

Best Value Review of Police Training

Force: North Yorkshire Police

Date of Inspection: 15–16 December 2004



A Report by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary

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Context and Force performance

Context

Population served by the Force	759,183	
Number of police officers	1,550	
Number of police staff	995	
Number of special constables	143	
Budget for training for the financial year:	Financial Value	Percentage of Overall Force budget
2003/04	Not asked	2.3%
2004/05	£3.3m	2.7%

Performance

A baseline assessment of the force was undertaken between March and October 2004.

The findings of HMIC relating specifically to the HR area, can be found at:

www.homeoffice.gov.uk/hmic/nyorkshirebasleine1004.pdf

Further details of the force performance can be found at www.northyorkshire.police.uk

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

Findings

Area Examined	Findings
TRAINING STRATEGY	<p>HM Inspector found that the Force have a training strategy, which is well aligned to national and local policing plans, force priorities, and their people strategy. However, it does not conform to Home Office circular 53/03 in many respects.</p>
QUALITY OF COSTED TRAINING PLAN	<p>The Force has produced a good quality CTP utilising the NCM, in line with relevant Home Office Circulars, using 'Context' software.</p> <p>The Force recognises the difficulties still faced by an inability to fully utilise this tool, but, to their credit, have demonstrated its functionality in respect of helping to prepare cost information for the IPLDP, and have undertaken benchmarking work with another 'family group' force. HM Inspector found that the work carried out by the Force in relation to further developing the links between the CTP, and other key drivers for change such as the Police Performance Assessment Framework to be noteworthy practice.</p> <p>HM Inspector was pleased to note a good liaison between the Finance Department and Staff Development Services Department (SDSD) in relation to this work, and would like to see this arrangement formalised through a service level agreement (SLA).</p>
MONITORING COSTED TRAINING PLAN THROUGHOUT THE YEAR	<p>The CTP is monitored and update reports are received internally by the Training Prioritisation Group (TPG) at each meeting and variations to the plan are monitored and agreed by the TPG.</p> <p>HM Inspector was pleased to note that the Director of HR meets monthly with members of the PA HR Thematic Working Group, and through this arrangement is able to update the PA on the progress of many aspects of training and development, including progress against the CTP. HM Inspector encourages the Force to consider adopting a more formal approach to these meetings, which would reinforce the monitoring role of this work.</p>

Area Examined	Findings
<p>TRAINING NOT INCLUDED IN THE COSTED TRAINING PLAN</p>	<p>There is comprehensive coverage of the Force’s training regime contained within the plan, and the Force clearly articulates the principle that where training is found to be taking place outside the plan then it will be included as soon as possible. Where any such training is found to be taking place outside the plan HM Inspector was pleased to see that this is robustly challenged at TPG level, for example, Health and Safety training, open area search training.</p> <p>The Force also needs to include costing detail for tactical dog training within the plan.</p>
<p>CLIENT/CONTRACTOR ARRANGEMENTS</p>	<p>HM Inspector found a clear understanding strategically of the client/contractor arrangement within NYP. The contractor is lead by the Head of SDSD, who reports to the TPG.</p> <p>This group is attended by representatives of all areas and staff associations, and is chaired by the Director of HR. This allows access to ACPO by both client and contractor on a formalised and regular basis.</p> <p>The Force supports a strong training structure in BCU’s and departments. HM Inspector was surprised to find no formal or corporate client/contractor relationship at this local level. The Force currently relies upon the interaction between Area HR managers, and the Area Client Training Unit Manager to fulfil this function. While there are regular informal local meetings between training managers and HR managers, the Force should consider some arrangement, which better reflects the representation, needed by both sides locally, to engage in a resilient and practical client/contractor relationship.</p>
<p>MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS FOR TRAINING</p>	<p>Superintendent SDSD has overall professional management, responsibility and ownership of all training within the Force. The Superintendent reports to the Director of HR.</p> <p>HM Inspector was pleased to see a judicious mix of professionally qualified police staff in management positions within the SDSD, blended with the operational experience of police officers, and feels that this is of noteworthy practice.</p> <p>HM Inspector was also pleased to find a range of internal performance measures underpinning the training and development area of the HR strategy, which are regularly reported upon to the TPG.</p>

