable resilience at superintendent rank and all now have a place on at least one rota (the BCU cluster, Gold cluster or the SIO rota), providing development opportunities and distributing workloads equitably. The new arrangements need to be reviewed from a user perspective to ensure they are workable and robust.

Debriefing at all firearms incidents is in place and performance management systems have been enhanced. The use of specialist operational support in planning and policing major events has been tested regularly, as have the arrangements to deal with major incidents involving partners. Resilience for dealing with any major or critical incident has improved, making sure the right people with the right skills are readily available and that command structures are more effective. This is managed through the resilience panel led by the ACC (OS).

The operations support department plays a key role in developing and refining the Streetcraft training programme, an initiative which has received interest nationally. The current animal house operation in Oxford requires effective public order management. There is extensive work under way to ensure resilience for major incidents and spontaneous disorder, but training and accreditation cannot be achieved overnight and there is a large, young and inexperienced workforce (including at inspector and sergeant level).

There is a corporate and consistent approach for local operations planning teams in respect of structure, staffing, roles, responsibilities and training. Operational command is subject to rigorous and extensive training and development, supported by an accreditation process. Corporate standards are now applied to command locations, facilities, staffing and procedures for both static and mobile Silver suites. These have been tested in fast-time operations. Thames Valley Police enjoys excellent relationships with partners and is



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progressing well to meet the requirements of the Civil Contingencies Act. Training is provided including partners up to chief executive level and military equivalents. The open culture encourages learning that is subsequently reflected in revised working practices. Regular exercising of critical incident and major incident procedures, including CBRN (chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear) incidents, is undertaken. These exercises involve a range of agencies and counties adjoining the Thames Valley Police area.

## Strengths

- ACC (SO) gives clear leadership in respect of operational policy, training and accreditation issues for the provision of specialist operational support. There has been a review of the management of handling firearms incidents. Much has been learnt and policies, procedures, resourcing levels and command systems have been reviewed and adapted. The NCE capability assessment framework has been completed and was subject to inspection in October 2005. The inspection team was complimentary regarding progress against the action plan.
- There is compliance with the Home Office code of practice. A thorough review of the accreditation process for Gold, Silver and Bronze commanders and 'tactical advisers' has been undertaken. A comprehensive and consistent approach to selection, training and accreditation of these officers and the maintenance of a dedicated command cadre is ensuring more resilience and a better quality of response.
- The establishment of a firearms cadre (24 officers providing cover 8 am to 2 am, thereafter on call) has helped to ensure command of incidents is taken much earlier. Investigative but dynamic assessment when applying firearms policy is ensuring a faster and more effective response to the increased number of incidents.
- Specialist resources are tasked at level 1 and 2 TTCG meetings. However, many of the level 1 taskings are dealt with at the separate tactical support tasking process. Levels of resourcing may be determined by the firearms risk assessment (FRAM) process or the public order tactical risk assessment. Tactical support intelligence and tasking is produced weekly and disseminated to all officers within tactical support.
- All officer applications and training records are maintained by the tactical support personnel department. Selection interviews always include an independent personnel specialist.
- Substantial evidence has been supplied of collaboration with other police forces in the management of critical and other incidents. The use of specialist operational support in planning and policing major events has been thoroughly tested. The animal house operation at Oxford is an example. The response was robust but sensitive and there was effective collaboration with partners and sections of the community.
- The operations support department plays a key role in developing and refining the Streetcraft training programme, an initiative which has received interest nationally. The programme helps test and develop crime investigation and public order skills with subject matter ranging from the management of critical incidents to proactive intervention in domestic violence incidents. It is delivered to teams of officers with their supervisors and this gives trainers opportunities to help develop decision

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making and the capabilities of supervisors and staff in a safe learning environment. It has been very well received.

- The planning process for all public order incidents follows the conflict management and disorder models. All planning meetings are chaired by an accredited Silver commander. There is regular exercising of critical incident and major incident procedures, including CBRN incidents. These exercises involve a range of agencies and counties adjoining the Thames Valley Police area. There is an extensive training programme for major critical incidents at all levels of the organisation as well as the Streetcraft project.
- The Chief Constable or her deputy chair the twice-yearly local resilience forum (LRF) meeting with partners. There is an extensive programme of multi-agency geographical, role and capability-based groups with Thames Valley representation at headquarters and/or BCU level. The force contingency officer has developed a web-based exercise calendar to keep all agencies informed and to reduce duplication. Good work with event organisers has provided clarity about responsibility and maximised self-policing to reduce police costs.
- Specific risk assessments are in place for major operations. Smaller local outbreaks of disorder are covered by generic risk assessments, and have been updated. The national policy requires level 2 police support unit officers to be trained during four phases per year. Double the national requirement of 13 police support unit officers have been trained. Operation Overlap requires each LPA to provide a police support unit serial when called upon by the force control room inspector. These officers may not always be level 2 trained (see Areas for Improvement).

### **Work in Progress**

- Business continuity plans are not formalised but key functions are known and plans are in place for such processes as 999 calls and for IT support (see also 5A and 6E).
- There are agreed multi-agency media plans for unitary authorities within Berkshire and Buckinghamshire which reflect the support given by partners in these two counties. A media plan for Oxfordshire has recently been agreed, but one for the unitary authority in Milton Keynes remains outstanding.

### **Areas for Improvement**

- There is not a full-time public order capability in Thames Valley. The force has experimented with the provision of such a resource but found that there was insufficient demand to justify its retention. There is confidence that the response to spontaneous incidents, by drawing together serials from across the five BCUs, is timely and effective. However, resourcing is reliant on front-line policing and there is evidence that timeliness is not consistent. The mobilisation of sufficient trained officers in a prompt fashion without depleting front-line resources should be tested on a frequent basis.
- Local incidents often require the mobilisation of all available staff for immediate containment. There is a need to ensure that the training which has been provided to supervisors to control and deploy resources is sufficient for them to exercise effective command and control.
- Extensive work is under way to ensure resilience for major and critical incidents and spontaneous disorder, but training and accreditation will continue to have to

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compete with other demands and priorities. While training has been given to Bronze, Silver and Gold commanders and other managers, there is a need to ensure that training is delivered to all key personnel, such as call handlers and front-line operational staff, in the identification and management of critical incidents.

- It is apparent from feedback from partner organisations in the management of civil contingencies that recent changes in the chief officer team have to some extent weakened relationships between key agencies. Organisational links and clear lines of communication at the strategic level should be re-established to reassure partners.
- While the two contingency planners do contribute to returns to the national community tension team, there is scope for improved integration of intelligence from the national return into the force strategic assessment.

**5C Strategic Roads Policing**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Direction of Travel</b>
<b>Good</b>	<b>Improved</b>

**National Grade Distribution**

Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
0	7	33	3

**Contextual Factors**

The current establishment of the strategic roads policing department (SRPD) is 261 fully trained police officers and 93 police staff. It has responsibility for one of the largest sections of motorway in Britain: 196 miles. The sections of the M4, M40, M25 and M1 are among the busiest in Europe.

The SRPD continues to build upon strong foundations to deliver key casualty reduction strategies. It remains on course to meet the national casualty reduction targets for 2010 but these targets should be more explicit in its plan. The focus on performance continued over the last 12 months; a rigorous performance framework being built upon the platform of adherence to common minimum standards by SRPD officers.

The performance management process is the means of identifying and tailoring roads policing activity to the contributory factors in fatal and serious injury collisions, such as the illegal use of mobile phones and breaches of seatbelt legislation. The SRPD continues to use activity analysis to identify ways of improving its use of resources but would benefit from dedicated analytical staff.

Special action has been taken to attract female officers, including a number of open days. Since holding these events there has been an increase in female applicants.

There is a well structured approach towards ensuring roads policing is integrated into force NIM processes. SRPD regions are coterminous with BCUs and inspectors link effectively with CDRPs and level 1 TTCGs. Additionally, SRPD sergeants are tasked to directly assist crime and casualty reduction initiatives at local police area level. The SRPD has dedicated intelligence officers who are directly involved in intelligence work at BCU level. They in turn play a crucial part in shaping and developing BCU TTCG processes.

Thames Valley Police is an active member of the collaborative arrangements to police the motorway network around London. ACC (SO) chairs the group and oversees a number of workstreams, including anti-terrorist response, ANPR, intelligence, common working practices and links with the Highways Agency (HA).

The annual policing plan has a target to reduce fatal and serious injuries resulting from collisions by 4% when compared with the previous year. In 2005/06 there was a 21% reduction in fatal collisions and a 5% reduction in collisions resulting in an injury – the force continues to be on track to achieve its 2010 reduction targets. The camera safety partnerships have made a significant contribution to this casualty reduction.

