Best Value Review of Police Training

Force: Cambridgeshire Constabulary

Date of Inspection: 6-7 July 2004

A Report by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary

Context and Force performance

Context

Population served by the Force	774,000	
Number of police officers	1443	
Number of police staff	918	
Number of special constables	185	
Budget for training for the financial year:	Financial Value	Percentage of Overall Force budget
2003/04	not asked	0.8%
2004/05	£ 2.2 million	1.9%

Performance

A baseline assessment of the Force was undertaken between September and December 2003.
The findings of HMIC in relation to the HR area can be found at:

www.homeoffice.gov.uk/hmic/cambbaseline0604.pdf

Further details of the Force performance can be found at: www.cambs.police.uk

For details of the rationale and methodology for the Best Value Reviews and inspection of police
training visit http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/hmic/training.htm

Findings

Area Examined	Findings
TRAINING STRATEGY	Historically the training function has not been strategic and there has been year on year under investment. However, there is a strategy in place that conforms to HOC 53/2003. The links with the HR plan, the Force and the operational objectives are clearly defined.
QUALITY OF COSTED TRAINING PLAN	The plan supports the NCM costing methodology and requirements and also reflects the cost of external training. All new training bids must now be costed. HM Inspector was concerned that the training budget has been fixed for the past three years and has not been set as a result of the training planning process. Currently there are no staff to continue the work on the NCM or the CTP.
MONITORING COSTED TRAINING PLAN THROUGHOUT THE YEAR	The plan is reviewed monthly by Training Planning Co-ordinating Group (TPCG), which is the tactical implementation group, quarterly by Police Authority Resource Panel and the Force Resources Board, and six-monthly by Force Executive Board (FEB). Variations are monitored by TPCG. HM Inspector was encouraged to hear that the Force has introduced forward looking monitoring to identify and ensure current priorities are reflected and that training fits in with current and emerging operational events. HM Inspector was encouraged to see effective and consistent challenge at ACC level of the CTP to ensure current relevance. The NCM costs are not contemporaneously monitored at present (because of a lack of management systems), but a spreadsheet is used to monitor the predicted under spend of the training budget. The Training Planning and Costing administrator currently does this, but this post is under review because of budget cuts.

Area Examined	Findings
TRAINING NOT INCLUDED IN THE COSTED TRAINING PLAN	Most areas of training are included in the CTP but divisional training across the Force has not been included. HM Inspector acknowledges that next year's plan will aim to capture all training in Force.
CLIENT/CONTRACTOR ARRANGEMENTS	HM Inspector was encouraged to see that there is a developing client/contractor structure in place within the Force. Although still embryonic in nature, the Head of Training, who is a member of the FEB, has clear plans to develop the structure further.
	The Prioritisation Board manages decisions and constant challenge is carried out at ACPO level, adding independence to the decision making and prioritisation process.
	There is an audit trail of training that is refused and the consequent risk assessment. Notes from the challenge process are placed on a spreadsheet for future reference.
MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS FOR TRAINING	HM Inspector was encouraged to see improving management stability that is adding strength to the prospects for improvement. The Head of Training has overall responsibility for training and sits on the FEB. The deputy and unit managers report to the Head of Training.
	The Head of Training has responsibility for most of the training conducted within the Force. However, divisional training remains outside her professional management.
	HM Inspector was pleased to see that a formalised and documented meeting structure is about to be introduced across the training function to improve, consolidate and redefine existing structures.
	HM Inspector was encouraged to see the tutor units operating across the BCUs, but there were concerns that tutor unit staff are not being provided with the necessary skills to carry out their role. Furthermore, it is felt that there is now an opportunity for tutor units to encompass all staff development.