Area Examined	Findings
<p>IMPLEMENTATION OF:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing Learning • Training Matters • Diversity Matters • Foundations for Change 	<p>HM Inspector was encouraged to find action plans defining the Force response to all appropriate HMIC Training thematic reports contained within an all encompassing composite action plan (CAP). This CAP also has all other relevant action plans (for example, IIP and Centrex QA) within it. There is also an obvious audit trail to evidence achievement to date.</p> <p>However, HM Inspector could find little evidence of formal monitoring and scrutiny of this CAP outside of SDSD. It is therefore encouraging to note recent developments, whereby this CAP, and monitoring log, will be owned by Force Cabinet and be reviewed by them on a six monthly basis, and will also be monitored through the chair of TPG, and by the PA HR Thematic Group.</p> <p>There is clear and evidenced activity, at both force and regional level, around the FfC, with an appropriate plan to support this. However, monitoring and scrutiny only takes place through regular regional meetings, and locally by the Head of SDSD. This plan could also be effectively monitored as suggested previously.</p>
<p>CURRENT IMPROVEMENT PLAN</p>	<p>HM Inspector was encouraged to find that the Force has achieved most of their original IP (93 per cent), which reflected a thorough and wide ranging Best Value Review. SDSD has now instigated the CAP to focus further development of the IP principles, and other 'work in progress', and will drive recommendations from this inspection.</p> <p>HM Inspector congratulates the Force on reacting quickly and thoughtfully to <i>Managing Learning</i>, by undertaking their own review in response to this document. This work can clearly be seen to underpin much of the Best Value inspection work subsequently undertaken in 2002.</p>
<p>MONITORING THE IMPROVEMENT PLAN</p>	<p>The IP has been monitored regularly within the Force by SDSD through monthly Senior Management Team meetings, and is also tracked by the CDD who monitor all recommendations and actions on an internal database. Regular meetings between CDD staff and the relevant ACPO lead, additionally monitor this work.</p> <p>Police Authority monitoring and scrutiny is provided by quarterly progress reports from CDD to the Police Authority Performance Monitoring Board. HM Inspector found well-engaged PA training liaison officers, who regularly attend tramline meetings, and who have regular interaction with the SDSD.</p>

Area Examined	Findings
<p>QUALITY ASSURANCE PROCESSES</p>	<p>HM Inspector found a developing QA policy and framework, with some good work being undertaken and effective plans in place. However, HM Inspector was concerned to observe an apparent lack of rigor, depth or consistency in the application of some QA processes within the Force, for example, version control of lesson plans and trainer observation.</p> <p>There is a commitment to the development of all required QA and staff development activities, including lesson observation, version control of lessons, and the mapping of lesson plans to NOS, and observations are linked to PDR processes. However, HM Inspector found that these processes are currently being inconsistently applied across the whole training function.</p>
<p>EVALUATION OF TRAINING</p>	<p>The Force have in post a police staff manager responsible for evaluation across the training function of the Force. This post holder is currently also responsible for co-ordinating all QA activity within the training arena, as well as being responsible for several other management functions including performance reporting.</p> <p>The evaluation policy reflects the aspiration for TPG to prioritise the evaluative work to be undertaken, at Level 3 of the Kirkpatrick scale, and for that body to receive and monitor recommendations arising.</p> <p>The training evaluator is located within the Training Department (SDSD), and is line managed by the Head of SDSD. HM Inspector is concerned that the independence of the Force evaluation function could be weakened by the current line management structure, and encourages the Force to consider adopting a mechanism to address this point.</p> <p>With the evaluator currently being 'multi-tasked', HM Inspector is concerned that additional demands placed upon this post holder, by this increased workload of evaluative activity, potentially falling out of the national evaluation strategy, will hinder further development of the evaluation function within the Force. The Force is encouraged to consider allocating additional resources to this function.</p>