## Strengths

- The SRPD has a well structured and resilient investigation capability with a 24-hour, seven-days-a-week fast-time response to all critical incidents, major incidents and major crime by fully trained and nationally accredited SIOs. There is a sound knowledge and application of the road death investigation manual, with recent expansion in key investigative roles such as vulnerable and intimidated witness specialists, and levels 2 and 3 trained investigative interviewing officers. Sufficient trained family liaison officers have been used at times of greatest need in the investigation of major crime.
- SRPD makes a significant contribution to force performance and to BCUs in denying criminals the use of the roads, casualty reduction and local support for neighbourhood policing. To this end, the SRPD's geographical boundaries have been reorganised in line with the five BCUs. It attends 22% of all immediate incidents, exceeding its target by 2%.
- The five regional SRPD inspectors are now members of the relevant CDRPs to ensure that casualty reduction is linked to community safety. Web page information assists local officers in determining appropriate problem-solving tactics. Among the offered responses are the use of trained road safety Special Constables and the development of a force-wide Community Speed Watch scheme. Work is under way in consultation with local authorities to review how funding changes to the camera partnership will enable other broader contributions to casualty reduction.
- Inspectors are also members of the level I tasking groups to ensure that the SRPD makes a full and active contribution to the crime strategy. The department is proud that it represents 3% of the total establishment and yet contributes some 5.4% to the overall detection rate. There are sound links between the SRPD intelligence officers and those based on BCUs and at the force intelligence bureau (FIB).
- Common minimum standards (CMS) are set for roads policing officers which provide a focus on casualty reduction and denying criminals the use of the roads. The system includes a formally agreed process for monitoring and assessment. Changes made to CMS have significantly increased attendance at collisions. During 2005/06, SRPD officers attended 76% of injury collisions, above the target of 70%. Flexibility of the CMS system allows enhanced allocation of points to encourage the enforcement of those offences that contribute most to fatal and serious collisions such as mobile phone, seatbelts and lighting offences.
- There is ample evidence of Thames Valley Police exploiting new ideas and new technologies to reduce casualties. For example, together with a private service provider, it has developed and offers a range of educational diversion schemes as an alternative to legal sanctions. These schemes include driver improvement, seatbelt awareness, safer riders, low (as an alternative to fixed) penalty and high-speed awareness (as an alternative to court prosecution but still with a fixed penalty notice). The high-speed scheme is the only scheme of its kind nationally and is approved by the ACPO roads policing committee.
- The speed schemes include a Reading University computer-based hazard perception awareness facility, a safer rider scheme for motorcyclists, an open road speed awareness course and a red and yellow card scheme for careless/dangerous riding run in association with a private company.

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- The SRPD has made good use of the database (used for the investigation and detection of thefts of goods vehicles and plant). It has also accredited VOSA officers to undertake roadside checks and stops without a police officer needing to be present.

### **Work in Progress**

- The SRPD is embarking on a project with local authorities and other agencies to educate children aged 16/17 years regarding responsible use of the roads. It is anticipated that this scheme will reach some 12,000 children during 2006/07.
- Following consultation, the head of the SRPD has agreed that all new police recruits entering the Initial Police Leadership and Development Programme (IPLDP) will be tutored for two weeks in the department. This will occur immediately after the final college input where the recruits are trained alongside experienced officers. This training will focus on denying criminals the use of the roads and show the role they can play in casualty reduction and in meeting the demands and expectations of neighbourhood communities. They will also receive input on safe practices for working in the road environment, a key health and safety topic.

### **Areas for Improvement**

- The casualty reduction strategy is an accessible document that has been in place since November 2004. There is, however, no comprehensive roads policing strategy that totally reflects Thames Valley Police's contribution to the ACPO and Department for Transport roads policing strategy.
- The SRPD plan for 2005/06 has objectives that are linked to force service priorities. Each priority has a series of outcomes/measures, critical success factors and dependencies. There is little reference to 2010 casualty reduction targets, the objectives are not SMART and it is not clear what success looks like or who is responsible for delivery.
- While there is not a dedicated ANPR intercept team for each of the five BCUs, the department does have one team, a sergeant and six constables, who can be tasked by either a BCU or LPA through the tasking process. There is clear evidence of it being put to good use. However, given the size and geographical spread of the force, consideration should be given to assigning one ANPR interception team to each BCU through the department.
- There is limited analytical capacity, except for the contribution from the Safer Roads partnership which identifies causation factors and trends. Consideration should be given to enhancing this capability to enable the department to understand where and why it is being successful and to target its resources.
- The SRPD does have some 42 officers specially trained to tackle those who drive while unfit through drink or drugs and is striving to train more. It is currently waiting for type approval of mobile evidential breath-testing equipment before it is acquired and installed into mobile custody vans. In the interim it could follow the example set by Hampshire and train officers in the detection of all forms of incapability to drive. Furthermore, the SRPD has, in partnership with the CRED, introduced a system of codifying incident closure for all road traffic collisions to record whether drivers have been breath-tested. It is evident that not all BCU and SRPD staff are updating the control room with this information.

## 6 Resource Use (Domain B)

### 6A Human Resource Management

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Direction of Travel</b>
<b>Good</b>	<b>Improved</b>

#### National Grade Distribution

Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
2	18	23	0

#### National Position

The PPAF indicators on sickness and medical retirement continue to be key quantitative measurements of human resource (HR) performance. Increasing significance is being given to the completion of performance development reviews (PDRs) within 60 days of due date. PDRs should be intelligence-driven and link to other HR processes such as promotion and career pathways.

While most forces have conducted some basic workforce planning, this has yet to be extended to all staff, ranks and grades. Workforce planning often concentrates on basic succession planning for key operational police officer posts. Most forces now have a full range of policies to support the work/life balance, often going beyond their legal obligations. The majority of forces need to develop an effective mechanism to manage demand, which ensures that they allocate resources to peak periods. There is limited evidence to show that supervisors and managers have been adequately trained in effective resource management.

Although annual staff satisfaction surveys are common, applying the learning from these surveys, and from employment tribunals, accidents, injuries, complaints and grievances, could be developed further. Much health and safety activity in forces is owned by a handful of key individuals and is rarely integrated fully into day-to-day activity, other than monitoring of accidents, injuries and near misses. Few forces have accident/injury reduction targets or effective performance management of health and safety activity.

#### Contextual Factors

The human resource directorate (HRD) has continued to play an important part in the delivery of policing services within Thames Valley Police. The HR and L&D delivery plans are strategically aligned and are used as a platform for the development of individual BCU/OCU plans. Robust accountability mechanisms exist at all levels to review and monitor performance against HR actions and projects. The Police Authority and the CCMT play an active role in reviewing performance and holding individuals to account.

HR management is integral to individual and organisational development and consequently there is increased awareness and ownership of HR issues across the force. Senior members of the HRD are leading and supporting a wide range of national change projects; at the same time they are leading innovative change initiatives within the force to ensure

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that it is proactive in responding to the changing landscape in which policing services are delivered.

The HRD has delivered the challenging and wide range of actions contained within the delivery plans. Of particular note is the work undertaken to: implement the PeopleSoft upgrade and revised business processes, prepare for the implementation of IPLDP, take part in the work-based assessment (WBA) promotion pilot scheme, and adopt proactive approaches to managing sickness and health issues. The head of HR is leading the review of business support services and work is in progress to deliver the identified areas for improvement across a range of transactional business support services.

Good progress has been made on delivering against the recruitment targets set for further implementing mixed economy policing teams. There has been a clear slowdown in the number of officers transferring to other forces, suggesting that retention measures introduced in recent years have had a positive impact. This has resulted in an increase in the percentage of experienced officers, although, like other forces around London, there are still too few experienced officers in front-line LPA teams.

A new diversity unit has been created to oversee the multiple strands of diversity work taking place across the force and within the HRD. Positive working relationships between the force, the Police Federation, UNISON and staff representative groups are used to good effect in taking forward projects and sharing learning. The department works closely with the professional standards department and BCUs/OCUs to ensure the appropriate management of complaints, grievances and performance issues, although there is always room for improvement and earlier resolution. A bank of trained conflict mediators has been used effectively to resolve workplace conflicts.

Police officer sickness has been reduced to one of the lowest rates in the country. The average of 57.3 hours per year equates to 7.2 days per year and is below the national policing plan target of 8 days and significantly better than the national average of 72.1 hours. The average hours lost per staff member was reduced slightly from 78.0 hours to 77.2 hours, which equates to 9.6 days per year, just below the national average of 78.47 hours; the national policing plan target of 9 days was not met.

A variable target to reduce overtime by 7.5% by the end of 2005/06 was exceeded, the reduction being 7.9%.

The staff appraisal process is increasingly being used and accepted as a tool to drive performance. Some 98.6% of all appraisals were closed within the target time of 60 days. Rewards are becoming more aligned to performance and the acquisition and use of skills as opposed to length of service. Performance-related pay has been introduced for police staff, chief officer and superintendent ranks.

