MODERNISING

THE POLICE SERVICE

A Thematic Inspection of Workforce Modernisation – The Role, Management and Deployment of Police Staff in the Police Service of England and Wales.

Acknowledgements

Foreword by Sir Keith Povey QPM BA (Law), HM Chief Inspector of Constabulary

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This thematic inspection was led by Her Majesty's Inspector (HMI) Sir Ronnie Flanagan, supported by his HMI colleagues Robin Field-Smith and Kate Flannery and Assistant Inspector of Constabulary, Peter Todd. However, a national inspection on this scale is necessarily a team effort and HMI wishes to take this opportunity to thank all those involved sincerely.

A great many people played some part in bringing this work to a successful conclusion. Hundreds of officers, police staff, police authority members and other stakeholders have completed questionnaires and participated in interviews and focus groups. This includes representatives from each of the 43 Home Office forces in England and Wales, non-Home Office forces and forces overseas. Special thanks go to the following police forces and organisations that participated in the fieldwork visits:

- An Garda Síochána
- British Transport Police
- Centrex
- Cleveland Police
- Cumbria Constabulary
- Dyfed-Powys Police
- Hertfordshire Constabulary
- HM Customs & Excise
- Humberside Police
- Kent County Constabulary
- Lancashire Constabulary
- Merseyside Police
- Metropolitan Police Service
- Ministry of Defence Police
- National Crime Squad
- National Criminal Intelligence Service
- Northamptonshire Police
- Northumbria Police
- Police Service of Northern Ireland
- Serious Fraud Office
- South Wales Police
- Surrey Police
- Tayside Police
- Thames Valley Police
- UK Immigration Service
- West Mercia Constabulary
- West Yorkshire Police
- Wiltshire Constabulary

HMI is very grateful to everyone who participated in the strategic interviews. Around 60 were conducted with key stakeholders, who by definition are very busy people, and who without exception willingly gave up their valuable time.

Some stakeholders, in addition to being interviewed, also sat on the reference group, helping to guide and inform the direction of the inspection and to provide critical readership for the draft report. A full list of reference group members appears at Appendix E and HMI is appreciative of their help, support and advice.

A number of national focus groups were organised and the inspection team received valuable assistance from Gary Pugh, Metropolitan Police Service; Jon Ashe, Sussex Police; Steven Chase, Thames Valley Police and Nigel Brooks, West Yorkshire Police.

Significant support was also forthcoming from many parts of the Home Office, in particular the Police Personnel Unit and the Research, Development and Statistics Directorate. Again HMI is very grateful for their help, in particular in terms of providing a most valuable insight into the complexity of some of these issues from a policy and governmental perspective and through the analysis of the various questionnaires used during the inspection.

The most important contribution was undoubtedly made by those who actually did the work, the inspection team. This inspection has made significant personal and professional demands on all those involved and their families. Visiting 28 forces and organisations over a three-month period is a huge undertaking and HMI was struck by the professionalism, commitment, dedication and sense of duty displayed. The composition of the inspection team is detailed below.

Inspection Team Structure

Les Parrett
Lead Staff Officer

Team 1	**Team 2**	**Team 3**	**Specialist and Support Team**
Graham Lowings *(team leader)*	Gary Lewis *(team leader)*	Keith Taggart *(team leader)*	Richard Avis
			James Colledge
Jane Anscombe	Odette Butson	Jon Ashe	David Dalgleish
Sharon Gibson	Alistair Oates	Mark Housley	Sue Eason
Mick Gillick	Nigel Pocknell	Martin Mitchell	Stuart Harrison
Julia Morris	Andrew Stevenson	Damian Morley	Carol MacKenzie
Barry South			John Miller
			Helen Notman
			Liz O'Hanlon
			Diane Thompson
			Robyn Williams
			Christina Wong

HMI is very conscious of the demands that a piece of work on this scale can make on individual police forces, stakeholders and the inspection team and is genuinely appreciative of their support, without which this inspection could not have taken place.

Over many years, police organisations in England and Wales have invested significantly in the process of civilianisation and modernisation. This has involved the replacement of police officers with police staff in specified roles and the introduction of new roles that are best suited to the skills and experience of non-sworn staff. Over time, police staff have become increasingly influential in policing, undertaking a range of highly specialised functions and filling an increasing number of senior leadership positions.

The hugely complex nature of modern policing means the service needs an increasingly broad range of specialist skills and expertise to meet these challenges. This raises key questions about just what the nature of policing should be in the future and the role that police officers and police staff might play in such a future, including the contribution of the wider policing family.

Despite the importance of these matters, there has been little rigorous scrutiny carried out in respect of them. The issues involved are necessarily complex, but the HMIC thematic inspection *Open All Hours* (2001) and Sir David O'Dowd's *Policing Bureaucracy Taskforce* (2002) both identified a lack of strategic direction and national guidance in this area.

This lack of scrutiny, combined with key drivers including the government's reform programme, were key factors in the decision to undertake this inspection. Civilianisation and workforce modernisation within the police service have hitherto been undertaken in a piecemeal way as a series of initiatives, with little attempt to take a holistic view. The policing challenges of today mean that we must now take this wider view and consider a major step change in our approach.

There are understandable concerns in some quarters that the modernisation agenda in some way devalues the role of the sworn police officer. Nothing could be further from the truth. The key challenge is to make the service more professional and to enrich the role and contribution of all staff in providing the best possible service to our communities. In doing so, whilst change will be inevitable, it is equally vital that we retain the core values inherent in the office and powers of a constable that have made policing in Britain the envy of police services across the world.

I am delighted that HMIC has been able to contribute to what will be a crucial issue for the service in the years to come. The report sets out an agenda for change and points to a number of areas where more detailed work is required. I am confident that the recommendations we have made will help drive forward the modernisation of the police service and in doing so, ensure that the police service continues to serve its communities effectively.

I commend the report to you.

Sir Keith Povey QPM BA (Law)
Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Constabulary

Overview

1.1   This inspection report provides a detailed exposition of where the service is at present in respect of workforce modernisation. It goes on to set out a vision as to where it could be in the future. Our work has focused upon ensuring that the service adopts a considered, strategic, planned and fair approach to establishing the optimum mix of staff and skills required to deliver policing in the 21st century and helping ensure the professionalisation of the service as a whole. In particular, it will mean officers, as the core front-line service deliverers, are appropriately valued, supported and enabled to deliver the very best policing service possible to the public and communities they serve.

1.2   This report advocates a significant programme of change. For too long the service has dealt with officers and police staff in silos as if somehow they were not part of the same organisation. This is divisive and does not meet the needs of a modern police service in the 21st century. That is not to say that there are not differences in role and responsibility that should be recognised, valued and rewarded appropriately.

1.3   The traditional approach to civilianisation and decision making around the mix of staff and skills has been ad hoc and initiative driven. Workforce modernisation opens up very real opportunities for a step change and a more integrated approach that challenges traditional resource allocation, including that relating to front-line service delivery. It also encourages an examination of new ways of working.

1.4   One tension evident throughout this inspection has been between the desire for consistency of approach based upon national frameworks and standards and enabling local innovation and management, for instance in terms of pay and reward structures. We will propose a more robust national framework, but one that enables local flexibility and innovation.

1.5   This inspection has been carried out in parallel with a number of other important strands of work being carried on within the Home Office, the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) and wider government. The inspection team has liaised closely with those involved in this related work.

Cultural issues

1.6   Civilianisation has been in many forces a vehicle for recruiting large numbers of women and minority ethnic staff into police forces. The recent success of community support officers (CSOs) in recruiting from minority ethnic backgrounds once again demonstrates this value. The service has not fully considered and exploited the benefits that this route offers in terms of ensuring police organisations are fully

representative and can effectively reach out to the diverse communities they serve. Furthermore, whilst the recruitment, retention and progression of minority ethnic police staff is actively monitored as part of the 'Breaking Through'[1] action plan, the focus in most forces is very much upon police officers. Police staff should not, of course, be seen as the only solution to developing a truly diverse police service. There would be a real danger, for example, that women and minority ethnic staff would become increasingly concentrated in the lower paid jobs, which could in turn exacerbate feelings of 'them and us'. The service must strive for diversity within all ranks and roles.