Area Examined	Findings
<p>COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN TRAINING</p>	<p>HM Inspector was concerned to find that no formal consultation processes relating specifically to training are currently in place. Local members of the community have been involved in role play scenarios with probationer groups, but this is all that is conducted. The Force accepts that more commitment and application is required here.</p>
<p>COLLABORATION – EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS</p>	<p>HM Inspector found a range of external collaborative events associated with the Force. Such collaboration ranged from first aid provision at local hospitals, through joint training sessions with criminal justice sector partners, and on to local colleges providing IT inputs to staff</p> <p>HM Inspector found that there is a developing need for some central recording and monitoring of this activity, along with some evaluation of the successes of the collaboration.</p>
<p>COLLABORATION – OTHER POLICE ORGANISATIONS</p>	<p>HM Inspector was encouraged to find a willingness by the Force (both at strategic and local levels) to engage collaboratively with regional colleagues. The Force chairs the North East (no.2) region Heads of Training meeting, which reports to the Regional ACPO/APA Strategic Group. North Yorkshire is also represented on the North East Region Evaluators’ Group (NEREG).</p> <p>However, there are some concerns held by the Force about difficulties encountered around differences of individual Force policies and procedures, and this has been a restricting factor.</p> <p>The wide range of collaborative events associated with the Force include those with Cleveland Police (TPAC training), Northumbria (FLO training), no.2 region (Train the Trainer course), Croatian Police Service (various courses) and Lancashire (firearms training)</p> <p>HM Inspector reiterates the earlier point regarding external collaboration.</p>

Area Examined	Findings
ADOPTION OF NATIONAL GUIDANCE	<p>The Centrex document <i>Models for Learning and Development</i> has been extensively adopted by the Force, and the toolkits contained within it are adapted and contained within the form 190 (lesson planning template). This provides evidence that it is well embedded within key Force structures, TNA, training design and evaluation activity all feature <i>Models for Learning</i> as the source material and point of commencement.</p> <p>However, there was a demonstrable lack of understanding of this at the point of delivery, both at central, area and operational levels, and consideration needs to be given to further communication of these principles, and the links established.</p>
MAIN AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE FORCE	<p>The Force have identified the following key areas for continued improvement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure that all training must be approved and assessed by SDSD and any conflicts are brought before the TPG (for example, problems regarding risk assessment training); • attendance discipline needs improving through improved line management ownership; and • getting information quicker to personnel when they need it (i.e. legislation etc).
APPLICATION OF THE 4Cs SINCE THE REVIEW	<p>There is good evidence supplied of continuing and developing activity around all aspects of the 4 Cs within the Force. Challenge is provided via the form 190, the business case and sponsoring process, and by the Training Prioritisation Group process, the latter of which is identified as being the key strategic prioritisation group. There is extensive consultation and comparison (benchmarking) taking place both locally (by the staff satisfaction survey) and within the region. With regard to Competition, 40 per cent of the SDSD budget is managed through service level agreements that emphasise the Department's readiness to test itself against external competition.</p>

Area Examined	Findings
<p>IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INTEGRATED COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK</p>	<p>The ICF has not yet been fully introduced or established in the Force, although it is accepted that there is a plan to roll out this national scheme in March 2005. A project manager has been appointed and a project initiation document (PID) been accepted. Role profiling is taking place with completion by March 2005, and the national PDR will be adopted at that time. The project director is the Head of SDSD.</p>
<p>MONITORING PROCESS AND COMPLETION OF PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT REVIEWS FOR POLICE OFFICERS AND POLICE STAFF</p>	<p>The current PDR system is mandatory, and area HR managers monitor completion. PDR completion rates are reported to the Director of HR and the Police Authority on a quarterly basis, as part of the reporting mechanism in relation to the Force HR Action Plan 2004/05. This reporting is undertaken by the Quality and Policy Development Manager, SDSD. On an ongoing basis, completion is monitored by managers in terms of 'grandparent' reviews.</p> <p>An external organisation has been commissioned to audit the PDR process – audits were undertaken in May 2003 and March 2004.</p> <p>Compliance rates are high for both police officers and police staff. Almost all officers interviewed had experienced PDR activity during the previous four to six months.</p>
<p>BUSINESS PLANNING FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF TRAINING</p>	<p>The business planning cycle for training complies with HOC 53, has clear timelines, and integrates with the corporate planning cycle. Departments and BCU's submit training plans to SDSD, through the Corporate Development Department before January, where they then undergo a business challenge from the ACPO team. These will then be used to determine the delivery of training over the coming year and this provision is then detailed in the annual CTP.</p>
<p>PRIORITISATION MODEL FOR TRAINING</p>	<p>The TPG is responsible for prioritising training. This is assessed on corporate and operational needs, and based on the identification of a framework of priority areas to be addressed through the CTP.</p> <p>HM Inspector is encouraged by the function of TPG with regard to prioritisation of competing training requirements. The Force should consider developing a prioritisation model, which can be used consistently to apply to new proposals for training.</p>

