

Best Value Review of Police Training

Force: Kent

Date of Inspection: 24–25 November 2004



A Report by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary

ISBN 1-84473-527-3
© Crown Copyright 2005
Published 2005

Context and Force performance

Context

Population served by the Force	1.5m	
Number of police officers	3,561	
Number of police staff	2,313	
Number of special constables	333	
Number of PCSOs	109	
Budget for training for the financial year:	Financial Value	Percentage of Overall Force budget
2003/04	Not asked	4.2%
2004/05	£ 6.6 million	2.6 %

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/kentbaseline1004.pdf

Further details of the Force performance can be found at: www.kent.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 was encouraged to see a three year training strategy that conforms to HOC 53/03, which is clearly aligned to organisational objectives and is a living document subject to appropriate scrutiny.</p>
QUALITY OF COSTED TRAINING PLAN	<p>Whilst the Force has costed all training, only Kent Police College (KPC) training is included in the training plan. HM Inspector acknowledges the intention to rectify this for 2005/06 and notes that Kent is leading the development of the NCM in the region.</p> <p>HM Inspector was encouraged by the effort being applied to the development of the NCM and the level of integrity in the capture of data. The focus in relation to costing has been to develop a plan based on actual costs. The predictive element of the costed training plan for 2005 will be limited to three months. HM Inspector found that the NCM costing methodology is not making the necessary connections with budget setting decisions.</p> <p>HM Inspector was pleased to see that the management information being produced, such as spare capacity, is leading to effective challenge of training costs by ACPO and the Police Authority.</p>
MONITORING COSTED TRAINING PLAN THROUGHOUT THE YEAR	<p>The CTP has been subject to routine monitoring by the Force Training Board, which includes the Police Authority.</p>
TRAINING NOT INCLUDED IN THE COSTED TRAINING PLAN	<p>Fifty-three per cent of the training being provided in the Force is not included in the plan. The need to produce a Force training plan that captures all training has been recognised.</p>

Area Examined	Findings
<p>CLIENT/CONTRACTOR ARRANGEMENTS</p>	<p>HM Inspector was pleased to see that the training strategy clearly sets out the roles and responsibilities of the client and contractor. The Force Training Board, led by ACPO, has clear terms of reference, includes representatives from all areas of the Force and oversees the prioritisation of training.</p>
<p>MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS FOR TRAINING</p>	<p>ACC (Personnel and Training) is the ACPO lead within the Force and the Head of Personnel and Training, (a training professional) has responsibility for the overall control of all training, including specialist training. The Head of Training; a detective superintendent, has day to day tactical responsibility for Kent Police College (KPC), which includes responsibility for the Area Training Officers.</p> <p>There are formalised and documented meeting structures across the training function for training managers and trainers.</p> <p>HM Inspector was pleased to see there is clear and proactive PA involvement in the training process at all levels.</p> <p>There was dissatisfaction amongst training staff about the lack of succession planning to ensure continuity of trainer skills across the teams. HM Inspector encourages the Force to review its succession planning process within the training function, in order to afford it the same rigour as other specialist departments within the Force.</p>
<p>IMPLEMENTATION OF:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing Learning • Training Matters • Diversity Matters • Foundations for Change 	<p>HM Inspector was pleased to see clear progress reports for each of the previous HMIC Training reports and is satisfied that the Force has integrated the recommendations within current strategies. However it is not clear where outstanding recommendations currently sit or what priority is being given to the FfC. The Force has acknowledged the value in bringing together what remains to be done in one plan, currently being drawn up by Head of Personnel and Training.</p> <p>HM Inspector acknowledges that the Force is leading on nine FfC areas and working with regional partners.</p>

Area Examined	Findings
CURRENT IMPROVEMENT PLAN	<p>The BVR recommendations have become part of the Force's service improvement plan that is clearly linked to organisational priorities. The BVR Training recommendations are largely complete and it was encouraging to find the Head of Personnel and Training is producing a HR improvement plan that will bring together all that needs to be done, together with clear targets and a measure of how progress will be judged.</p>
MONITORING THE IMPROVEMENT PLAN	<p>The PA HR Committee regularly monitors the service improvement plan; in addition, the emerging HR improvement plan will be subject to routine monitoring at HR Board.</p>
QUALITY ASSURANCE PROCESSES	<p>HM Inspector found that the application of QA is variable across the training function. There is a QA approach to the standards and development of trainers and the training, but, it is currently confined to KPC. Peer and line manager assessment of trainers does not routinely take place in many areas of training.</p> <p>The Force is not exploiting the good practice that exists in other training areas outside of KPC, such as firearms training, but HM Inspector acknowledges that the Force Training Board has already identified the need to define and extend the QA regime across all training in the Force.</p>
EVALUATION OF TRAINING	<p>Kent Police evaluation is undertaken by two Force evaluators located within the Training Performance Team, but the Force needs to approach evaluation in a systematic and consistent way, in accordance with their evaluation strategy. The evaluation approach that exists is confined to KPC. HM Inspector was pleased to see independent tasking and reporting of evaluation via the Force Training Board (FTB).</p> <p>There is evidence of Level 1 and 2 activity and at the time of inspection, proposals for a new approach to identifying impact and return on investment of the training were being explored. HM Inspector acknowledges that this issue will be debated and overseen by the FTB.</p>