1.7   The lack of integration of officers and police staff and the existence of a 'them and us' culture has been a consistent theme throughout the literature on this subject. Evidence from the police officer/police staff questionnaire, coupled with views obtained during the fieldwork suggest that this situation has improved and in particular where mixed teams have existed for some time relations were found to be generally very good. However, many police staff, including those at very senior levels, still consider themselves to be **"the biggest minority group in the service"**. There are also tensions in some forces around mixed supervisory relationships, particularly where police staff are supervising police officers.

1.8   The inspection team found many practices that police staff perceive as devaluing their professional expertise and experience. There is a tendency, for instance, in some forces, that if a department headed by a police staff member is seen to be performing poorly, the solution is to appoint a senior police officer to take charge. Other police staff members see this in a very negative light.

1.9   The recruitment of police staff to chief officer positions and their membership of ACPO have sent an important and valuable signal regarding their worth to the service. However, there is considerable variation in the number of police staff granted chief officer status across forces, even of similar size and management structures. There is also a lack of awareness amongst police staff as to the criteria for them to achieve ACPO status and a police staff member has never been the head of an ACPO business area, even in a discipline where they have the professional expertise.

Strategy, policy and planning

1.10   The service urgently needs to develop a coherent and long-term strategic vision and planning framework to support civilianisation, workforce modernisation and the effective utilisation of all its staff.

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1   The 'Breaking Through' action plan, published in January 2004, is the second phase of the Home Office initiative 'Dismantling Barriers', which sets out to achieve a police service that is representative of the communities it serves.

1.11 The strategic and policy making framework around workforce planning and organisation is fragmented. Historically, there has been a very distinct silo approach to the management and use of officers and police staff. Furthermore, the lack of a longer-term funding and resource allocation strategy results in a 'famine and feast' mentality, inhibiting effective medium to long term workforce planning. The National Policing Plan needs to be underpinned by a costed national police resourcing strategy that enables forces to plan in the medium term.

Finance

1.12 Current arrangements for funding the service do not effectively support the workforce modernisation agenda. There is a need to move the emphasis from maximising officer numbers alone to enabling chief officers to ensure the optimum mix of staff in support of effective service delivery. Whilst the Crime Fighting Fund (CFF) has been a major success in helping drive up police officer numbers, there is widespread concern about its impact – combined with the proliferation of time limited and specific grants to support particular initiatives – upon workforce modernisation and innovation. Many basic command unit (BCU) commanders in particular are tightly constrained by the force's need to maintain officer numbers in order to meet the requirements of the CFF.

1.13 The funding regime for the service needs to better support workforce modernisation. Adaptation of the CFF to a workforce modernisation fund would help encourage chief officers to release police officers to front-line duties through modernisation and civilianisation initiatives. This would help ensure the immediate release of experienced officers and supervisors to operational duties without the long lead-in time associated with the current approach, which is based upon the introduction of new staff.

1.14 Many civilianisation initiatives are being funded by large precept rises within local council tax, which are not sustainable over the medium to long term. After many years of declining officer numbers, there has been a dramatic rise but this has not been accompanied by investment in both the supervisory and support infrastructures. This undermines rational workforce planning and organisation.

Role of national bodies

1.15 The Home Office has historically adopted a 'hands off' approach to police staff matters. Its recent move towards more involvement in the Police Staff Council (PSC) and the establishment of dedicated staff within the Police Personnel Unit (PPU) to take forward modernisation issues provide the foundation for a more proactive and

integrated approach. This is part of a wider Home Office restructuring, whereby the needs of the police service will be more effectively met. HMI welcomes this move, which has already delivered significant benefits. Work on police modernisation and reform, however, encompasses a huge and complex programme of change involving a multitude of stakeholder groups. It is questionable whether the current structures have the capacity to deliver what is required in an effective and co-ordinated way.

1.16 As the extended policing family concept embeds there will also be issues associated with the ability to ensure joined-up working and vision between government departments, for instance the Home Office and Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM).

1.17 The Cabinet Office is currently developing proposals for an improvement agency for policing. This work needs to fully embrace the requirement for a co-ordinated approach to workforce modernisation.

1.18 There needs to be a clearly articulated operational vision and workforce requirement for the service. HMI was pleased to see early attempts by ACPO to produce such a requirement to inform the 2004 spending review, but much more work is required in terms of sophisticated modelling of workforce requirements, with a stronger emphasis on being citizen and community focused, if this is to fully meet the needs of the service.

Performance management

1.19 It is currently very difficult to demonstrate clear links between variations in staffing mix, resource allocation decisions and operational performance. This in part reflects the large variation in the overall ratio of officers to police staff and their application to particular roles and functions. The service needs a performance management structure that enables senior managers to benchmark performance and measure how effectively forces are utilising their staff and how changes to the mix of staff impact upon performance. A great deal of work is taking place to develop a more effective and integrated Policing Performance Assessment Framework (PPAF) and this work should take account of the need to measure performance in terms of the provision of an efficient and effective support infrastructure and the contribution of the wider policing family.

1.20 The development of a front-line policing measure is welcomed but this needs to be further developed to more fully reflect the contribution of police staff to the provision of reassurance. Furthermore, it should not be seen as a panacea in terms of gauging overall resource optimisation – the danger being that if maximising front-line

deployment is seen as an end in itself, police forces and the service as a whole may become unbalanced, negating anticipated improvements in service delivery.

1.21 Widespread evidence was found of a failure to monitor the full impact of resource allocation decisions, particularly around civilianisation. The release of officers to operational duties, for example, is taken as given in many forces and is not adequately monitored. Evaluation of initiatives is also poor, with little systematic before and after comparison. As a consequence, the service does not have a good knowledge base as to what works and why. Structures for the identification and dissemination of good practice both within and across forces are poor.

1.22 Benchmarking across forces is extremely difficult due to the lack of consistency in matters such as grading arrangements, organisational structures and allocation of job titles. Even within forces police staff performing very similar roles are described very differently. Furthermore, structures for international benchmarking are underdeveloped. Some work has been conducted by the Home Office Police Standards Unit (PSU), which now needs to be progressed as part of an integrated approach to knowledge management in this area.

Management and deployment of police staff

1.23 Workforce modernisation raises profound issues about the way the service manages its people. In particular, there needs to be a more flexible and integrated approach to the recruitment, development and training of officers and police staff.

1.24 The findings of this inspection strongly support the need to develop a philosophy of integrated professionalism. The work of Skills for Justice (formerly the Police Skills and Standards Organisation (PSSO)), the National Centre for Policing Excellence (NCPE) and others to develop occupational standards and an integrated competency framework (ICF) are important building blocks to support integrated career pathways. This now needs to develop further to encompass the concept of the extended policing family and to support career development across a range of criminal justice and security sector organisations.

1.25 Investment in police staff training is disproportionately low in comparison to police officers. Many forces were unable to break down their training spend between police officers and police staff. The identification of learning needs at national and local levels should fully reflect the needs of police staff to ensure appropriate access to training related to their current role or personal development objectives.

1.26 Pay, conditions of service, discipline and many other employment arrangements for officers and police staff are negotiated separately. Whilst some recent structural changes have helped – for instance, enhanced involvement of the Home Office in the

PSC – significant and profound change is required to fully integrate and to develop flexible working. This involves strengthening the role of the PSC, with the long term aspiration of reforming the Police Negotiating Board (PNB) and PSC to provide one umbrella body responsible for the full range of officer and police staff terms and conditions and other arrangements.