Recommendations

Recommendation 1

HM Inspector recommends that the Force develop a training strategy that is aligned to the guidance given in relevant Home Office Circulars

Recommendation 2

HM Inspector recommends that the Police Authority establish a formal mechanism to monitor the costed training plan on an ongoing basis. This should include the development of performance measures in relation to the delivery of the plan

Recommendation 3

HM Inspector recommends that the Force gives ownership of the costing element of the National Costing Model to the Finance Department, and ensures that a formal relationship between that department and Staff Development Service Department is established. Thus ensuring that the costed training plan is produced in accordance with current and future national guidance

Recommendation 4

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 5

HM Inspector recommends that the Force develop a formal monitoring process for the composite action plan, with consideration being given to it becoming a standing agenda issue at the TPG (strategic client group), or via Corporate Development

Recommendation 6

HM Inspector recommends that the Force increase the resources available for evaluation activity, and in particular, consider an additional evaluator post to cope with the increasing demand that further evaluation activity at Level 3 will generate

Recommendation 7

HM Inspector recommends that the Force review the current line management arrangements for the evaluation function to ensure its independence from the contractor and its tasking from the client (TPG)

Recommendation 8

HM Inspector recommends that the Force develop a comprehensive and detailed Quality Assurance process for all training, irrespective of where or by whom it is provided. The Quality Assurance process should be regularly monitored, and produce a resultant audit trail of results

Recommendation 9

HM Inspector recommends that the Force develop a robust strategy for effectively engaging communities in all aspects of the training cycle

Recommendation 10

HM Inspector recommends the Force develops or adopts a prioritisation model to assist and enhance decision making within the training prioritisation process

Judgements

Judgement 1:

The Force was innovative and forward thinking when the Head of SDSD conducted a review of the Department two years before the formal Best Value Review of training. This second review concluded in January 2003, and the Force has achieved most of the recommendations within their implementation plan. The SDSD have now developed a composite action plan to move on from the old improvement plan, but this needs to be more formally monitored by a strategic body. The Force has invested resources into further application of the National Costing Model, and the current costed training plan reflects Home Office guidance. Almost all training is captured within this plan. There is a clear client/contractor relationship established, and the TPG provides good client scrutiny of the training function. The Head of SDSD is the professional manager of ALL training within the Force, and 'owns' all training staff. The composite action plan encompasses all HMIC Training thematic documentation and recommendations, as well as the outstanding Best Value recommendation from the initial review, but this composite plan needs enhanced scrutiny from the strategic group.

There is a developing quality assurance function, but this needs more rigor and requires to be more comprehensive. Evaluation is taking place at three levels, but this activity hampered by the evaluator having many other roles to perform. The evaluator also comes under the remit of the Head of SDSD, with the consequent questions about its location. The Force has a highly visible and committed Police Authority liaison member, a similarly visible and committed ownership of the Best Value improvement plan by the Police Authority was not so evident. A committed and well qualified workforce within the training function continue to deliver professional training, and displayed enthusiasm for the challenges ahead.