## Strengths

- A comprehensive HR strategy (2005–08) includes the HR and L&D delivery plans for 2005/06. The HR and L&D delivery plans are produced concurrently with the force delivery plan and are being used to inform the development of BCU and OCU delivery plans across the force in 2006/07.
- Delivery plans are comprehensive and focus on improving front-line policing services and performance. They take account of national and local issues. There are clear links to the force delivery plan and for each action there are named individuals, appropriate targets, measures and intended business benefits.



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- The HR and L&D delivery plans are agreed by the CCMT and the Police Authority. They scrutinise performance through agreed governance mechanisms, including quarterly reporting, review meetings and performance group meetings at all levels. Teams and individuals are accountable for performance through line management, project management frameworks and individual objectives.
- The department makes a significant contribution to overall performance; HR professionals are included in BCU/OCU senior management teams and the head of HR is a member of CCMT. The DoR, head of HR and head of L&D contribute to national projects and lead on internal initiatives to ensure that the force is at the forefront of national agendas such as workforce modernisation. The People programme is well established within the overall service improvement programme, delivering benefits across the force at strategic, tactical and operational levels.
- Recent HR initiatives impacting across BCUs/OCUs include the implementation of: new improved HR business processes and the upgrade to the PeopleSoft IT system; the introduction of automated and integrated workflow management in business support functions for routine transactions; increased support to officers seeking promotion to sergeant and inspector through the successful implementation of WBA; and the identification of areas for improvement across business support services (HR, IT and finance) arising from the business support modernisation stream within the Challenge and Change programme.
- A proactive approach is taken to promoting and managing a mixed policing economy. Resources are allocated according to a well-established formula, managed centrally through resource management meetings chaired by DoR and locally according to NIM and delivery plan priorities. During 2005/06, 340 police officers and 40 PCSOs have been recruited to support the development of neighbourhood and reactive policing services on BCUs. An extra 124 PCSO posts will be funded in 2006/07.
- Investment in occupational health and welfare services has provided a proactive approach to managing health, welfare and sickness. The sickness management policy has been reviewed and a new policy on the management of restricted and recuperative duties is being implemented. These initiatives have resulted in a significant decrease in the number of staff working reduced hours on recuperative duties (from 137 to 38) producing a saving of 45,540 hours and facilitating a supportive return to front-line duties. The force is delivering against the targets set to reduce sickness absence and police officer ill-health retirements.
- The DoR leads on health and safety (H&S) issues, supported by specialist staff at the centre and business managers on BCU/OCUs. There is a clear cascade of accountabilities and responsibilities for H&S from the DoR down to first-line managers and individuals. The HR delivery plans contain targeted actions to promote and support H&S issues. Thematic H&S audits have been carried out across the organisation and generic risk assessments updated and reviewed during 2005. Co-ordinator posts have been created on BCU and OCUs to increase the resources available and ensure a high-profile approach to managing risks and maintaining a safe working environment.
- Use of staff appraisal has improved so that it drives performance and is integral to HR services and all people management processes. There is an increasing understanding of the value of the process and engagement in it across the organisation. Clearer links exist between individual objectives and actions in delivery

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plans. In 2005/06, 98.6% of PDRs were completed within the due date against a target of 100% (see also Areas for Improvement).

### Work in Progress

- In spite of having a comprehensive exit interview policy, a gap exists in the quality and availability of management information relating to individuals' reasons for leaving; valuable information that might aid retention has not been adequately captured. Thames Valley Police has recently adopted the new national Home Office exit questionnaire and has begun to make use of the lessons learnt. The new process is automated: a workflow routine sends an email to all leavers with an attachment to the intranet-based questionnaire asking them to complete the questionnaire and attend an exit interview. In time it is hoped this will address the existing gap by providing timely quantitative and qualitative information.

### Areas for Improvement

- The HR delivery plans for 2005/06 and 2006/07 have direct employment costs only. It is now expected that key objectives within any HR plan should be costed. For example, in the 2006/07 plan, the recruitment and training of the additional 124 PCSOs, the appointment of additional 80 police sergeants, and the recruitment of an additional 200 police officers should be costed.
- There has been a distinct slowdown in the number of police officer transfers in the last two years, suggesting that the range of retention initiatives have had a positive impact. This has resulted in an improvement in the percentage of trained constables. Over the next two years (2006–08), funding has been agreed for an additional 80 sergeant posts. In spite of these improvements, police officer wastage has remained constant at around 7.5% since 2004/05, a comparatively high rate both nationally and in the MSF group. Police staff wastage has increased since 2004/05 and the current rate is also in the highest quartile nationally and in the MSF group.
- It is recognised that additional opportunities exist to explore the use of flexible working to encourage recruitment, retention and diversity. As the landscape of policing changes, additional opportunities exist to increase the diversity of teams, extend the use of mixed economy policing teams and implement recruitment and development initiatives linked to accreditation and career pathways.
- Improvements have been made to the functionality of the Snowdrop staff appraisal system in response to staff feedback. However, the results of an internal audit indicated a number of shortcomings, including incorrect role profiles, inadequate evidence, and poor setting of objectives. Police Federation representatives and police officers continue to report, as noted in the previous baseline assessment, that the process and the Snowdrop technology are bureaucratic and complex. If the system is to be credible, consideration should be given to withholding competency-related threshold payments for staff whose performance does not meet required standards.
- Staff associations continue to express concerns about the grievance procedure. It has been described as 'complicated and long-winded' and 'clumsy'. It is claimed by both the Police Federation and UNISON that there is unwillingness on the part of middle managers to deal with issues and, once the procedure has been started, there is rarely a successful resolution. Furthermore, UNISON reports that some police managers lack the skill, experience and confidence to manage police staff and to resolve issues quickly.

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- Comment is made in Section 6E about the difficulties in recruiting and retaining staff in some key roles due to problems with the pay grading system. While efforts are continuing to resolve this issue for the field of information and communications technology, consideration should also be given to its impact on other roles and functions.

**6B Training, Development and Organisational Learning**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Direction of Travel</b>
<b>Good</b>	<b>Improved</b>

**National Grade Distribution**

Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
3	11	27	2

**National Position**

Learning and development (L&D) is a key driver for forces to improve performance. The requirement is for the right staff to have the right skills in the right place and at the right time in order to achieve or support operational performance.

HMIC has awarded a Good grade where key criteria have been met. Notably, where there is a clear distinction between the role of contractor and client, with the full and sustained involvement of a chief officer and the Police Authority. There should be a single post with accountability for all L&D products and services. Another prerequisite is an L&D strategy which is fully compliant with Home Office guidance and supported by a business plan, an improvement plan and a fully costed 'planned' and 'actual' delivery plan. Finally, a Good grade reflects robust quality assurance and evaluation processes, with clear evidence that the force is engaged in collaborative activity.

**Contextual Factors**

Training and development (T&D) was graded Good in 2005 and a number of recommendations for improvement were made. Action taken in response to those recommendations is summarised below:

- The L&D plan 2006/07 incorporates a significantly greater proportion of training than in previous years, and includes the L&D plans of BCUs and departments as appendices. Work continues on adding BCU- and department-initiated training to the costing model.
- Work to improve the client/contractor relationship continues, including:
  - development of an L&D marketing plan, with curriculum maps for key groups of staff or key curriculum areas;
  - better local prioritisation of training by BCU senior management teams; and
  - a pilot project with the CRED to enhance responsiveness to clients' changing needs throughout the year.
- The evaluation function has initially concentrated on implementation of a common and consistent approach to level 1 evaluation across all L&D. There is a quarterly summary of evaluations using a set of key performance indicators against which all events are measured. The TPB has prioritised level 3 evaluations for the past two

years, and a more rigorous approach has now been agreed for the prioritisation of future level 3 and 4 evaluations.

## Strengths

- The lead members for HR on the Police Authority meet regularly with the head of T&D and closely review the strategy and the plan. The Police Authority is also formally included as a member of the TPB and relevant project boards, such as the IPLDP project board. This has built a high degree of support from the Police Authority on L&D issues. A particular benefit has been financial support for the substantial budget increase required for IPLDP.
- The L&D plan has for several years incorporated its improvement plan, thereby gaining support from chief officers and the Police Authority. Progress on improvement projects is overseen by the TPB, linked where appropriate to national learning strategy requirements.
- All corporate projects are managed through a programme support unit which ensures that the training implications of projects are properly considered and planned. Resource implications are then considered by the TPB to enable effective re-prioritisation.
- A single L&D policy implemented through clearly defined processes and standard operating procedures ensures high-quality and consistent work at all stages of the training cycle. It is complemented by a holistic approach to quality assurance, which includes regular internal audits of each section to measure compliance with policy and processes. It also includes an annual review of a learning development project and a process improvement project to ensure that processes have been followed and best value criteria applied. The IPLDP project followed these processes and resulted in Thames Valley Police becoming the third force in the country to gain sign-off from the IPLDP central authority against its quality assurance framework.
- The approach to development of new learning opportunities includes a standardised process to ensure identification of the most appropriate methods of delivery, the preference being for alternatives to classroom delivery. This is reflected in a target in the L&D plan to promote the extended use of e-learning and other forms of self-directed learning. E-learning was used to address race equality scheme training and a high completion rate was achieved.
- The approach to assessment against national occupational standards (NOS) is consistent across all programmes, has the support of chief officers, and uses the bonus system to reward those gaining the 'A1 assessor' award where it is not part of a job requirement. The use of professional police staff assessors ensures consistent use of good practice and greater standardisation across the force.
- The professional development of L&D staff force-wide is addressed corporately, with appropriate qualifications (eg L&D NVQs) defined for groups of staff, and an annual development week including a trainers' conference and workshops. Additionally, regular workshops are held for training managers and supervisors to engage staff in initiatives such as quality assurance and the use of consistent approaches to evaluation.