1.27   Debates on the quality of leadership in the service have principally focused on police officers. There is a need to develop an integrated and coherent 'talent strategy' which enables the service to be an employer of choice to as wide an audience as possible and which ensures opportunities for appropriately rapid progression for the most able as part of a managed career structure. There is currently no national high potential development scheme (HPDS) for police staff. The lack of an effective career pathways structure has prevented this issue being progressed in the past, but the application of the ICF to all roles within the service provides the basis on which to take this issue forward.

1.28   The involvement of police authority members in the selection of senior police staff is patchy across the service. A more integrated approach should be developed to finding both officers and police staff for the most demanding leadership roles in the service.

1.29   Whilst in most forces formal consultative structures with trade unions are well developed, concerns were expressed about the quality of meaningful consultation and engagement of police staff, with many feeling that they were only consulted at the end of a process when it was too late for them to influence the outcome. Some forces' trade union representatives were consulted through one ACPO officer whilst police officer representatives reported to another, with no obvious means of identifying common issues and concerns. The direct involvement and contact of police authority members with police staff and their representatives are inconsistent across forces.

1.30   Currently, a significant proportion of civilianisation takes place when the officer incumbent is retiring. Although the post is advertised and a competitive selection process takes place, the role requirements are often so police-specific that the result is a foregone conclusion. Few examples were found of attempts to undertake succession planning and to equip other (police) staff to acquire the skills and experience to meet the role requirements. This results in the strong perception amongst police staff of nepotism that in turn limits their career development opportunities. There is a need to recognise the limitations of the current approach and to attempt to open up such opportunities to as wide a range of staff as possible.

1.31   A significant demand and market exist for the skills of retired officers and forces are adopting a range of approaches. Several ex-officers have established agencies supplying retired colleagues back to their host force. Although these arrangements

have often proved beneficial, there are some concerns about potential integrity issues, the currency of skills and training and other matters associated with the existing approach. There is a need for a structure of accreditation and quality assurance that could be applied to external suppliers.

1.32   There are obvious tensions between workforce modernisation and the impact of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995. Most forces are at an early stage of developing their approach to managing the impact of the DDA and we found limited evidence of a strategic solution to this issue. As part of the modernisation agenda, there may be scope to consider the retention of officers not fit to perform the full range of operational duties within the organisation in non-sworn roles. Whilst a more flexible approach to the deployment of officers and police staff lends itself to this conclusion, there is a need to guard against sending out an unintended signal that police staff posts are being used as a dumping ground for unfit officers. There is already a concern amongst some police staff that one impact of the DDA will be to further limit their career development opportunities.

Police reform and the extended policing family

1.33   The Police Reform Act 2002 means that police staff can now assist in support of their sworn colleagues and fill a range of important front-line roles. Examples include CSOs, detention officers, escort officers and investigators. It has also given chief officers the power to accredit individuals who are not employed by the police service, such as neighbourhood wardens and private security staff, raising the profile of other public and private sector involvement in 'policing'.

1.34   There is a need to ensure a joined-up approach to the development of neighbourhood wardens, Community Safety Accreditation Schemes (CSASs), CSOs and similar initiatives in order to avoid a counter-productive twin track approach to community safety and reassurance. There are already examples of duplication of effort – for instance, the separate development of CSASs and quality standards for neighbourhood wardens and the private security industry. At the very least, the service needs to ensure a consistent approach, or ideally introduce one accreditation and standards framework across the extended policing family.

Possible future police staff roles

1.35   There is a significant gap in terms of general 'technician' level support for officers, particularly in responding to and dealing with incidents of minor crime and anti-social behaviour, and supporting officers in road policing and other areas of core activity. The introduction of CSOs has also led to somewhat of an anomaly in deployment practice

in that CSOs, wardens and others can be used to assist with the response to low level incidents and anti-social behaviour. At the same time, many forces are routinely using telephone resolution to deal with what would be regarded by the public as quite serious crimes such as thefts from cars without deploying any resource.

1.36   The inspection followed up concerns raised by ministers regarding apparently wasteful double crewing of officers. Many tasks may require two people, but not necessarily two fully trained, equipped and skilled police officers, although at present there are few other resource deployment choices available in most forces.

1.37   The potential to use a mix of powers more creatively to conduct tasks in a different way and to create and empower posts in a variety of functions across the emergency services and agencies within the criminal justice system would bring obvious benefits in terms of such joined-up activity. There would, however, be some drawbacks; for instance, flexible and high-skilled posts across a range of disciplines will require more highly trained staff.

1.38   The report identifies a number of areas of policing where we believe minor changes to legislation and the flexible use of powers could bring substantial benefits.

The future

1.39   The report concludes by painting a picture of what the future might look like given the current significant drivers for change. We question whether the concept of the omnicompetent officer remains viable in today's world. We also highlight the need to adopt a more flexible approach to the delegation of police powers. Many aspects of police officer employment practice serve to limit the service's attractiveness to many potential high calibre candidates from other fields of employment. We advocate a fundamental review of concepts such as the single point of entry to the service, the 30-year police career and the current non-transferability of training, skills and qualifications.

1.40   We go on to suggest a need for a more consistent national approach if workforce modernisation is to be successfully progressed and conclude that current force structures and hierarchies are acting as barriers to change. We identify areas where increased involvement by other public or private sector organisations in policing may emerge and highlight some of the associated risks with this approach.

1.41   Finally, we conclude by illustrating how a mixed economy approach to staffing might work in practice, with a menu of staffing options open to managers to resource a range of policing functions.

Summary of recommendations

1.42 The tables below summarise the recommendations made in the report. They identify the lead agency or unit for the delivery of each recommendation and set a timeframe within which work on each recommendation should be commenced and a programme for delivery agreed.

Police service strategy, funding and performance management

No	Paragraph	Recommendation	Lead Unit/ Agency	Timescale
1.	5.11	HMI recommends that the Home Office develops a national police resourcing strategy to underpin the next release of the National Policing Plan, which will enable forces to plan more effectively in the medium term.	Home Office, Police Resources Unit (PRU)	By April 2005
2.	5.19	HMI recommends that the Home Office develops the CFF into a broader workforce modernisation fund, linked to a revised front-line policing measure that more fully reflects the contribution of police staff to service delivery.	Home Office, PRU	By April 2005
3.	5.31	HMI recommends that the Home Office ensures that work being undertaken on workforce modernisation and the assessment of the service's HR capacity are effectively co-ordinated.	Home Office, PPU	Immediate
4.	5.34	HMI recommends that ACPO further develops its Project 2010 and strategic assessment to more fully encompass community and citizen focus, in order to ensure buy-in from all stakeholders.	ACPO, Presidential Business Area	By April 2005

No	Paragraph	Recommendation	Lead Unit/ Agency	Timescale
5.	5.37	HMI recommends that the Home Office, in developing its proposals for a Policing Improvement Agency in concert with ACPO and other key stakeholders, fully embraces the requirement for a co-ordinated approach to workforce modernisation and development of national policing policy.	Home Office	By April 2005
6a.	5.39	HMI recommends that the Home Office designs a template to assist forces in the development of local workforce modernisation strategies.	Home Office, PPU	By April 2005
6b.		HMI recommends that forces use the template produced by the Home Office to develop a local workforce modernisation strategy and identify a champion to drive this strategy forward.	Individual forces	By October 2005
7.	5.51	HMI recommends that, in developing the PPAF, the Home Office develops performance criteria to assess the efficiency and effectiveness of support infrastructures and the contribution of the extended policing family.	Home Office, PRU	By April 2006 (in line with other future developments being worked up for the PPAF)
8.	5.55	HMI recommends that the Home Office conducts a further revision of the headline front-line policing measure to ensure that equal recognition is given to the contribution of police staff and police officers to front-line operational policing.	Home Office, PRU	By April 2005