Area Examined	Findings
COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN TRAINING	<p>There is substantial evidence of broad community involvement across training delivery. The Force utilises a number of Force and lay consultative groups to inform the design and delivery of training programmes.</p> <p>In terms of the student officer programme there is in excess of 100 charity groups and minority groups involved in a placement programme. The Diversity Training Unit uses a number of Force and lay consultative groups to inform and deliver their training programme.</p>
COLLABORATION – EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS	<p>HM Inspector found extensive evidence that showed collaborative arrangements are in place across public and private sector organisations. For example, HE/FE partnerships to support the trainer development programme, supervisor training [certificate and diploma in management studies for sergeants and inspectors respectively] and the emerging probationer training programme. There is also a significant amount of shared training undertaken with other agencies, emergency services and military units.</p> <p>The Force has secured European funding to develop a European Diploma in Policing and is designing pilot courses with the Netherlands and Slovenia.</p>
COLLABORATION – OTHER POLICE ORGANISATIONS	<p>There is strong evidence of collaboration and shared training with other regional and European Forces and police organisations. These include an exchange programme with French and Dutch police services and international agreements to develop language learning facilities.</p>
ADOPTION OF NATIONAL GUIDANCE	<p>The Force is applying <i>Models for Learning and Development in the Police Service</i> standards to centrally provided training and there are plans to fully integrate them as part of a wider QA regime across the whole training function.</p>
MAIN AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE FORCE	<p>To ensure that training prioritisation reflects Force needs, through the Force Training Board.</p> <p>To develop e-learning within all training areas.</p>

Area Examined	Findings
<p>APPLICATION OF THE 4Cs SINCE THE REVIEW</p>	<p>HM Inspector was pleased to find that strategically, the Best Value ethos remains in the Force and within the training function. The 4Cs continue to shape the Kent approach to developing new and existing business. In particular, there is sound evidence of challenge, consultation and collaboration.</p>
<p>INTEGRATION OF THE INTEGRATED COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK</p>	<p>The Force has harmonised its PDR framework with the national framework and embedded competencies into all new training programmes, although all lesson plans have not yet been aligned to NCF and NOS.</p> <p>Role profiles have now been set and formalised for all police officers and some police staff.</p>
<p>MONITORING PROCESS AND COMPLETION OF PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT REVIEWS FOR POLICE OFFICERS AND POLICE STAFF</p>	<p>HM Inspector was disappointed to find wide variation in the completion rates for PDR but the Force has acknowledged the need to overhaul the approach and IT support for PDR. HM Inspector acknowledges that there is extensive supervisor training taking place in relation to assessor training to ensure future improvement.</p>
<p>BUSINESS PLANNING FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF TRAINING</p>	<p>HM Inspector is concerned that the CTP is produced too late and that the NCM costing exercise is not influencing budget setting sufficiently, [i.e. the student officer programme was not costed using NCM methodology]. Corporate objective setting does not appear to synchronise with the training planning cycle.</p>
<p>PRIORITISATION MODEL FOR TRAINING</p>	<p>There is an effective prioritisation process which is led by the training department that is accountable to the Force Training Board.</p>

Recommendations

Recommendation 1

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

Recommendation 2

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 3

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 4

HM Inspector recommends that the Force ensures that all training programmes are mapped against the Integrated Competency Framework to enable training to be linked to PDR and performance in particular

Recommendation 5

HM Inspector recommends that the Force and the Police Authority ensure that the business planning process for training is amended so that it is better able to respond to other Basic Command Unit and Departmental plans

Judgements

Judgement 1:

There is a great deal of positive and innovative activity taking place within the training function and HM Inspector acknowledges that a number of the proposed changes identified during the inspection are in the process of implementation and application to all training that takes place. This is particularly so in relation to QA and evaluation where frailty exists. It is very clear that there is commitment at all levels within the Force to drive performance through training. The Head of Personnel and Training, ACPO and the Police Authority are providing effective and enduring leadership that is enabling improvement.