### **Work in Progress**

- While the TPB provides the strategic governance of learning and development, there is a need to continue to improve the understanding of the role of 'sponsor' in training, particularly in relation to helping to ensure that course participants are properly identified and prioritised. Although regular meetings take place between clients and providers, further work is required to develop clear client/contractor relationships. As a pilot, a service level agreement has been put in place between the CRED and T&D. This approach is now being rolled out with full completion anticipated by March 2008.
- National costing model data is used to determine the cost of 'wasted' places on courses run below capacity. A quarterly report on L&D performance against the annual plan is produced and through 2007/08 it will include the cost of delivery. Use of the model for the costing of new developments is awaiting improvements in the national model to cover non-trainer-led delivery.

### **Areas for Improvement**

This section provides a broad summary of the Areas for Improvement identified as a consequence of the current inspection. Specific areas to address are contained in the detailed assessment guide which the force retains. Progress on the areas summarised below will be reported on in the Contextual Factors section of next year's report.

- All roles in the organisation have job profiles based on the integrated competency framework which therefore link through to NOS. All recently developed programmes have been systematically mapped to NOS. Many existing courses have been mapped and this work needs to be completed.
- There is a need to develop benchmarking to compare and challenge TVP approaches. Existing surveys (internal staff surveys and external customer satisfaction surveys) are used to determine satisfaction and areas for improvement from an end-user perspective. In addition, surveys should be developed for L&D staff in addition to the force-wide staff survey to determine their satisfaction as well as potential areas for improvement.

**6C Race and Diversity**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Direction of Travel</b>
<b>Good</b>	<b>Improved</b>

**National Grade Distribution**

Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
0	14	27	2

**Contextual Factors**

This framework overlaps with Section 1A. Within Thames Valley Police there is clear and visible leadership in diversity from the Chief Constable and the CCMT. A dedicated diversity unit, headed by a newly appointed superintendent, has sought to utilise the strengths and opportunities that the force’s DB and DAG, the REC meeting and the BCU and OCU diversity boards offer in respect of all six strands of diversity.

There is a healthy working relationship between the Thames Valley Black Police Association (BPA) and the CCMT, the diversity unit and BCUs. Representatives of the Gay Police Association (GPA) also attend a number of forums and meetings and their participation is encouraged. There is currently no formal Thames Valley branch of the GPA or British Association of Women Police (BAWP) but a business case for the introduction of a TVGPA is being drawn up. A similar business case is needed for the introduction of a Thames Valley group to represent the interests of women officers and staff.

The support of CCMT to allow staff to contribute to the work of diversity action groups and sub-groups (reflecting the six strands) is valued by officers and staff.

The target of 100% of officers and staff trained in race equality issues has yet to be achieved but by the end of 2005/06 some 88.2% had been trained.

**Strengths**

- The diversity group, chaired by the Chief Constable, continues to successfully co-ordinate action to ensure non-discriminatory services to the community, and equitable treatment and equal opportunities for officers and staff with the Thames Valley Police.
- The RES appears to be compliant with the standard set by the Commission for Racial Equality. The diversity action group has a key role in monitoring the RES. The previous Chief Constable made a significant contribution to race and diversity issues and this continues to be the case under the leadership of the acting Chief Constable as the force champion.
- ACC (local policing) chairs the diversity action group whose membership includes the chairs of each sub-group reflecting the six strands of diversity. BCU and OCU commanders champion diversity within their commands and chair their own diversity

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boards. BCU diversity boards work closely with IAGs. BCU and OCU commanders all have personal diversity objectives.

- During the year, new policies have been developed to encompass the Disability Discrimination Act, flexible working and grievances. There are examples of reasonable adjustments being made to change job roles and hours of work and adapting facilities and equipment to assist staff with disabilities. Work is also in progress to prepare for the forthcoming legislation covering age discrimination by use of the Employers Forum on Age 'One Step Ahead' toolkit to develop an action plan. A revised Respect in the Workforce policy will be launched during 2006/07.
- The network of diversity advisers is being reviewed and a clear programme of selection, training and development is being implemented. Emerging advice themes will be analysed and fed back to BCU commanders through BCU diversity boards for ongoing L&D and to rectify any emerging weaknesses.
- There is a dedicated diversity trainer within the T&D department. All staff are required to complete the RES distance learning computer-based workbook (but see Areas for Improvement). The diversity unit has a website which is regularly updated with information on all six strands of diversity as well as news, consultation exercises and codes of practice.
- Staff associations and support groups are consistently consulted at an early stage and are represented on a range of key meetings, projects and working parties.
- Good progress is being made on the Breaking Through action plan. A dedicated recruitment, retention and development team for BME staff, headed by an inspector, assists in providing objective support to BCUs when managing under-performance issues among BME staff. This has had a positive impact as the ratio of BME officers resigning during 2005 was significantly lower than in 2004 and better than the MSF average. BME and female recruitment has also increased during the same time period (but see Areas for Improvement).

### **Work in Progress**

- The ongoing review and improvement to the diversity adviser network should be progressed as a priority, allowing for improved support to staff to back up and complement the work of the staff associations.

### **Areas for Improvement**

- There is a need to develop the diversity strategy so that it incorporates all the projects and initiatives being progressed by the head of the diversity unit.
- The RES is monitored in a booklet that contains an array of performance information. It is a complex document that is produced bi-annually but it does not cover all six strands of diversity and undertakes little analysis. Although data is captured to reflect the diverse make-up of both officers and police staff, there is little analysis carried out and opportunities for positive action are missed. There are also difficulties extracting data on internal applicants from the 'Peoplesoft' IT system. Furthermore, this type of information should be published more frequently— perhaps quarterly – to enable positive action to be taken and to assist the force in reflecting the communities it serves.



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- Much effort is exerted in the recruitment of BME officers. The challenge of retaining, developing and progressing staff from all diverse communities should now be taken up. Action by all levels of management is needed to ensure that the organisation becomes properly representative at every level, especially within specialist roles. Furthermore, a Gender Agenda action plan should be created and formally monitored.
- There is scope for BME officers and staff to become more involved as assessors in recruitment and selection, particularly for workplace assessments.
- Comment was made in Section 6A about how the grievance procedure is viewed. It is intended to introduce an independent and confidential reporting system as used by over 20 other police forces. This system should enable individuals to report wrongdoing confidentially. However, if it is to be successful, then the lack of confidence in the subsequent procedure expressed by the Police Federation and UNISON should be addressed as soon as practicable.

**6D Managing Financial and Physical Resources**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Direction of Travel</b>
<b>Good</b>	<b>Stable</b>

**National Grade Distribution**

Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
1	11	24	7

**Contextual Factors**

This assessment is based on a self-assessment return and HMIC findings as well as consideration of the Police Use of Resources Evaluation (PURE) by the Audit Commission’s appointed auditor. Set out at the end of this section are the appointed auditor’s summarised scores for each theme covered by PURE. Separate more detailed reports have also been issued by the appointed auditor. Work on preparing for police force mergers has had a significant impact on the finance department and other corporate services.

Thames Valley has, within its MSF group, a below average number of officers per head of population. Service costs per police officer are below the MSF average and service costs per 1,000 population are the lowest within the MSF group. Expenditure on supplies and services is above average. Transport revenue and premises costs (per employee) are the highest in the MSF group.

**Strengths**

- Senior managers ensure that the financial plans, both medium-term and annual, support the strategic and operational plans of the force and Police Authority. The excellent working relationship between the Chief Constable and the treasurer allows for the full exploration of budget and financing options, embracing the Prudential Code to resolve the resourcing shortfalls.
- The budget-setting process includes an informed prioritisation process for capital schemes utilising operational experience alongside financial evaluation.
- The force and Police Authority follow good practice and have sophisticated planning processes which link performance objectives to the budget-setting process.
- BCU/OCU commanders and department heads are set increasing targets alongside the allocation of resources. However, from an external perspective, this is not fully transparent in publications, especially with respect to the use of existing resources.
- Budgets are devolved on a rolling basis and are developed through a bottom-up process from a single line allocation. Efficiency plans are integrated into the budget process and strategic issues are linked into the funding and budgetary systems.