No	Paragraph	Recommendation	Lead Unit/ Agency	Timescale
9.	5.59	HMI recommends that, to ensure the most appropriate use of CSOs, forces are required to measure and publish annually the percentage of time spent by CSOs on visible front-line patrol and details of how the remaining time is spent. This should be linked to the front-line policing measure and will help forces ensure that CSOs are being appropriately deployed.	Individual Forces	In line with the introduction of the front-line policing measure
10.	5.62	HMI recommends that when evaluating redeployment initiatives, forces establish processes to enable the tracking of both people and posts that are redeployed to the front-line. Such monitoring will enable forces to satisfy themselves that any benefits resulting from such initiatives are maintained.	Individual forces	By April 2005
11.	5.63	HMI recommends that the Home Office extends its approach to inter-force and international benchmarking exercises to encompass workforce modernisation, the role and deployment of police staff. This should be a regular exercise and form part of an integrated approach to knowledge management in this area.	Home Office, PSU	By April 2005

People issues – the role, management and deployment of police staff

No	Paragraph	Recommendation	Lead Unit/ Agency	Timescale
12a.	6.19	HMI recommends that, in time to inform the 2005/06 planning cycle, each force command team, in consultation with police authorities, staff associations and unions, identifies and sets staffing levels that ensure operational resilience, tailored to local need, is maintained.	Individual forces	By April 2005
12b.		HMI recommends that forces take account of all those agencies outside the service who deliver community safety services, to help ensure effective co-ordination and deployment of all such resources.		
13.	6.24	HMI recommends that the work of the NCPE expands from the development of doctrine applicable to the police service alone, to an approach that can be applied across the extended policing family.	NCPE	By April 2006
14.	6.27	HMI recommends that Skills for Justice works together with the justice sector and security industry agencies to adopt a common model of integrated people management that would in turn help facilitate career development and progression for staff from across these two sectors.	Skills for Justice	By April 2006
15.	6.42	HMI recommends that ACPO, in consultation with the Home Office and the PSC, agrees to a common approach to job evaluation for police staff roles to ensure fairness and consistency, whilst retaining the flexibility to respond to local need.	ACPO, Personnel Management Business Area	By April 2005

No	Paragraph	Recommendation	Lead Unit/ Agency	Timescale
16a.	6.47	HMI recommends that at a national level, the Home Office develops a similar scheme to the HPDS for police officers to identify and actively develop police staff with high potential.	Home Office, Police Leadership and Powers Unit (PLPU)	By April 2006
16b.		HMI recommends that at the force level, systems should be in place to identify police staff with high potential and actively develop their careers.	Individual forces	By April 2005
17.	6.52	HMI recommends that heads of all ACPO business areas ensure that police staff learning needs are fully considered in the process of identifying a learning requirement for the service in order to ensure that police staff have appropriate access to training and development opportunities.	ACPO, all business areas	By April 2005
18.	6.58	HMI recommends that forces develop systems to ensure they can identify the training spend on police staff and police officers.	Individual forces	By April 2005
19.	6.58	HMI recommends that forces conduct a training needs analysis, linked to the personal development review (PDR) process, to ensure police staff have appropriate access to training and development opportunities, linked to business need or an individual's development plan.	Individual forces	By April 2005
20.	6.74	HMI recommends that the Home Office, in conjunction with the Police Advisory Board for England and Wales, leads a detailed and fundamental review of Police Regulations to provide a flexible and enabling employment framework for police officers.	Home Office, PPU	By April 2005

No	Paragraph	Recommendation	Lead Unit/ Agency	Timescale
21.	6.80	HMI recommends that chief constables ensure that the professional expertise of senior members of police staff is appropriately recognised through their representation on force command teams.	Individual chief constables	By April 2005
22.	6.83	HMI recommends that ACPO works with the Home Office, PSC, Association of Police Authorities (APA), trade unions and the staff associations to develop comprehensive guidelines to ensure greater consistency of approach to the granting of ACPO membership to senior members of police staff across all forces.	ACPO, Presidential Business Area	By April 2005
23.	6.85	HMI recommends that ACPO and the APA develop an agreement, to be implemented locally, to ensure greater consistency in the appointment of police officers and police staff to chief officer roles.	ACPO/APA	By April 2005
24.	6.94	HMI recommends that forces outside the PSC join the council and adopt the agreements set out in the revised PSC handbook.	Specified forces	By April 2005
25.	6.104	HMI recommends that Skills for Justice works to develop agreed standards and accreditation for the use of retired officers and other staff under contract.	Skills for Justice	By April 2005

Police reform and the extended policing family

No	Paragraph	Recommendation	Lead Unit/ Agency	Timescale
26.	7.51	HMI recommends that the Home Office undertakes a national evaluation of CSOs in order to produce guidance for forces. This should include guidance on deployment models, risk assessment, designation of powers, uniform and equipment.	Home Office, PPU	By April 2005
27a.	7.89	HMI recommends that the Home Office leads work to more effectively market the extended policing family to address the public confusion evident from recent research.	Home Office, PPU	By April 2005
27b.		HMI recommends that, at a local level, forces develop marketing strategies in relation to the extended policing family to address the public confusion evident from recent research.	Individual forces	By April 2005

The future

No	Paragraph	Recommendation	Lead Unit/ Agency	Timescale
28.	8.33	HMI recommends that the Home Office ensures appropriate funding for existing initiatives is maintained and that a long term strategy is put into place to ensure adequate funding is available to support continued experimentation and evaluation well into the 2006 spending review cycle of spending.	Home Office, PPU	Ongoing

Chapter Summary

This chapter will outline:

- The background and rationale for the inspection
- Some of the key terms used throughout the report
- The key drivers for change
- The scope and terms of reference for the inspection
- The inspection methodology
- The characteristics of a modernised police organisation
- An overview of the report structure; and
- Anticipated key outcomes from the inspection

Background and rationale for the inspection

2.1   Most police services across the world comprise police officers and non-sworn police staff. Many have embarked upon a process of civilianisation, introducing new roles that are best suited to the skills and experiences of non-sworn staff and replacing police officers with police staff in specified roles. If successfully implemented, this process enables police officers to be directed to service areas requiring recourse to operational policing experience, training and the exercise of police powers.

2.2   The police service in England and Wales is no exception. It has made a considerable investment in the civilianisation process and police staff now account for around a third of all police personnel. However, the ratio of officers to police staff differs considerably between police forces and there is a significant variation in the range of roles performed and the mix of personnel in key areas of service delivery.

2.3   Whilst the use of police staff is not new, their role and significance have shifted over time from the provision of manual, clerical, administrative and support functions towards the performance of roles crucial to the effective functioning of modern policing. Police staff are supervising and managing police officers and most forces now have police staff members who have achieved chief officer status. They are helping shape the strategic direction of the service and are increasingly performing operational support and 'front-line' tasks which until recently were the exclusive preserve of sworn police officers.

2.4   These developments in part reflect the growing requirement of a modern police service for an increasingly diverse range of specialist skills to support the changing nature and complexity of policing. However, they also raise fundamental questions about the nature of policing and the respective roles of police officers and police staff and have raised concerns about the dangers of 'creeping privatisation' and 'two tier policing'. While there is a general acceptance of the need for a professional, dedicated and highly skilled police staff component in modern policing, there is less consensus regarding the scale and extent of their direct involvement in operational service delivery.

2.5   Despite the fundamental importance of these issues to the service, they have hitherto not been subject to rigorous scrutiny. While there have been a number of studies that have touched upon aspects of the civilianisation process and workforce modernisation, this has invariably been part of a wider consideration of a range of issues and there have been few attempts to evaluate these matters comprehensively. However, where work has taken place to examine these issues, they have identified some important common themes and features. Parrett (1991 and 1998) identified a piecemeal approach to the civilianisation process, a lack of strategic direction and a failure to properly evaluate the benefits and costs of the process. The HMIC

thematic inspection *Open All Hours* (2001) and Sir David O'Dowd's *Policing Bureaucracy Taskforce* (2002) both reinforced this view and pointed to a lack of strategic direction and central guidance.

2.6   This lack of scrutiny is stark and the failure to comprehensively evaluate such an important feature of police organisation and practice was a significant factor in the decision to undertake this inspection.