Area Examined	Findings
IMPLEMENTATION OF: • **Managing Learning** • **Training Matters** • **Diversity Matters** • **Foundations for Change**	HM Inspector found formalised, clear and evidenced progress of the recommendations from *Managing Learning* and *Diversity Matters* within the Training Department. However, there is no evidence of progress of recommendations from *Training Matters* being similarly developed. There is little evidence of the above action plans being communicated to all staff. The Force has made moves to develop some FfC elements and is leading in marketing and communication. However, lower management was not confident about articulating or identifying the strategic direction in which the Training Department is heading. They had no apparent knowledge of other strategic departmental issues. This raised the question of the effectiveness of communication among middle and senior management.
CURRENT IMPROVEMENT PLAN	The Performance Improvement Programme clearly and comprehensively pulls the priority areas for improvement together that reflect Force, regional and national developments.
MONITORING THE IMPROVEMENT PLAN	Revised monitoring arrangements have now been developed which involve the chief officer level as well as the PA. The Continuous Improvement Board (CIB) will act as Programme Board and the HR Resources Board will provide a quality assurance check to ensure the Programme Board has taken account of all key issues and to assist in any re-prioritisation of work. The Head of Training reports to these groups on a monthly basis.

Area Examined	Findings
QUALITY ASSURANCE PROCESSES	QA processes are developing rapidly, but until recently there has been a lack of application. The Force is aiming to introduce a rigorous training QA system. There is a QA and Training Support Team who have the knowledge and skills to achieve the required results. HM Inspector was pleased to see all future QA activity is planned to be communicated via a dedicated intranet site, currently under development. Training plans are not currently validated and there is no ongoing programme of validation of existing training. Such work is planned, but these plans are at present aspirational. Staff development processes are inconsistently applied. There are no performance indicators to assist managers effectively to monitor the process. There are not enough TDOs within the training department adequately fulfil to this function.
EVALUATION OF TRAINING	The Force evaluator has only been in post since October 2003. As evaluation remains part of the training function, the ability for an independent approach is in doubt. Courses are planned to be evaluated to Level 1 and 2. There is a developing Level 1 database but little evidence of regular, consistent and formal Level 2 evaluations. Level 3 evaluation at the most basic level is carried out via the PDR process. This area is still a source of difficulty for the Force. There is currently no obvious Level 4 evaluation activity. A structure is being developed.
COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN TRAINING	The area of community consultation and involvement is one which the Force acknowledges requires further development. A Force IAG is in the process of being set up. There is strong evidence of broad community involvement across training delivery. For example, in the design and delivery of diversity training, a community focus group was set up to assist in the design of half-day stop and search workshops.

Area Examined	Findings
COLLABORATION – OTHER EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS	There is sound evidence that collaborative arrangements are in place across public and private sector organisations. For example, Peterborough City Council assist with the design of Anti-Social Behaviour Order (ASBO) training and there is joint training for scenes of crime with the fire service.
COLLABORATION – OTHER POLICE ORGANISATIONS	There is a good exchange of information at regional level around TNA, design and evaluation and the FfC are being managed across the region. There are many examples of shared training with other Forces and police organisations. There is some evidence of intra Force collaboration; for example, the National Intelligence Model implementation project has linked to the lead trainer for the subject within the Force training centre.
ADOPTION OF NATIONAL GUIDANCE	Centrex *Models for Learning and Development* have not yet been implemented as part of the developing QA process, but are planned to be incorporated into the new system and communicated to trainers. HM Inspector acknowledges that this is work in progress. There is evidence of the rest of the training cycle being driven by the *Models for Learning and Development* guidance across the training function.
MAIN AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE FORCE	Strategic direction and senior management buy-in to the corporate role of training and development. To establish and 'bed in' the new management team for the Training Department. To review the use of accommodation at RAF Alconbury, because of its poor quality and amenities. Implement the planned QA developments but cultural issues may impact on implementing the QA procedures Force-wide. This will be addressed via the ACC and FEB support for the Performance Improvement Programme. To ensure that all training is captured in the CTP. To improve two –way communication within the training department, particularly across the training teams. The current IT systems do not fully support the function and a business case will need to be produced to request new systems.