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- Extensive devolvement ensures that financial responsibility follows operational and management responsibility. The joint management and monitoring by operational and finance staff of the allocation process supports devolution.
- There is an excellent record of achieving efficiency plan targets such as the internal force restructure (£0.6 million) which, with other gains, has been reinvested into front-line policing. Efficiency gains to the value of 4.8% of net revenue expenditure were made during 2005/06 against a target of 3%.
- The early involvement of the finance department in operational planning, eg in Gold group meetings, allows an understanding to develop as soon as possible of the impact of operational demands on finance and resources.
- Capital projects are reviewed and scored against risk, delivering the strategy and organisational capability, with good use being made of operational experience.
- BCU/OCU commanders attend the chief officer strategy days and contribute to resource decisions; this is supported by quarterly resource management meetings chaired by the DoR.
- Thames Valley Police provides a national lead on finance issues and demonstrates examples of good practice in financial reporting, financial standing and financial management.
- The results from an external strategic review of estates management are being acted upon. These include a realignment of the strategy and a more flexible approach in meeting operational and administrative requirements, using solutions available in the marketplace. This programme has successfully provided a modern firearms range, which was delivered within budget and on time.
- The estate has been developed through a number of schemes providing operational benefit. These include CCTV installation and police station developments. A highly consultative and collaborative approach to the development and delivery of an estates strategy has been adopted. A formal asset management plan has been produced.
- The Chiltern Transport Consortium is recognised nationally as a best practice example of collaboration, based on a whole life-cycle model delivering operational benefits flexibly and cost-effectively. Real growth has been achieved in vehicles and mileage through the consortium, without growth in staff. This is a rare example of back-office support in the form of a 'shared service centre', providing a complete service to another police force. It has provided the final transformation from collaboration to a single service provider (strategic management through to front-line delivery).
- The procurement service is nationally recognised for its professionalism and its contribution to national framework contracts. There is an emphasis on professional training and contract management, identifying efficiencies, electronic ordering and participation in collaborative arrangements.

### **Work in Progress**

- The external auditor has assessed force data quality for activity-based costing and its management arrangements as Good and Fair respectively. However, the force is aware of the limitations around the current two-week paper-based sampling process

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and will be seeking to supplement the collection of activity data through electronic means, possibly via the new command and control system.

- Payment of salaries for officers and police staff is due to move from four-weekly pay periods to monthly periods by March 2007, reducing transactions from 13 to 12.
- A strategy is being developed to secure an income stream from the new firearms range at Sulhamstead.
- Thames Valley Police has developed a range of performance indicators for support services but accepts that these remain as work in progress.

**Areas for Improvement**

- There is an awareness of the importance of integrated business systems to drive down processing costs and to improve the quality of management information. The option of a shared service facility is likely to be taken up if the service-wide initiative receives funding.
- The external auditor has reviewed procurement arrangements and has noted that BCUs were generally satisfied that they were receiving an effective service and assistance. However, the scope for a more proactive approach in BCUs to contract monitoring was noted.
- There is a need to consider the efficient and effective utilisation of various transport methods to ensure value for money is always achieved - e.g. the use of hired cars as opposed to fleet vehicles.
- There is acknowledgement that the links between the estates strategy, corporate decisions, policy making and operational requirements should be strengthened; this was identified in the external property review commissioned by the Police Authority. There is scope to identify potential opportunities for redevelopment, disposal and rationalisation of the force estate.

Audit Commission assessment of use of resources

Element	Assessment
Financial reporting	Not Available
Financial management	3
Financial standing	4
Internal control	2
Value for money	3

Key to grades

1. Below minimum requirements – inadequate performance
2. Only a minimum requirement – adequate performance
3. Constantly above minimum requirements – performing well
4. Well above minimum requirements – performing strongly

The judgements are made by auditors under the Code of Audit Practice and in accordance with guidance issued by the Audit Commission.

**6E Information Management**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Direction of Travel</b>
<b>Fair</b>	<b>Declined</b>

**National Grade Distribution**

Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
1	9	31	2

**National Position**

The convergence of information and technology streams, and in particular the developing role of the chief information officer, is focusing attention on how forces corporately govern information. The aim in this assessment is to differentiate between forces that are taking an information-based approach to delivery and those that are technology-driven. A raft of emerging standards – notably Management of Police Information (MoPI) – is defining metrics against which performance can be measured, and these will ease the challenge in future assessments. Equally, the need for forces to develop medium-term planning, to consider national strategy in their local planning, and to reflect the requirements of the information technology infrastructure library (ITIL) have all provided some clear measures of success.

It has been a particularly challenging 12 months for forces' information services, as much development work was postponed because of amalgamation proposals. This backlog will need to be addressed in 2006/07, together with work on shared approaches to bridge the level 2 shortfall. The challenge of providing information for the cross-regional information-sharing project (CRISP) and the emerging IMPACT system is considerable. This may require the development of 'confidential' networks and work to meet the requirements of the Unified Police Security Architecture (UPSA) as well as MoPI. These carry as yet unquantified but very considerable costs, as well as resulting in major business change. With constrained budgets and increasing demands, the future poses real challenges as to how forces will manage their information assets.

**Contextual Factors**

The information and communications technology (ICT) department is restructuring to achieve improvements in many aspects of both departmental management and its services. The ICT strategy is in line with the Home Office science and technology strategy and the information system strategy for the police service (ISS4PS) and supports the strategic plan. There are costed capital plans in place for significant ICT development schemes. The work for the financial year 2006/07 is set out in a detailed ICT delivery plan.

The DCC leads on information management. The ICT department is led by ACC (OS) and the head of ICT (temporarily filled on a part-time basis by the head of IT at West Mercia Constabulary) who sits on force and national strategic ICT bodies. A security committee co-ordinates information security activity. There is a formal programme and project management framework which includes prioritisation, progress monitoring, risk and issue management, and business benefit measurement. The ICT user group monitors

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performance against agreed service levels. The 2004 satisfaction survey showed a high level of satisfaction with the department. There are a number of legacy systems with a low degree of data integration but there are plans to achieve more effective searching and improved performance from these platforms.

There has been difficulty in recruiting a head of ICT and it has proved problematic to recruit and retain staff in some key roles due to a pay-grading system that is based on spans of responsibility rather than skills.

There is a stable IT infrastructure with a modern, scalable, and upgradeable network which supports quality of service and multi-media applications. The force is working towards meeting the full demands of the national intelligence sharing project which is being used within the force intelligence bureau. It is leading regionally on developing data mapping but needs to make operational use of the data involved.

Projects are under way to implement the provisions of the community security policy (CSP). There are published policies owned by the information security officer and implemented by ICT. Penetration testing was conducted during 2005 with no significant issues identified. Contingency plans and fallback arrangements involving the twin data centres have been tested and disaster recovery plans have been exercised. Service continuity planning has taken place and will soon be exercised.

## Strengths

- The ICT strategy is in line with the Home Office science and technology strategy and ISS4PS and supports the force's strategic plan. There is an annual business plan which articulates and controls the programme of work to meet the strategic direction and ongoing business development.
- There are four-year capital plans in place for significant ICT development. The work for the forthcoming financial year is set out in the ICT delivery plan.
- IT infrastructure library (ITIL) procedures for recording, managing and resolving user issues have been implemented.
- A robust corporate planning process employs PRINCE2 (Projects in Controlled Environments) methodology and includes prioritisation, progress monitoring, risk and issue management, and business benefit measurement. In addition, there is an ICT programme board which seeks to integrate and co-ordinate the delivery of both business and ICT-led developments.
- The ICT user group has stakeholder representation which monitors developing performance measures against agreed service levels. The ICT help/service desk manages all incidents and requests for service. The 2004 satisfaction survey showed a high level of satisfaction with the department.
- The IMPACT Nominal Index (INI) went live on 23 December 2005. IT has been supported to meet national requirements and is being used within the force intelligence bureau. Thames Valley Police is taking the lead regionally on the development of data mapping and ETL (extraction, transformation and loading) processes.
- There are published policies owned by the force security officer. Penetration testing was conducted within 2005 with no significant issues identified.

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- The force benefits from an effective Airwave fallback system. It is working closely with others within the South East region on sharing best practice and other forms of collaboration.
- A legacy of procuring off-the-shelf systems means that some key operational and support systems are not fully integrated. The strategy is to remedy this situation in the medium term and it is planned to replace key operational systems, including command and control, crime management and intelligence, within three years.

### **Work in Progress**

- Scoping for command and control replacement starts 2006/07 and replacement should take place during 2007/08. Crime and intelligence replacement is due to start in 2008/09. When completed, there will be a fully integrated data store for incident, location and nominal data. An operational data store should be introduced during 2006/07 which will support more effective searching of legacy data silos, thereby extending the life of existing systems and increasing data-search flexibility. Tactical developments are centred on process mapping, involving application integration, automated business processing, and data mapping, e.g. of command and control information and CEDAR workflow integration and mapping in support of the national data sharing programme.
- Work continues towards achieving the requirements of the ACPO CSP. The results of a CSP compliance audit are awaited before further action is taken to address any gaps. The Police Authority has now agreed an audit programme for the next three years.
- Work is continuing to ensure that all key processes are covered by comprehensive business continuity plans by March 2006. The service continuity project is ongoing with work to increase disaster recovery capability and business continuity planning.