2.7   The government's police reform programme represents a major attempt to modernise the service and to raise performance. In doing so it necessarily causes one to question traditional arrangements around the deployment and mix of personnel. In particular, how should the service and individual police forces determine and effectively manage the optimum mix of officers and police staff in order to deliver the increasingly complex services required of a modern police organisation? This is a key strategic issue that provides much of the focus for this inspection. Some may think, given this focus, that it is in some way devaluing the role of the sworn police officer. Nothing could be further from the truth. Modernising the police workforce is about making the service more professional. Developing the role of police staff does not imply that the role of officers will be somehow demeaned. It is vital to retain the core values inherent in the office of constable, but seek to modernise the concept in a way that enriches the role of all staff and, more importantly, engages more effectively with local communities.

Key terms

Police officer and police staff

2.8   There are two distinct categories of employee in police organisations, police officers and police staff. Officers are unique in terms of their sworn, or attested status, which vests them with powers not held by the general public, such as powers of arrest, search and seizure. Another key difference relates to the employment status of officers. The 'Office of Constable' is a Crown status and that means officers do not have the legal status of employees, although increasingly employment law is being applied to them. The position brings with it a number of benefits for officers, but they are balanced by restrictions such as having no right to strike and not being permitted to overtly demonstrate political affiliation. Such restrictions, of course, also apply to other groups of employees. Prison officers have effectively no right to strike and civil servants are not permitted any overt political affiliation, so these factors in themselves do not provide the basis for police officers to be treated uniquely.

2.9   Police staff are personnel employed by a police organisation who do not have the sworn status of a constable. This term was adopted across the service in 2003

in preference to a variety of alternatives that were hitherto in common use, such as 'civilian', 'support staff' and 'civil staff'. This term is designed to reflect the wide range of roles performed by police staff within today's police service and in particular the fact that many such roles are very much 'front-line' rather than 'support' in nature.

2.10 Section 10 (1) of the Police Act 1964 provides the statutory basis for the employment of police staff. Historically, there has been a very different approach to the setting of officer and police staff establishments. Officer numbers have traditionally been subject to close scrutiny and approval by the Home Office. Police staff numbers are set at the discretion of police authorities, although the Home Office may issue advisory circulars regarding the role of police staff. This difference reflects the fact that police staff were until recently local authority employees and there has been a long-standing debate about their status. This status is further complicated by the historical perspective of the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) whose police staff were all formerly civil servants. Among other things, this has resulted in two different trade unions (the Public and Commercial Services Union (PCS) in London and UNISON outside the capital) being the chief representative bodies for police staff.

2.11 The Police and Magistrates' Courts Act 1994 finally resolved their status and provided chief officers for the first time with formal responsibility for the direction, control and discipline of police staff together with greater financial freedom to decide on the mix of officers and police staff.

2.12 Police staff perform a wide range of roles in the service, which can broadly be grouped as follows:

- Manual, clerical and administrative roles.
- Supervisory and managerial roles, including as members of senior and chief officer teams.
- Professional roles in areas such as human resources (HR), finance and IT.
- Specialist roles that are unique to the police service. Police staff are increasingly performing front-line operational support and operational roles, such as scenes of crime officers, traffic wardens, CSOs and communications centre staff, which until relatively recently would have been exclusively carried out by police officers.

2.13 The involvement in front-line policing activity is significant. Police staff are increasingly performing roles similar to or identical to those performed by officers, some of which involve them exercising 'police type powers', such as the ability to detain and interview suspects and to seize evidence. This blurring of officer and police staff roles and responsibilities raises fundamental questions about the traditional division of labour and indeed the 'unique' status enjoyed by police officers. It raises fundamental questions about whether this currently very stark distinction, embodied in the office of constable, is still valid and appropriate to the requirements of policing in

the 21st century. This question lies at the heart of the issues subject to consideration in this report, the vision of a more integrated and professional workforce, and will be a recurrent theme.

Civilianisation

2.14 Civilianisation has traditionally been defined as the direct replacement of police officers by non-sworn staff to perform roles previously undertaken by officers. It is important to distinguish 'police staff jobs' from civilianisation. Increasingly, police staff are being recruited to perform roles which are new to the service, or have never been undertaken by police officers.

2.15 There are a variety of reasons for civilianisation. The requirement to provide efficient, effective and responsive police services, together with public demand for more officers on the street, have been major catalysts for large-scale civilianisation. However, civilianisation is much more than a simple indicator of efficiency or a means of cutting cost. Significant drivers for the process include:

- The ever-rising cost of police service delivery. In particular, the traditional omnicompetent constable is now an expensive resource in terms of salary, pension, training and other costs.
- Pressure to control public service expenditure and to demonstrate year on year efficiency gains and best value.
- Increasing functional specialisation. Policing is a complex business requiring a range of diverse skills and abilities, financial, HR management expertise, IT skills etc. Core operational professional responsibilities are also increasingly reliant on skills, experience and competencies not necessarily the product of generic police officer training and development.
- A desire to reform public service provision and to explore alternative means of delivery.
- An increasing focus on performance and the need to ensure the optimum mix and deployment of the workforce.
- Difficulties recruiting and retaining police officers. Historically, at certain points forces have been unable to recruit and retain sufficient numbers of police officers and have been forced to explore alternative staffing options. Today, many forces in the south-east of England are experiencing such difficulties in the light of a buoyant economic climate and the relatively attractive terms and conditions of employment offered by the MPS, although the MPS itself is also experiencing retention difficulties.
- Releasing police officers to front-line duties.

Mixed economy

2.16 Increasingly, police organisations are experimenting with a more diverse and flexible mix of personnel. In addition to fully employed officers and police staff, some functions, such as custody provision, are being contracted out to private sector providers. Many police forces are employing retired police officers and personnel on short-term flexible contracts to assist them to cope with operational crises and periods of exceptional demand, such as during a major criminal investigation or other critical incidents. This desire to experiment with the mix of personnel, both inside the service and through external providers, is becoming increasingly known as the mixed economy approach to service provision.

Workforce modernisation

2.17 During the initial stages of the inspection, the team was keen to ascertain exactly what workforce modernisation meant in a policing context. In particular, what would a modernised service and force look like? Perhaps not surprisingly, the inspection team encountered a wide range of views and opinions. As the inspection progressed, it therefore became important that the team had a clear and shared vision as to what workforce modernisation meant and what were the key characteristics of a modernised police organisation. This is not the only view and is most certainly not proposed as definitive, but it provides a benchmark against which to compare and contrast current practice and provides the basis for a vision for a modernised service.

Characteristics of a modernised police organisation

HMIC would see a modernised organisation as having the following characteristics:

- Is an integrated service with a clear vision regarding its future direction and the people and skills required to deliver this.
- Has a clear focus on improving operational performance.
- Engages effectively with local communities.
- Recognises and rewards the skills and professionalism of the entire workforce.
- Is representative of staff from diverse backgrounds with diverse skills.
- Has flexible entry and exit points.
- Operates flexible and integrated reward structures and terms and conditions.
- Is locally managed but within enabling national frameworks and standards.
- Has an inclusive culture.
- Benefits from effective leaders at all levels with the vision, time and resources to drive modernisation activity, both within the service and across organisational and professional boundaries.
- Works effectively in partnership with other organisations.
- Is not fixated with internal boundaries and functional silos.

Key drivers for change

2.18 A number of important factors are acting as positive drivers for reform within the police service:

- Though levels of crime in England and Wales have fallen sharply since the mid-1990s, they remain high by historical and international standards, with violent crime a particular problem.
- Public satisfaction with the police has been declining for a number of years and concerns have been raised about the responsiveness of policing to local needs and in supporting civil renewal and community engagement.
- New challenges have arisen in recent years from technology, globalisation, terrorism, migration and the increasing range and complexity of crime.
- The growing importance of partnerships, community engagement and multi-agency approaches to tackling crime and disorder.
- Concern about the effectiveness and resilience of existing force structures.
- Pressures for improved efficiency and effectiveness as budgets have risen and wage and pension costs grow, whilst expectations in respect of police performance have increased.
- A real doubt as to whether the service has adequate HR capacity and whether it is effectively using the full range of the HR capacity it has.
- Significant societal changes, such as the development of an increasingly strong night-time economy, higher demands being placed on the police and increased accountability.