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

Judgement 2:

HM Inspector considers that both the Best Value review processes were undertaken in line with national guidance, and that Foundations for Change have been a key driver for action. This in turn has led to unprecedented change within the learning and development functions of the Force. The inspection found a great deal of detailed work under way designed to facilitate improvement, and this includes action plans arising from IIP and Centrex QA, as well as previous HMIC Training documentation action plans. Thus there is definite future aspiration and direction for the Force. However, there does need to be a more robust monitoring process and audit trail resulting if the Force are to demonstrate such future improvement. The Force has the full and committed support of the Police Authority to continue its development of innovative and technological responses to the demands of training and development for the work force, and continued improvement is likely. The Force has ensured that all recommendations from this report and other relevant HMIC Training reports are incorporated into one overarching improvement plan, and this is seen to be very positive.

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

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

BEST VALUE AND PLANNING GUIDANCE FOR POLICE AUTHORITIES AND FORCES

Adult Learning Inspectorate

Summary of Findings

Achievement and Standards

- Pass rates for assessed courses are good. For firearms training pass rates are 100 per cent. On the police national computer courses the average pass rate is 95 per cent over the last three years and for public order and dog training they are 99 per cent and 98 per cent respectively. Attainment by learners in sessions is good. Learners demonstrated a good acquisition of knowledge and skills and related these well to real life situations. Trainers worked hard to keep learners challenged, often making greater demands than required by national standards.

Quality of Education and Training

- Training is good. Two thirds of the training was good or better and no unsatisfactory sessions were observed. Whilst on balance practical sessions were better than theory sessions, practical sessions built well on theoretical input. Across all teaching aims and objectives were clearly outlined and there was frequent checking of knowledge with a good use of questions and answers. Trainers made good use of up to date examples to enliven the training and drew well on learners' experience to reinforce the relevance of the training to work practices. Poor accommodation affected the quality of some of the training. A couple of sessions suffered from poor time management and were too slow.
- North Yorkshire Police Force has some poor facilities. There are insufficient training facilities at the headquarters. There is only one training room that is fully dedicated to training. It is adequately equipped but has poor wheel chair access. The sports facilities are poor at headquarters. Probationers and other staff have no access to gym facilities as the equipment is deemed a health and safety risk. The residential learning facilities are poor. There is inadequate access to IT for residents and insufficient recreational facilities. Library resources are satisfactory. However resources for probationary training are sparse. Staff are appropriately qualified. All staff have undergone a six week Centrex training and development programme and some are working towards a certificate in education.

- There are some weak assessment practices. There is no clear policy or consistent practice for initial assessment. Trainers do not have access to learners' previous training or experience prior to a course. Although many trainers use informal methods in sessions to gauge learners' needs, concerns and expectations there is no formal process for initial assessment. Students experience little use of initial assessment even when it is gathered. For example, one IT course used a questionnaire to gather information about learners IT skill levels but failed to use the information by starting everyone at the same level. Learners receive inconsistent advice about on-going assessment. On the probationary course, which is taught centrally, learners from different areas receive different advice on how to complete their portfolio. There are assessment policies for NVQs and assessment of probationers but not for other training.
- Learners have access to a good range of additional courses. The Force has a distance learning policy that spells out clearly the strategy of distance learning and how learners can access it. All materials are available to staff to use in their own time or as part of development identified through their personal development review. Materials are available through one of the learning resource centres in each region and are in audio-visual format or accessible through the Intranet. Additionally the Force is an accredited centre and is developing NVQ pathways in management and other areas to give learners the possibility of gaining an NVQ. As an example learners who are building their portfolio for their probationary training can also, with little extension, use it to receive an NVQ 2 in customer service.
- Support for learners is satisfactory. Trainers give good learning support to learners on programmes. There are also examples of learners receiving additional support where necessary, for example loop systems are used for learners with partial hearing and specialist equipment for visually impaired learners. However there is no coherent or systematic support policy in place.
- Quality assurance is at least satisfactory. The Force has a recent observation of training policy which requires trainers to be observed four times a year. It is in the early stages of its implementation. Course evaluation forms are collected after every lesson and collated by the quality manager, who fulfils the function of a training evaluator. Trainers are asked to identify changes they have made as a result of evaluations. The Force is also working on Level 3 evaluations to allow learners to evaluate how courses have impacted on their working practices for the better. The initial evidence shows that most learners feel that the courses are of positive benefit but the response rate is typically low for postal questionnaires.



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

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