### **Areas for Improvement**

- Having experienced some difficulty in recruiting a suitably qualified and experienced head of department for ICT, at the time of this assessment it was being led by a senior police officer who had played an important role in refocusing the department on supporting force priorities. The aim should be, however, to recruit a specialist in due course, not least because this post is one of the most senior roles open to police staff. In the meantime, the head of information systems from West Mercia Police will be leading the department two days a week with a uniform chief inspector acting as his deputy. Furthermore, the post holder should operate at force policy group level.
- A departmental plan has not been produced for 2005/06, it being deemed unnecessary in the light of other systems for progressing projects. Although good progress has been made in managing the department, the discipline of a plan to set objectives, allocate resources and monitor progress, on both internal and customer-facing issues, should be adopted. An ICT delivery plan will be produced for 2006/07.
- It has proved difficult to recruit and retain staff in some key roles due to problems with a pay grading system that is based on spans of responsibility rather than skills. Efforts are continuing to resolve this issue which has had an adverse impact on the department's capacity to support some IT projects. ICT has introduced a technical specialist skills re-grading that has resulted in salaries becoming more competitive than was previously possible. The impact of this on the ability of the force to recruit and retrain staff cannot yet be established.

**6F National Intelligence Model**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Direction of Travel</b>
<b>Good</b>	<b>Improved</b>

**National Grade Distribution**

Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
0	19	22	2

**Contextual Factors**

The NIM is managed by the NIM development manager working to the head of intelligence. Throughout 2005, Thames Valley Police has shown significant commitment to ensuring compliance with national codes of practice and minimum standards. Funding for a NIM business analyst was secured, enabling a detailed action plan to be completed.

All the minimum standards in the action plan have been researched and updated by engaging with key stakeholders at a NIM 'master class' and two focused workshops. This has resulted in many responses to each action, providing unique and balanced perspectives across many areas of police business. The evidence for each minimum standard was assessed and summarised to establish compliance. To ensure an objective assessment, an independent validation exercise was commissioned. It found that, of 142 items, compliance had been achieved on 122, and progress towards compliance was being made on 6 (compliance had not been achieved on 14).

Ongoing work to improve compliance is monitored through the NIM steering group, chaired by the ACC (SO). The group's remit is being widened to cover all intelligence issues and it also monitors progress on issues raised in the previous baseline assessment. All tasking processes and NIM products comply with national standards with full use being made of the products and analytical techniques. Lead analysts have been appointed on BCUs to further improve performance.

Significant work has been undertaken to improve briefing. A force briefing guidance document sets out the standards and a new briefing system is being piloted. Early results involving control rooms and roads policing are very encouraging. Staff can access any LPA or BCU briefing on a 'need to know' basis. This is especially important for those who have force-wide responsibility or who are likely to work across more than one BCU. The challenge ahead is to maintain and further improve compliance while extending NIM principles and practices into neighbourhood policing. Progress has been made with the introduction of neighbourhood policing priority profiles, but further work is required to establish a force standard incorporating community information. Significant involvement with the national management of police information (MOPI) and intelligence-sharing programmes (IMPACT), as well as force projects such as the new probationer development programme, will be core tasks during 2006/07.



## Strengths

- The CCMT is driving development and use of the NIM. The Chief Constable is the ACPO national lead on NIM and ACC (SO) chairs the force TCG and regional tasking meetings. Strategic TCG meetings are held twice a year and are chaired by the Chief Constable.
- Extensive work has been undertaken with the production of a NIM action plan measuring compliance against the 142 minimum standards. The agreed assessment is that Thames Valley Police is significantly compliant. The areas for improvement have been highlighted in separate reports and progress is monitored regularly at the NIM steering group. Furthermore, a system of reviews has been put in place for BCUs to establish compliance with the 'challenge and change' intelligence principles.
- Analysis is a strength and there is pride in the quality of analytical products. These have included a problem profile on firearms, including links to firearms licensing, a problem profile on Operation Hucklebury (cannabis factories) and the extensive scoping work for Operation Pentameter (people trafficking). New posts, including the forensic analyst and lead analysts on BCU, have increased capacity. The principal analyst is now supported by a deputy, and this has facilitated a review of practice across the force linking into the BCU lead analyst posts.
- A virtual joint intelligence cell with HMRC and strong links with the IND have resulted in improved sharing of intelligence. Joint operational activity includes Operation Hola (importation of cocaine) and Operation Visa (illegal immigrants). Support has been provided to the South East region, albeit operational activity has been limited, the exception being Operation Wych (distraction burglaries) led by Hampshire. Good links have been maintained with surrounding police forces both within and outside the South East region and with other agencies. Major roles have been played in several cross-border operations to tackle serious and organised crime.
- Dedicated controllers continue to provide improved accountability and operational direction in respect of covert operations. An additional dedicated controller is now driving forward the Special Branch intelligence requirement. The five dedicated controllers for the BCU and level 2 source management units are well established. Compliance with national covert policing requirements and tradecraft/professional issues are overseen by a force bureau, including the operational security officer and a dedicated analyst.
- The intelligence research bureau (IRB) has been formed from an amalgamation of the PNC and Phoenix bureaux (it does not include crime intelligence or firearms departments. Most of the PNC compliance action plan has now been completed; a PNC policy awaits final approval and PNC timeliness shows steady improvement (see also Section 3E). To complement this, CRED can now provide 24/7 intelligence research for officers responding to incidents and can access several IT systems by means of the Crystal reporting (see also Section 5A).
- Technical support capacity and capability are considered excellent. Special Branch resourcing has been increased significantly this year and its proactive capacity has been greatly strengthened.
- The head of intelligence undertakes a 'pre-tasking meeting' to ensure that analytical work is carried out to best effect on the intelligence most likely to produce results (see also Section 3B). The inclusion of BCU commanders at force TCG processes

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is assisting with the prioritisation of bids for force resources. Event planning still occurs outside TTCG but this is evolving, and operations such as Pentameter link TTCG and headquarters Gold resourcing directly. TTCG has developed further and now includes a counter-terrorist section, a confidential tasking section and force tasking, including BCU representatives.

- A NIM master class was held for all commanders and senior operational officers to improve understanding of the NIM and its significance in 'getting a grip' and driving business.

### **Work in Progress**

- The impact of the data management policy has been to increase inputting demands across the force. Backlogs have been identified but they have been managed with an injection of resources and should be cleared promptly.
- National templates are now used and there is a consistent approach to tasking. The force restructure has provided challenges with tasking at BCU and LPA levels. A model is developing whereby BCU tasking focuses on BCU resourcing and the links to force-level issues, while LPAs are working with CDRP partners to engage them more fully in joint tasking.

### **Areas for Improvement**

- Capturing community intelligence has been the subject of much work at force and national level. The NIM development manager has written several reports which correspond to the national drive to tie neighbourhood policing into NIM processes. This is still a developing area and there is limited corporacy, but there are pockets of good practice, including the effective management of community information at Reading. There continues to be an organisational need to develop capability to record community information and intelligence in relation to ASB (see also Section 4A).
- Improved IT capability to enable multiple database searching is a key area. Most of the NIM minimum standards compliance issues relate to data management. The strategic development of IT systems has been agreed and the criminal intelligence system has been formally identified as requiring replacement. This will improve intelligence capability, particularly around community intelligence, but is unlikely to have an impact in the short term (see also Section 6E).
- Capacity and retention issues are putting increasing pressure on analytical capability, in particular within the major crime unit, and a review is under way to ensure this remains a strength, despite increasing demands. Much work has been undertaken with the HR function to aid retention. This area is still fragile, with experienced staff being attracted to external career development opportunities.
- Much work has been undertaken on the management of intelligence, particularly in relation to the MOPI, IMPACT, the requirement to have strong capability at level 2 and public protection issues. The Protective Services Review carried out by HMIC in 2005 identified the gaps that currently exist and require addressing; these have been subject to a separate report.

## 7 Leadership and Direction

### 7A Leadership

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Direction of Travel</b>
<b>Good</b>	<b>Not Graded</b>

#### National Grade Distribution

Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
0	4	35	4

#### Contextual Factors

During the period under assessment, the chief officer team underwent significant change following the appointment of the Chief Constable as chief executive of the National Policing Improvement Agency (NHPIA). The leadership demonstrated by the Acting Chief Constable and other members of the team, with Police Authority support, in subsequent months was impressive. During this period the force has continued to move forwards, delivering improvements and maintaining momentum and continuity in key areas. This leadership through a period of potential disruption is commended.

The Chief Constable's management team has developed an open and trusting relationship with the Police Authority. The Authority has refined and reviewed its business processes to ensure it is best placed to provide support, with critical challenge where appropriate. CCMT members hold a variety of national ACPO posts, including custody, intelligence and restorative justice.