2.19 The complexity of some of these new challenges points to the need for a major step change in approach if the service is to confront them effectively. The world is changing fast and the policing challenges of today are hugely different from those that existed only a few years ago. Factors such as the government's public sector reform and modernisation agenda, the neighbourhood wardens programme, the Private Security Industry Act 2001, the Police Reform Act 2002 and the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003, coupled with pressure from within the service, are all pointing towards a more diverse policing market. There are clear moves towards a sustained modernisation agenda focused on value for money, customer focus and the development of better quality, more responsive services.

2.20 Modern employment trends are another major driver for change. The gulf is widening between the police service and other employers in terms of flexibility, mobility and giving staff more control and autonomy over their career choices and paths. The 30-year career commitment is increasingly anachronistic. Indeed, evidence from CSOs in one force suggests that this was a significant reason why many chose to become CSOs rather than choosing the police officer route. If the police service is to build a representative workforce, it needs to be attractive to as wide an audience as possible.

2.21 Policing services are managed and delivered through people. Increasingly, this involves not just officers but police staff and members of the extended policing family. The service needs to ask itself if it is recruiting, training, developing and retaining the right people to do the increasingly complex task of 'policing'. The recently completed review of efficiency within the public sector led by Sir Peter Gershon will rightly increase the pressure on the service to optimise the use of all its resources and in particular its people. Other challenges include the need to effectively manage a more complex mix of resources as part of the extended policing family and mixed economy approach to service delivery. All this means we need to ask fundamental questions about the suitability of concepts such as a single point of entry for officers, a 30-year career and the constraints imposed by statutory Police Regulations and move to more flexible working arrangements.

Scope and terms of reference

2.22 The full terms of reference for the inspection are reproduced at Appendix A. Four major themes, however, formed the focus for the inspection:

- **Strategy, policy and business planning.**
- **Performance monitoring.**
- **Management and deployment of police staff.**
- **Development of future roles.**

2.23 The potential scale and breadth of this work made it vitally important that the terms of reference were adhered to and that the inspection team remained focused upon key issues. Analysis of these matters raises fundamental questions about the role of policing/police officers and the appropriate division, organisation and management of labour across police forces. The complexity of the issues under consideration meant that it was simply not possible to fully consider a range of related and important issues in any depth. For instance, whilst of critical importance, it would have been very easy for the inspection to focus almost entirely on the various pay and conditions and management issues relating to the employment of police staff. Likewise, it was only possible to consider the use of volunteers, including special constables, in terms of their role as part of the extended policing family. While the main analysis was restricted to the 43 police forces in England and Wales, extensive benchmarking took place with non-Home Office forces, the Police Service of Northern Ireland, An Garda Síochána and Tayside Police in Scotland. An examination of practice outside the UK and Ireland was also conducted to ensure full consideration was given to alternative models and ways of working.

2.24   In summary, the key strategic issue and the focus for this inspection was to consider how the service, forces and other police organisations determine and effectively manage the optimum mix of officers and non-sworn police staff to deliver the increasingly complex services demanded of a police organisation in the 21st century.

Inspection methodology

2.25   This is the most comprehensive and detailed consideration of civilianisation and workforce modernisation conducted in England and Wales to date. Hundreds of documents were analysed and around 60 strategic interviews conducted. During the fieldwork stage, a total of 28 organisations were visited and in the region of 600 interviews and focus groups were held. In addition, 11 national focus groups and workshops were convened across the country.

2.26   The inspection incorporated a range of research methods and approaches to enable data and evidence to be triangulated from a variety of qualitative and quantitative sources. This approach recognises both the breadth and complexity of the subject matter and the importance of gaining a detailed awareness of some of the less tangible interpersonal and cultural issues that are important in terms of any consideration of civilianisation and workforce modernisation.

2.27   Full details of the inspection methodology are included at Appendix B.

Report structure

2.28   This report contains eight chapters. Each chapter is prefaced with a summary of the key messages and where appropriate contains a vision statement detailing where the service could be in five years time if the findings of the inspection are successfully implemented. The report makes a number of recommendations. These are summarised in chapter 1, which also sets out the lead agency or unit to take the recommendation forward and the timescale within which HMI would expect work on the recommendation to be commenced and a programme for delivery agreed. The appendices to the report are published in electronic format only.

2.29   Although little in the way of evaluated good practice was identified during the inspection, there were many examples of innovation and a significant number of promising initiatives. These are highlighted in the form of case studies throughout the report. Many of these case studies were found in forces in the south-east of England. It became evident as the inspection progressed that the difficulties experienced by many such forces in recruiting and retaining police officers had forced them into more radical thinking about the profile of their respective workforces. Such pressures simply did not exist elsewhere in the country.

Anticipated key outcomes from the inspection

2.30 It is important at the commencement of a major piece of work such as this to have a clear idea of the anticipated outcomes and what success would look like. HMIC's ambition is that this report will:

- Provide a comprehensive assessment of the historical development and current approach to civilianisation, workforce modernisation and the role of police staff in policing.
- Establish a clear baseline of where the service is in relation to these matters and benchmark existing practice with that in police organisations outside the UK and with other public and private sector bodies.
- Identify the main enablers and barriers to current and future reform and innovation.
- Highlight examples of innovative and good practice in this area.
- Produce an evidence base and a strategic and tactical framework of recommendations to help guide police forces and the future reform of the service.
- Set a vision for the development of civilianisation, workforce modernisation and the more effective management and deployment of police staff.

Key Message

Integration of the workforce has been an issue that has been around since the formation of the police service. Similar challenges exist elsewhere in the world and in other occupational areas. This is not a new problem, but is one that needs to be addressed effectively if the police service is to meet the increasing demands of the 21st century.

Chapter Summary

This chapter will outline:

● The role of police staff in the police service of England and Wales between 1829 and the present day
● The role of police staff in forces outside England and Wales; and
● Details of modernisation within other occupational sectors

The role of police staff in the police service of England and Wales from 1829 to the present day

3.1   Historical analysis suggests four broad stages in the development of the civilianisation process, each characterised by a general consistency of approach. We consider that the service stands on the threshold of a fifth phase of development, the 'Workforce Modernisation Phase'. The implications of this potential step change in approach will be developed later in this report. The stages of historical development in the traditional approach to civilianisation can be briefly summarised as follows:

Stage 1 1829 – 1938

3.2   This period can best be characterised as an early initial shedding of mundane manual and clerical tasks from police officers to provide a very limited range of new 'civilian' posts.

Stage 2 1939 – 1959

3.3   During and in the immediate aftermath of the war forces experienced difficulties in recruiting sufficient numbers of 'policemen' and women were introduced into a limited range of roles. There was a growing, but grudging, realisation of the need for skills not usually held by police officers.

3.4   The Parliamentary Select Committee on Costs 1957/58 noted progress in the employment of police staff across the service, but acknowledged that this was largely due to difficulties recruiting officers, rather than a conscious decision to progress civilianisation.

Stage 3 1960 – 1982

3.5   This period involved consolidation of approach, combined with a dramatic rise in police staff numbers, but considerable variation in the ratio of police staff to officers across forces. Early efforts were made to identify what constitutes 'proper police work' and the criteria for civilianisation. There was a growing debate regarding the ownership of police staff, ie should they remain local authority employees, or be under the direct employment, direction and control of chief officers and police authorities? Not only were police staff now involved in police work as scenes of crime officers and traffic wardens, some were beginning to occupy senior professional and specialist roles and in a growing number of forces were becoming members of command teams.