Area Examined	Findings
APPLICATION OF THE 4Cs SINCE THE REVIEW	The 4Cs were robustly applied in the original BVR and there is some evidence that the Best Value regime is currently practised, especially in the challenge of new and existing training. There is a need to improve the approach to 'consultation' and 'comparison' within the training management function.
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INTEGRATED COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK	There is good and consistent evidence of effective and efficient PDR completion with targets being met. The Force is planning fully to migrate to the ICF system by December 2004. Role profiles and objectives have now been set and formalised throughout the Force and skill profiling is planned to inform priorities.
MONITORING PROCESS AND COMPLETION OF PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT REVIEWS FOR POLICE OFFICERS AND POLICE STAFF	Historically, PDR/appraisal compliance rates have been monitored manually and the results reported to Resources Board on a quarterly basis. The new PDR system will be supported by a bespoke IT database solution which will audit compliance at all stages of the PDR process to facilitate reporting as required by internal/external stakeholders.
BUSINESS PLANNING FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF TRAINING **Noteworthy Practice**	This business planning cycle is not synchronised and does not assist in the effective training planning process. In particular, because of the cycle timing the final CTP is published too late to inform the budget setting process and the Force operates on a fixed budget for training. Consideration is now being given to split the budget into maintenance and growth sections, allowing more scope for the transfer of unused potential resources.
PRIORITISATION MODEL FOR TRAINING	There is a strategic prioritisation model for training that engages both the client and contractor sides with a weighting attached to the key Force objectives. This enables decisions to be made in support of Force priorities.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1

HM Inspector recommends that the Force develops a mechanism to ensure that accountability for standards, costs and planning for all training rests with a single source, irrespective of where in the Force or by whom it is provided

Recommendation 2

HM Inspector recommends that the Force continues to develop a full costed training plan that is aligned to the guidance given in relevant Home Office Circulars

Recommendation 3

HM Inspector recommends that the Force costed training plan is developed to ensure it captures all training in the force irrespective of where or by whom it is provided

Recommendation 4

HM Inspector recommends that the Police Authority reviews the budget setting process for the training function to ensure that there is integration with the performance requirements of the Force

Recommendation 5

HM Inspector recommends that the Force develops a comprehensive Quality Assurance process for all training, irrespective of where or by whom it is provided. The Quality Assurance process should be regularly monitored

Recommendation 6

HM Inspector recommends that the Force develops a robust evaluation function for all training, with a tasking and reporting process independent of the Training Department. This should include a clear mechanism for commissioning and actioning evaluation projects and their recommendations

Recommendation 7

HM Inspector recommends that the Force considers the value of expanding the tutor units to encompass all staff development at local level. Furthermore, tutor unit staff must be provided with the necessary skills to carry out their role

Recommendation 8

HM Inspector recommends that the Force reviews the impact of police staff induction to ensure that all new full and part-time staff are included

Recommendation 9

HM Inspector recommends that the Force develops its IT infrastructure to enable full internet access for training and staff development as a matter of priority

Judgements

Judgement 1:

There is a great deal of change underway within the training function and HM Inspector acknowledges that, at the time of the inspection, many of these changes had yet to be embedded. However, it is also evident that there are significant difficulties for the Force in terms of the strategic level prioritisation of training, the costed training plan, Quality Assurance and evaluation as well as communication problems. It is very clear that there is a commitment at all levels within the Force to drive performance through training. There is also good training provision from the training staff at all levels, as evidenced by the Adult Learning Inspectorate report, which deserves to be recognised and acknowledged.

HM Inspector concludes therefore that the quality of the service is **'fair'**

Judgement 2:

HM Inspector considers that the Best Value Review process was undertaken in line with national guidance and there is clear evidence that the resulting Performance Improvement Programme has been regularly monitored, implemented and seeks to impact on performance in the workplace. The Police Authority has been, and continues to be, actively engaged in the process and is committed to close monitoring and scrutiny of the training function. There are plans for developing Quality Assurance and evaluation processes, supported by enthusiasm and commitment from staff. Personal responsibility is clear at ACPO level and a new Training Prioritisation Board, also attended by the Police Authority, will better link training to performance. The routine challenge to training that is now taking place is making a difference and likely to raise the status of training across the Force.

HM Inspector concludes therefore that the prospects for improvement are **'excellent'**

For further information on the judgement criteria refer to Appendix H/Annexe A of the below document.

BEST VALUE AND PLANNING GUIDANCE FOR POLICE AUTHORITIES AND FORCES.

Adult Learning Inspectorate

Summary of Findings

The Adult Learning Inspectorate undertook an assessment of several training sessions during the course of the HMIC (P&T) inspection. A summary of their findings is shown below:

Achievement and Standards

- Data about pass rates or learners' success rates on all courses is not kept centrally within the Force. For most courses, there are no clear criteria for learner success, and pass rates are not routinely monitored or reviewed. Driver training courses are structured to meet national occupational standards, and learners' progress against these standards is carefully monitored. In driver training sessions there is good informal and formal feedback on learners' attainment and achievement, and good pass rates for most courses.