There have been major changes to structures, processes and organisational culture in 2005. This programme has been divided into four strands: BCU implementation; strategic police force; business support; and strategic management. A business change unit has been created specifically to manage the interface with BCUs on major change projects, with the force restructuring to five BCUs with 16 LPAs and concentrating effort on improving business processes. Such major change has not been without its challenges, but is being energetically led by the Chief Constable with the intention of delivering neighbourhood policing, increasing resilience and ensuring the operational preparedness of protective services. The challenge and change process is well supported by partners. There is a healthy engagement with senior managers and effective use of the media, such as the force newspaper and intranet.

A concerted drive for improved performance was made during 2005/06, reflected in sustained improvements in detection rates and offences brought to justice. In these areas the force ended the year top of its MSF group. Savings have been used to fund new business units such as the PPU's. BCUs and OCUs are given substantial autonomy within an appropriate corporate guidance framework.

The top team, and the Chief Constable in particular, show visible leadership, undertaking patrols, conducting visits and running the senior leaders' forums. She personally updates

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staff on current issues and future strategies through a weekly review. She chairs a strategic diversity board, is the champion for diversity issues and holds regular formal and informal meetings with the staff associations, unions, the BPA and the GPA. Considerable energy is devoted by the Chief Constable to partnership links, such as a programme of visits to local authorities.

All five BCU commanders and the head of crime support now sit with the chief officer team to create an extended CCMT to the benefit of corporacy, team working and collaboration in the decision-making process. Good work is recognised through a range of rewards and partners are included in this recognition process.

### **Strengths**

- The departure of the former Chief Constable as chief executive (designate) of the NHPIA posed a risk to stability and continuity in the chief officer team. However, by means of a carefully managed hand-over and the appointment of the DCC in an acting capacity, stability and effective leadership have been maintained. This position has been bolstered by further internal acting appointments and that of a substantive ACC (local policing).
- The chief officer team works well together; there is good evidence of skills development, and use of 360-degree feedback and seminars to develop the strategic view.
- Chief officers are involved in ACPO business, playing a significant part in national developments, eg in intelligence, crime, custody, criminal justice and the police negotiating board. Team members hold a variety of national ACPO posts and update colleagues on developments within their business areas. The team does not allow their contribution at the national level to compromise their primary responsibility to Thames Valley Police. The value of working at the national level is recognised.
- The Chief Constable and the top team are visible throughout the force, undertaking regular patrols, conducting visits and running the senior leaders' forum. The Chief Constable displays visible leadership in a number of ways, including regular briefings to senior and middle managers. There is strong evidence received from staff regarding the 24/7 accessibility of the chief officer team. Of particular note is the Chief Constable's personal briefing to staff on current issues and future strategies through the her weekly review, which is effective in style and content. The Gold meeting on detection performance is an example of how the top team led a reversal in under-performance.
- The relationship with the Police Authority is very constructive and they are active and engaged at force, BCU and LPA levels. Joint working is evident with business discussions being open and frank, challenging yet supportive. There are a number of informal mechanisms in place to keep members updated on a range of issues and developments.
- Consultation with partners is noteworthy, with exceptionally positive responses from chief executives concerning joint working. The Chief Constable has well-established communication channels with partners. An annual programme of meetings with all 18 local councils is now in its third year. This is a considerable workload and demonstrates the Chief Constable's personal commitment. She has regular formal

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and informal meetings with the staff associations, and BPA and GPA representatives who appreciate the openness of their relationship with the top team.

- Improvements to the career development process are evidenced by the use of a senior appointments board to ensure resilience at senior management level and links to succession planning. The strategy group regularly discusses senior management resilience and development.
- Chief officers have published their direct line telephone numbers as part of the professional standards reporting policy. The Chief Constable makes available feedback from her open forums and visits after performance group. In particular, the 'Starburst' visits are seen as a good opportunity to enable two-way communication with staff and influence morale at a local level. The Chief Constable undertakes planned and unplanned visits to all police areas to meet with police officers and police staff during their normal duties. In addition, she has held a number of 'roadshows' to which middle managers and first-line supervisors are invited to discuss their issues on any appropriate subject.
- The NIM has been integrated with force business planning. A delivery plan was established within the programme management structure and is overseen on a monthly basis by all chief officers. All five BCU commanders and the head of crime support are now part of this monthly strategy meeting which has resulted in a greater sense of corporacy.
- The Chief Constable chairs a strategic diversity board and a quarterly race equality council meeting and is a proactive champion for diversity issues. A new structure has been implemented with a central diversity unit and the Chief Constable has ensured that each BCU has introduced local diversity boards. In response to an inspection of the LCJB, the force's diversity structures are to be integrated with the LCJB race and diversity structures.

### **Work in Progress**

- There are some inexperienced supervisors, managers and staff filling acting positions. They need clear direction as to what is expected of a manager and support and training to enable them to develop their leadership and managerial skills. A programme to address the development needs of middle managers is well advanced, and there is a coaching and mentoring framework for all inspectors and chief inspectors. In a police force with a reputation for encouraging innovation, further attention should be given to the needs of front-line supervisors in areas such as people-skills development and the handling of grievances to enable decisions to be taken at the most appropriate level.

### **Areas for Improvement**

- Effective programme and project management governance arrangements are in place. The implementation of the various change initiatives at the BCU level, however, requires further co-ordination.
- Despite the progress made in consultation and communication, the picture is not wholly positive. The force would benefit from reviewing the opportunities for consultation with BCU, partnership and staff associations at a stage early enough to

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influence decision making. Good communication with staff associations at force level is always replicated at lower levels. The effect of this is particularly noticeable during periods of change and uncertainty, when reasons, consequences and processes need to be fully explained to those at risk.

- The reversal of detection under-performance by means of a Gold group is to be applauded; however, it required considerable focus and energy which could have been avoided by earlier recognition. The force should review its ability to anticipate potentially difficult issues and deploy a proportionate response at an earlier stage.

**7B Performance Management and Continuous Improvement**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Direction of Travel</b>
<b>Good</b>	<b>Improved</b>

**National Grade Distribution**

Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
0	12	26	5

**Contextual Factors**

A comprehensive performance management framework has been developed for application at strategic, BCU/OCU and support department levels. The model reflects all the key principles from the Home Office joint publication, *A Practical Guide to Performance Management*. The performance model incorporates the ethos of continued improvement and has resulted in collaborative ventures with other police forces and outside agencies. The strategic plan, annual plan and delivery plan have a strong and discernible emphasis on performance and acknowledge the importance of citizen focus. The strategic assessment takes account of developments within the policing performance assessment framework (PPAF) and the findings of the HMIC baseline assessment.

There are a number of accountability mechanisms at all levels across the organisation, including performance groups at force and BCU/OCU level, crime meetings and a rigorous internal inspection regime. The relevant chief officer lead conducts on-site inspections and analysis over two full days with clear Police Authority and partnership involvement.

The Police Authority plays a proactive role in monitoring performance and challenging current approaches throughout the organisation. The Authority is involved in all performance groups, the internal inspection process, BCU committees and local area policing boards. The chairman of the Police Authority jointly chairs a six-monthly review of nationally set (PSA1) crime reduction targets with 16 CDRPs, the GOSE and the force – the first of its kind nationally.

The performance management arrangements integrate both the HMIC inspection methodologies and PPAF. It is recognised that there is a need to equip managers at all levels to better understand and use performance data, including more effective and targeted use of survey results.

Having developed a strong performance management and internal audit system that has substantially improved force performance, it is now time to consider how this can be developed further, in particular balancing crime reduction and crime detection with the implementation of neighbourhood policing and how the effectiveness of neighbourhood policing can be assessed.

## Strengths

- There is clarity about the roles and responsibilities of the Police Authority, Chief Constable and managers with regard to performance. A comprehensive performance management framework is in place for application at strategic force, BCU/OCU and support department level that is fit for purpose. It draws upon previous well-established force systems, collaboration with other forces and the Home Office joint publication *A Practical Guide to Performance Management* (but see Areas for Improvement).
- An expectation that senior managers will be regularly and robustly held to account for performance is firmly established. The revised performance review processes, which are conducted in a learning and supportive environment, have become embedded throughout the organisation (see also Areas for Improvement).
- There is a comprehensive and integrated annual programme of performance reviews. It incorporates BCUs and OCUs, support departments and 16 CDRPs. This programme ensures that audit and inspection are timed in such a way that issues identified in the resulting action plans can be followed up via the performance group (see also Areas for Improvement).
- A six-monthly joint review is conducted of progress towards nationally-set crime reduction targets (PSA1), involving the Police Authority and the regional government office. It is attended by all CDRP chairs, community safety officers and LPA commanders. The objectives are to review progress against CDRP crime targets set as part of the Safer and Stronger Communities Fund agreement, to share good practice and debate areas of concern. Furthermore, barriers to delivering crime reduction are identified together with appropriate solutions, including how the various agencies can support CDRPs in their delivery. This review is the first of its kind nationally.
- Both strategic planning and regular performance review have become better integrated with NIM processes, with force and local control strategies reflecting national and local priorities. Performance reviews and NIM are mutually reinforcing, with neither overly dominating the other. Force and local performance groups are informed by NIM products, and robust questioning around intelligence, prevention and enforcement further consolidates these links. The strategic plan, annual plan and delivery plan have a strong emphasis on performance and citizen focus. The strategic assessment takes account of developments within PPAF and the findings of the HMIC baseline assessment. This document is a key driver in the force's business planning.
- There is a comprehensive internal audit and inspection programme with clear evidence that findings are acted upon. BCUs and OCUs are regularly audited against HMIC Going Local methodology, including elements of HMIC's forthcoming revised BCU self-inspection regime. The appropriate chief officer leads conduct on-site inspections over two full days with clear Police Authority and partnership involvement. Action plan management takes place through performance groups, CCMT strategy days and BCU committees. Peer review during each on-site inspection adds considerable value to the process in terms of support, transparency and organisational learning.