3.6   The growth in police staff numbers led the Royal Commission in 1960 to express some concern regarding the impact of civilianisation. Reservations were expressed about the service's ability to respond to crisis situations, together with the capacity within forces to shelter older and unfit officers no longer able to perform full duties. Not for the first time the Commission noted the significant variation in the proportion

of police staff across forces, which ranged from 5% to 25% of total establishments. Despite these reservations the 1964 Police Act introduced the first statutory authority to employ police staff in the service.

3.7   The Royal Commission had explicitly linked police officer pay and conditions to the unique demands of police duties and in 1967 the Police Advisory Board defined 'proper police duties' as those requiring:

> a) *The special qualifications and personal qualities demanded of entry to the service.*
> b) *The particular training provided within the police, with special emphasis on crime prevention and protection and the maintenance of public order: and*
> c) *The exercise of authority, ie police powers.*

<div align="right">(Police Advisory Board, 1967, paragraph 60)</div>

3.8   The combination of personal qualities, special training and the exercise of police powers have continued to be important criteria in terms of the designation of 'proper police work'.

3.9   This period also witnessed significant changes in the role and responsibilities of police staff. Perhaps most notably, certainly most visibly, 1960 saw the establishment of the traffic warden service under the Road Traffic and Roads Improvement Act. It is frequently forgotten but traffic wardens – non-sworn personnel wearing a uniform, patrolling public places and discharging 'police type' powers – were highly controversial at the time and allegations of 'two-tier' policing were rife.

3.10   In 1978 the Police Advisory Board endorsed guidelines for civilianisation prepared by the Home Office. In essence, these reflected the 1967 criteria around personal qualities, special training and the exercise of police powers. The Board also emphasised the importance of establishing suitable career structures and being able to contain the risk of potential industrial action.

3.11   The Edmund Davies Report (1978) resulted in a significant improvement in police officer pay that was not replicated for police staff. This was despite calls from police staff unions to hold a similar commission to consider the inequity of pay arrangements, particularly as increasing numbers of police staff were working side by side with their officer colleagues.

Stage 4 1983 – 2004

3.12   This was a period of rapid change and reform of public services, when civilianisation was seen as a by-word for police economy, efficiency and effectiveness. Various Home Office circulars throughout the 1980s explicitly tied growth in police establishments to the release of officers to operational duties through civilianisation. The period is also characterised by the active consideration of core police roles and

responsibilities and the potential to shed ancillary tasks, together with a growing disquiet regarding the inability to deliver core services such as patrol effectively. More recently, the police reform agenda has signalled a new wave of fundamental reform of the service.

3.13 The growing emphasis on value for money during the 1980s led to civilianisation becoming synonymous with the efficient use of police resources. Not surprisingly, this resulted in a 21% rise in police staff numbers, compared to a 9% increase in officer strength. Indeed, Home Office Circular 114/83 *Manpower, Efficiency and Effectiveness within the Police Service* required forces bidding for increases in establishment to demonstrate that:

> *"...civilian manpower and technical support are effectively freeing police officers for operational duties."* (Home Office 1983, paragraph 4)

3.14 This shift in emphasis is significant. Civilianisation was no longer seen as a means of simply plugging gaps caused by an inability to recruit sufficient numbers of officers, rather it was becoming a key indicator of police service efficiency.

3.15 Once again, a defining feature in the 1980s was a significant variation in approach between forces. A Department of the Environment Audit Inspectorate report (1983) found in a survey of 10 forces that the ratio of 'accountable civilians' to officers varied between 1:8 and 1:4 and that this ratio had actually fallen between 1977 – 81.

3.16 During 1988 an ACPO study acknowledged a lack of strategic direction:

> *"…an issue central to police organisation has been dealt with piecemeal: without addressing satisfactorily a range of related matters."*
> (ACPO, 1988, paragraph 17)

3.17 Home Office Circular 105/88 *Civilian Staff in the Police Service* stressed that a more 'radical' re-examination of the role of officers and police staff could lead to efficiency gains over and above mere salary savings. Importantly, the Circular introduced a checklist of posts suitable for civilianisation. It is worthy of note that some 16 years later many forces in England and Wales have not civilianised the full range of posts listed in this Circular.

3.18 The early to mid 1990s are perhaps best characterised by a reform process focused upon social market principles. Part of this involved attempts to determine the core functions of policing with a view to shedding auxiliary roles (*Review of Police Core and Ancillary Tasks*, Home Office (Posen) 1995, and the joint Policy Studies Institute (PSI) and Police Foundation Review *Police Roles and Responsibilities*, 1994).

3.19 *The Operational Policing Review* (JCC, 1990) examined a range of issues including civilianisation. It stressed the need to take a longer-term view of the impact

of the process and highlighted a range of unresolved matters. These included: ownership, direction and control of police staff; poor recruitment practice and high wastage rates; poor career development and appraisal practice and the need to improve the integration and relationship between officers and police staff.

3.20 The government white paper on police reform (Home Office, 1993) raised a number of important issues, including the need for chief officers to have greater flexibility to decide on the number and mix of officers and police staff. This led to the Police and Magistrates' Courts Act 1994, which for the first time gave chief constables formal responsibility for police staff under their direction and control and the subsequent formation of the Police Support Staff Council in 1996.

3.21 During the late 1980s and early 1990s, there was significant debate about alternative ways to deliver core police services, in particular patrol and community reassurance. An Audit Commission review (1992) of the traffic warden service identified the potential to use them as an integrated part of street policing in order to reinforce community policing. A further Audit Commission paper (1996) highlighted problems around the status and effectiveness of police patrol; a number of options were proposed, including the creation of 'designated' patrol officer roles. The following year a Police Foundation and PSI inquiry into the role and responsibilities of the police, highlighted a range of alternative models of patrol, including private patrol forces, accredited and directed by the police, and designated patrol officers within forces.

3.22 Over a number of years there had been calls to improve the regulation, licensing and standard setting regime around the private security industry. The Private Security Industry Act 2001 established the Security Industry Authority, a regime of licensing and regulation and set standards of conduct, training and supervision. This was an important foundation stone for subsequent efforts to develop the 'extended policing family' and to foster closer working between the public and private sectors.

3.23 In December 2001 the HMIC thematic inspection *Open All Hours* was published. This included recommendations to address the accessibility and visibility of police services and the 'reassurance gap'. Specifically, it recommended that:

> *"ACPO, APA and the Home Office, in consultation with relevant representative bodies, should develop strategic guidance on the process of civilianisation and avoid a simplistic focus on overall police numbers."*

3.24 The Police Reform Act 2002 contained a number of important provisions including:

- Changes to pay and condition arrangements for officers.
- Initiatives to improve attendance and ill-health management.
- Changes to training and leadership development.

- A greater focus on performance and standards, including the introduction of the PSU.
- Efforts to reduce bureaucracy.
- Reform of the public complaints process and the establishment of the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC).
- An enhanced role and empowerment of police staff in key roles.
- The ability of chief officers to accredit community safety schemes.

3.25 The reform programme was supported by a number of parallel initiatives and developments, including the establishment of a Policing Bureaucracy Taskforce. Amongst the many recommendations made by the taskforce was a repeat of the call for strategic guidance to inform civilianisation decisions.

3.26 The publication of the first National Policing Plan enabled the government to formally set out its priorities for policing over a three-year cycle. The challenge for chief officers was increasingly to manage the 'tensions' between addressing a radical reform agenda, the increasing specification of national priorities, whilst still delivering a locally accountable policing service.

Key issues and themes

3.27 What emerges from this summary of the historical development of the civilianisation process?

- At both national and force level, strategic vision and direction in this area have been weak.
- The wide variation in the ratio of officers to police staff across forces and within specific functions and roles is not new.
- Historically, major drivers included: the inability of forces to recruit sufficient police officers; a growing recognition of the requirement for specialist skills and experience; the recognition that non-sworn staff perform crucial operational and operational support roles; the requirement to deliver value-for-money and to provide efficient and effective services.
- Civilianisation raises fundamental questions about the nature of policing and police work. There has been a long-standing debate about what constitutes 'proper police work', the 'core' responsibilities of a public police service.
- A consistent theme in the literature is a need to provide better support for officers, in particular patrol officers, to deliver a service, to reduce bureaucracy and to raise the status of the constable.
- Both historical and comparative analysis reveal the strength and impact of police culture. Whilst dramatic improvements have taken place, the view that police staff are second class and a cheap option still persists.