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

Judgement 2:

The Best Value Review process was undertaken in line with national guidance and the revised service improvement plan has been updated to reflect all that needs to be done across the Force training function. There are clear SMART objectives with milestones and realistic timescales. Ownership of the improvement plan rests with ACPO, who together with the Police Authority are actively engaged in the process and are committed to close monitoring and scrutiny of the training function. There are plans for developing QA and evaluation standards across all training and to produce a costed training plan that reflects all Force training and informs budget setting decisions. The Force Training Board is ensuring that operational needs are driving the planned training events 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/Annex 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 alongside the HMIC (P&T) inspection. A summary of their findings is shown below:

Achievement and standards

- Learners demonstrate satisfactory to good understanding of the topics covered in most lessons and of previous work. The level of discussion observed in the student officer programme and in patrol supervisors' training was particularly good. In a lecture on criminology, student officers were able to link theory from other modules in the programme to a discussion on sociological aspects of law enforcement. Patrol supervisors were able to make informed decisions to allocate resources appropriately in an exercise based on analysis of a serious crime. Students on the intelligence analysts' programme showed considerable skill in synthesising information from a wide variety of sources in a series of well-delivered presentations.

The quality of education and training

- Teaching and learning is satisfactory, with practical and mixed theory-and-practical lessons being generally better than pure theory lessons. Most sessions are well planned by tutors and facilitators to use appropriate resources and a satisfactory range of activities and teaching methods. Good lessons involve students fully, make good use of questioning to draw out what students have learned so far, and carefully structure opportunities to discuss and debate problems or points of law.
- Good use is made of small group activities as well as whole class discussions. In a diversity lesson on working with people with mental health problems, a particularly effective technique was employed to simulate some mental health problems experienced by members of the community.
- In those lessons which are less effective, sessions are more didactic or instructional, and tutors and facilitators take insufficient account of what students may already know or be able to do. Occasionally, there is too much reliance on students taking notes without checking that they are able to do so accurately or relevantly. Where questioning is used, students' responses are valued in all cases. This approach is useful in encouraging further contribution, but occasionally the lack of evaluative feedback on wide-ranging or multiple responses leaves learners unsure of which aspects were most important or relevant.

- Most resources and facilities are very good. They are excellent for the student officer programme, particularly at the Medway campus of the University, where there are well-equipped seminar and lecture rooms, a pleasant refectory and good drop-in computer facilities. The police college in Maidstone also provides a good environment for learning, and other facilities used are satisfactory. The centre used for diversity training is less attractive, and is in the process of being sold.
- Tutors are well qualified and experienced, and most have, or are working towards, a nationally recognised teaching qualification. Turnover of trainers is relatively low, but there are some concerns that replacement tutors may have fewer opportunities to gain relevant qualifications as a result of new arrangements.
- Several courses draw on outside groups and organisations to enrich the students' experience. In diversity training, this is particularly successful, and there are links with over 120 community groups to provide short term work placement attachments and visiting speakers. However, the contribution from experienced police community support officers on the PCSO course was not valued by students, who felt that it was too negative and did not match their own previous experiences.
- It is rare for lecturers, tutors and facilitators to be given any prior information about the students they will be teaching. In most cases, it is assumed that relevant information will be collected during induction or "ice-breaking" activities. While this may be appropriate in some diversity training, where the activity itself is a useful part of the training, it is not helpful in most courses. Students who may have specific learning needs, such as dyslexia, are sometimes placed in situations where they have to reveal their condition publicly, perhaps because of the chosen activity. In other cases, groups of students with very different levels of prior experience may be put into inappropriate or inefficiently structured small groups for discussion. For example, some of the community support officer trainees have previously worked in staff roles for a police force, while others may have acted as special constables. Small groups consisting entirely of experienced students or entirely of inexperienced students limit the effectiveness of discussion.
- The range of training programmes available is good, and the production of a single prospectus to include all courses is particularly useful. The new student officer programme is well structured, and there is good close partnership working with the University of Kent to develop an appropriately qualified and skilled team of tutors, lecturers and facilitators. Students benefit from exposure to different teaching and learning cultures on this programme.
- The introduction of a Certificate in Management studies (CMS) for sergeants and the corresponding diploma for inspectors and above (DMS) has been well supported by a significant resource allocation of one day a fortnight off-the-job training for the CMS, one day a week for the DMS.

- Support for students is satisfactory, particularly on the longer courses. The student officers are allocated a personal tutor/mentor to ensure that they are well supported during their operational attachments, and are not required to undertake duties beyond their expected capability.



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

www.homeoffice.gov.uk/hmic