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- Timely, accurate and comparative performance data and management information are made available on a daily, weekly and monthly basis. The data is comprehensive, user-friendly and visually impactful. Publication and reporting take place both manually and electronically to an agreed corporate format. Publications are journalistic in style, with analysis-based contextual narrative.
- The Police Authority plays a proactive role in monitoring performance and challenging current approaches throughout the organisation. Its role is clearly set out in the performance management model of March 2005. The Police Authority is involved in all performance groups, the internal inspection process and in BCU committees and local area policing boards. The chairman of the Police Authority jointly chairs the aforementioned six-monthly review of PSA1 crime reduction targets with 16 CDRPs, the GOSE and the force.
- Effective monitoring and review processes enable emerging poor performance to be identified, with robust systems in place to link problems with the means of taking positive action. For example, the crime meeting, performance group and other local accountability mechanisms have driven a large increase in the sanction detection rate (see also Section 3C), an increase in the number of offences brought to justice (see Section 3E), positive intervention in domestic violence incidents (see Section 4B) and an impressive set of performance outcomes against call-management targets (see Section 5A).
- A range of mechanisms to reward good performance are embedded throughout the service, including High Sheriff Shrievalty Merit Awards, Chief Constable's commendations, and force and local performance group presentations and commendations. High performance and good practice are communicated across the force through a variety of methods and publications. Performance-related pay is managed effectively through the bonus payment scheme and the annual staff appraisal process.
- The PDR system is used as a driver for performance improvement and there have been clear directions as to its use. It is evident from group interviews that all officers have at least one organisational objective and most have objectives linked to sanction crime detection; however, the process is viewed as bureaucratic by most constables and sergeants (see also Section 6A).

### **Work in Progress**

- The recent publication of survey data together with grade boundaries has allowed better understanding of the significance of the results and performance relative to peers. There is recognition that better use should be made of survey results, associated analysis and supplementary feedback in order to inform force and local planning and improve service delivery in key areas of public satisfaction within the broader QoSC. This has featured at the senior leaders' forum with contributions from all senior management teams in the force. Quality of service/citizen focus is the number one priority in the delivery plan (see also Section 1C).

### **Areas for Improvement**

- There is scope to develop the FPG process. It and the force crime meeting have been very successful in driving up sanction detections (see 3C Volume Crime Investigation). It is now time to include assessment of the implementation of neighbourhood policing, monitoring of local area agreements and the victims' code, coupled with a more detailed assessment of the broader citizen focus agenda. This

inclusion will require adjustment and balancing of the current FPG to ensure it is not an all-consuming process and also to avoid duplication with the monthly crime meetings. While some analysis of BCU control strategy and tactical assessment is undertaken, further assessment of BCUs at the FPG would benefit from increased comparison of performance and actions to see how they match with the BCU control strategy and tactical assessment. This will aid a more incisive approach and ensure resources are being targeted in the right areas (see Strengths).

- The current internal audit and inspection regime is very thorough and resource-intensive for those involved. It is estimated to take some five months from start to completion and to cost around £120,000 in staff time. Some managers believe that the inspection process lacks relentless follow-up to ensure compliance with recommendations, an issue that should be addressed to ensure value is secured.
- A further challenge is how good practice can be identified from high performers and translated into action elsewhere in the force at OCU, BCU or LPA levels.
- As the performance management landscape changes and PPAF further develops, managers at all levels need to be equipped with a broader capability to better understand performance information and use it to improve service delivery.

## Appendix 1: Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations

### A

ABC	Acceptable Behaviour Contract
ACC	assistant chief constable
ACPO	Association of Chief Police Officers
AIM	active investigation management
AMEC	Alcohol Misuse Enforcement Campaign
ANPR	automatic number plate recognition
ARV	armed response vehicle
ASB	anti-social behaviour
ASBO	Anti-Social Behaviour Order

### B

BAWP	British Association of Women Police
BCS	British Crime Survey
BCU	basic command unit
BME	black and minority ethnic
BPA	Black Police Association
BVR	best value review

### C

CBRN	chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear
CCMT	Chief Constable's management team
CDRP	crime and disorder reduction partnership
CIA	community impact assessment
CLI	caller line identity
CMS	common minimum standards
CPS	Crown Prosecution Service
CPSCU	child protection and sexual crimes unit
CRBN	chemical, radiological, biological and nuclear
CRED	control room and enquiry department
CRISP	Cross-Regional Information Sharing Project
CSAS	community safety accreditation scheme
CSP	community security policy

**D**

DAG	diversity action group
DB	diversity board
DCC	deputy chief constable
DoR	director of resources
DV	domestic violence

**E**

EISEC	enhanced information services emergency calls
ETL	extracting, transformation and loading

**F**

FIU	forensic investigation unit
FPG	force performance group
FRAM	firearms risk assessment
FTE	full-time equivalent

**G**

GOSE	Government Office for the South East
GPA	Gay Police Association

**H**

H&S	health and safety
HA	Highways Agency
HMIC	Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary
HMRC	Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs
HOCR	Home Office Counting Rules
HR	human resource
HRD	human resource directorate

**I**

IAG	independent advisory group
ICT	information and communications technology
liP	Investors in People
IMM	investigation management model
IMPACT	share information / act on intelligence

IND	Immigration and Nationality Directorate
INI	IMPACT nominal index
IPLDP	Initial Police Learning and Development Programme
IS/IT	information systems/information technology
IST	intelligence support team
IT	information technology
ITIL	information technology infrastructure library
<b>K</b>	
KIN	key individual network
<b>L</b>	
L&D	learning and development
LAA	local area agreement
LAPB	local area policing board
LCJB	local criminal justice board
LPA	local police area
LRF	local resilience forum
<b>M</b>	
MAPPA	multi-agency public protection arrangements
MCU	major crime unit
MOPI	management of police information
MSF	most similar force(s)
<b>N</b>	
NAFIS	National Automated Fingerprint Identification System
NAG	neighbourhood action group
NCHS	National Call-Handling Standards
NCPE	National Centre for Policing Excellence
NCRS	National Crime Recording Standard
NIM	National Intelligence Model
NOS	national occupational standards
NHP	neighbourhood policing
NHPIA	National Policing Improvement Agency
NSIR	National Standards for Incident Reporting

NVQ National Vocational Qualification

**O**

OBTJ offence brought to justice

OCU operational command unit

Osman Osman v. UK (1999) 1 FLR 193, where the court established that in certain circumstances the state has a positive obligation to take preventive measures to protect an individual who is at risk from the criminal activities of others

**P**

PCSO police community support officer

PDG performance delivery group

PDR performance development review

PEC police enquiry centre

PED police elimination database

PI performance indicator

PNC Police National Computer

PND penalty notice for disorder

POCA Proceeds of Crime Act

PPAF policing performance assessment framework

PPO prolific and persistent offender

PPU public protection unit

PRINCE2 Projects in Controlled Environments 2

PSD professional standards department

PURE Police Use of Resources Evaluation

**Q**

QA quality assurance

QoSC quality of service commitment

**R**

REC race equality council

RES race equality scheme

RNID Royal National Institute for the Deaf

RSO registered sex offender

**S**

SARA	scanning, analysis, response, assessment
SIO	senior investigating officer
SLF	senior leaders forum
SMART	specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, timely
SNEN	single non-emergency number
SOCA	Serious Organised Crime Agency
SOCO	scenes of crime officer
SRPD	strategic roads policing department
SSP	safer schools partnerships
SWIM	scientific work improvement model

**T**

T&D	training and development
TCG	tasking and co-ordination group
TIC	(offences) taken into consideration
TPB	training prioritisation board
TTCCG	tactical tasking and co-ordination group

**V**

VOSA	Vehicle and Operator Services Agency
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**W**

WBA	work-based assessment
WCU	witness care unit

**Y**

YOT	youth offending team
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