- Sexual offences training includes useful and well-structured reviews of learners' understanding and attainments and learners are able to share experiences and good practice.

- Attendance is poor on some courses. On driver training and staff induction courses there is satisfactory attendance. On other courses, attendance ranges from 40 per cent to 60 per cent. Managers do not routinely monitor attendance and trainers do not always know how many learners, and in some cases, which learners, will attend sessions. There is no system for dealing with poor attendance on courses, and trainers receive no feedback from managers about reasons for learners' failure to attend training.

Quality of Education and Training

- All of the training observed during the inspection was satisfactory or better. All practical training is good or better, with two-thirds of sessions being very good.

- The ratio of trainers to learners is good. Trainers develop very good working relationships with learners and provide very detailed and constructive individual feedback throughout training.

- Trainers delivered accurate and useful feedback on each stage of practical training, and learners were given clear guidance about the standards and expectations for each session and how each stage of training would be assessed. There is very good briefing for learners about overall course requirements.

- Training is responsive to Force needs and priorities, and at the time of inspection, there was effective and efficient training underway for large numbers of officers in response to recent ACPO guidelines for the management of police pursuits.

- There is good diversity training for police staff and officers. The Force has developed a wide-ranging programme of diversity training that will take in all staff and officers by the end of 2004. Diversity training currently takes the form of large-scale drama and role-play workshops involving a specialist external training company. Observed sessions were effective in raising learners' awareness of diversity, there was good growth in learners' confidence during the session, and very good strategies were employed to involve all learners in discussions and role-play.

- At the start of some courses, there is no outline or description of learning outcomes. Learners in these sessions do not always know what they will be doing, nor do they have a satisfactory understanding of the skills they are expected to develop or demonstrate.

- In personal safety training there are effective demonstrations of techniques by instructors before learners attempt each movement or exercise, and the individual techniques are effectively linked to operational activities. There are very detailed and well structured lesson plans which take good account of health and safety issues. Trainers often evaluate the success of courses during and after delivery.

- Trainers provide good quality learning materials for many courses. There are well-structured course guides and in some observed sessions trainers distributed and made use of well-produced handouts. Trainers delivering staff induction sessions have prepared a useful induction pack for learners, which is used productively to support learning and develop learners' confidence during the three-day programme.

- When learners have commented on poor furniture or learning aids on course evaluation forms, there has been rapid action by the Force and Trust to rectify shortcomings. Social facilities at Alconbury do not provide sufficient space for learners to eat and relax, and because entrances to social areas are close to classrooms, there is sometimes disruption to sessions before and after meal breaks. Staff working at Alconbury have no link to the Force communications network, and have to return to Force headquarters at the end of each day to check email and access the intranet.

- Most trainers have operational experience in their areas, but not all hold formal qualifications in assessment or training. In some areas, trainers have few qualifications.

- There is poor provision of e-learning opportunities throughout the Force. The Force has staff with qualifications in the design and delivery of e-learning packages, and has two multi-media authoring packages, but support has not been given for in-house development of courses or for the loading of the authoring packages onto the intranet. There is no connection to the internet from Force machines, so staff and trainers cannot access Learn Direct or other on-line learning materials.

- There is insufficient use of initial assessment. On most courses, managers or supervisors select learners for attendance and there are no formal checks of prior knowledge or understanding. Learners are often unclear why they have been sent for training. Informal assessment takes place on most courses. This varies in form, but is adequate to give learners confidence and allow trainers and learners to measure progress.

- There is good local and regional liaison to enhance the quality of training and give opportunities for staff development. Many trainers have developed productive links with colleagues from neighbouring and other regional Forces. Some trainers and training managers provide training for other Forces on a cost-recovery basis, for instance in ICT training.

- Tutors provided good support for learners during observed training sessions, and in most cases learners were given encouragement to extend their abilities and skills.

- There is a satisfactory induction programme for staff, but staff who become full-time after some years of part-time service are often excluded from induction activities. There are inadequate mechanisms to support tutor constables, who receive insufficient guidance on how to prepare for or carry out their role. Managers do not apply any clear criteria for selection of tutor constables, and there is no formal assessment of competency during training for tutor constables.