3.28   The aim of this section has not been simply to provide a synopsis of recent historical trends, but to illustrate that many of the issues considered in this report are not new. The very fact that they have persisted over such a long period indicates how deep-rooted they are – clearly a more radical approach is required to resolve them and shape the future of policing.

The role of police staff in police forces outside England and Wales

3.29   Part of this inspection has involved a comparison of approaches to the deployment and management of police staff in police organisations outside England and Wales. This has involved the following:

- An analysis of relevant literature.
- Visits to the Republic of Ireland, Tayside Police, Police Service of Northern Ireland and Berlin.
- Detailed discussion with a Deputy Commissioner of Police from New Zealand, who was working with HMIC over the period of the inspection.
- Questionnaires to selected police forces and organisations in the USA, Canada, New Zealand, Australia and Europe.

3.30   These countries and police departments were selected as it was felt their experience of workforce modernisation and civilianisation would offer either interesting parallels or points of departure from the experience of forces in England and Wales. The level of response to the questionnaire varied greatly, as has the type of force surveyed. The aim has been to gain a broad understanding of some of the more important issues impacting upon the processes in order to identify significant similarities and differences in approach. There is a lack of relevant comparative policing studies in this field. Comparative analysis should form part of any regime of performance monitoring but efforts to acquire meaningful comparative data have proved difficult.

North America

3.31   The historical development of civilianisation in North America has strong parallels with that in England in Wales and it is apparent that there has been strong opposition from police officer unions to the expansion of non-sworn officers. One consequence of this has been a widespread demarcation of roles along operational and non-operational lines.

3.32   Trend data for the eight-year period 1995/96 – 2002/03 were provided by five of the seven US respondents. There are significant differences in this trend data between individual police departments and no overall conclusions can be drawn. For instance, while Houston has experienced a reduction in police staff representation from 29%

to 24%, Milwaukee has increased from 19% to 25%. While only Dallas, Phoenix and San Diego indicated that they operate a formal career development or leadership scheme for their police staff, five of the seven departments now employ police staff in strategic positions, performing roles previously occupied by an assistant or deputy chief police officer.

3.33 All of the departments that responded have mixed supervisory relationships and listed a range of positions where non-sworn staff directly supervise and manage officers. These included financial and HR management, analytical and research posts, scientific investigation and forensic roles.

3.34 As part of the questionnaire, the inspection team was keen to ascertain the approach to managing the 'tension' between increasing civilianisation and the suitable deployment of officers unfit for full operational duties. Three departments indicated that they specifically maintain roles for officers no longer able to perform the full range of duties and that this helps to inform decision making around civilianisation. However, only one department indicated that this was a formalised and documented policy.

3.35 Police departments were also questioned regarding any issues they had encountered integrating officers and police staff into the workplace. A range of issues were highlighted, including difficulties caused by differences in pay and conditions arrangements, providing a meaningful career structure for police staff and the existence of a 'them and us' divide, with specific resistance being identified from first-line police officer supervisors.

3.36 In terms of the 'front-line' deployment of police staff, only San Diego and Los Angeles utilise police staff in roles that require them to exercise 'police type powers'. For instance, San Diego makes extensive use of police investigative aides and community service officers in a range of criminal investigation, traffic and community policing roles. This includes the power to detain suspects and to arrest for 'misdemeanour' type offences. Four respondents stated they train and/or equip police staff in front-line roles to protect themselves. For instance, Dallas Police Department provides training in self-defence tactics and provides ballistic/knife resistant vests, handcuffs and incapacitant sprays.

3.37 The expansion of non-sworn roles is developing in Canada on the basis of identification of six core functions of policing and questioning of the need for using sworn officers to fulfil all of these. The categories are: response to public calls, referral to other agencies, prevention of offences, public education, solving crime and law enforcement.

3.38 The questionnaire addressed the robustness of operational performance monitoring processes and evaluation of civilianisation initiatives. None of the departments who responded conduct any form of analysis of posts before and after

they are civilianised; review public perception or satisfaction regarding the use of police staff; survey officers and police staff regarding their job satisfaction; or review other aspects of the civilianisation process.

New Zealand

3.39   New Zealand is a national force organised on a district basis. Between 1972 and 1996 there was a significant increase in police staff numbers from 278 to 1,770. This has subsequently stabilised and between 1996 and 2003 the proportion of police staff has remained consistently between 20% and 22% of total staff.

3.40   During the 1980s a series of organisational reviews provided impetus to the civilianisation process. The Police Amendment Act 1989 led to the Commissioner becoming, for the first time, the employer of police staff. The Commissioner was also empowered to authorise non-sworn members of staff to exercise police powers, except the power of arrest and search by means of warrant. This greater flexibility enabled the Commissioner to appoint either sworn or non-sworn staff to a range of positions dependent upon their experience and qualification. A national process of job evaluation helped rationalisation and pay structures were related to role, ensuring officers and police staff received the same pay for the same job. This rationalisation of pay structures has been accompanied by the accommodation of police staff in the Police Association so both officers and police staff are represented by the same body.

3.41   The perceived advantages of employing police staff were considered to be: cost effectiveness; the ability to target training more effectively; the introduction of specialist skills and expertise; enhanced continuity of staff in post and the introduction of fresh ideas and perspectives. Although few disadvantages were identified, reference was made to cultural challenges and the lack of officer acceptance, with a significant perception of police staff as 'second-class citizens'. There were also problems regarding the placement of officers no longer fit for the full range of duties.

3.42   Police staff supervise and manage officers in a range of positions. The force has also recently civilianised a deputy commissioner position with prime responsibility for resource management. However, the incumbent also has line management responsibility for four of the twelve police districts.

3.43   The requirement to exercise police powers and the benefits of operational training and experience, together with public perception and 'political' considerations, are seen as major influences on the degree of civilianisation.

3.44   The Police Act 1958 has enabled the Commissioner to swear in individuals temporarily to perform duties usually the preserve of a sworn officer. This facility is used to empower private security personnel, for instance involved in custody/prisoner handling duties on behalf of the New Zealand Police, to enable them to search

detainees and to obtain evidential samples. Those engaged in temporary sworn positions receive some training in the use of handcuffs, pepper spray and self-defence.

Australia

3.45 The Australian Federal Police has integrated police officers and police staff into one workforce; the guiding principle for filling any position is to employ the person with the most appropriate skills. As a consequence, posts may alternate between sworn and non-sworn employees.

Europe

3.46 The limited responses to the questionnaire from European forces indicated that while the employment of civilian staff by police forces appeared to be a common phenomenon, it was very largely confined to administrative functions within the police service. It does appear that the UK police service is leading rather than following. For example, until recently most police functions within the French National Police were the responsibility of police officers; this could extend from control room and scenes of crime personnel through to police drivers and all internal administrative duties, including finance, personnel and telecommunications.

3.47 The slow growth of change in the National Police has coincided with the development of municipal police employed by local authorities. In terms of their role and responsibilities, they have similarities to CSOs in England and Wales. Interestingly, they are committed to a general uniform patrol function in the towns and cities, which the National Police found it increasingly difficult to fulfil.

3.48 Dutch police forces have made use of voluntary police officers. There are currently more than 2,000 civilian volunteers active in the Netherlands performing basic policing tasks. The objective is not just to increase police strength but also to strengthen bonds between police forces and communities. A recent development has been the introduction of 'voluntairs' who are civilians assigned to specific tasks such as basic forensic research and camera surveillance.

3.49 An Garda Síochána (meaning in English: 'the Guardians of the Peace'), the Republic of Ireland's police service, was visited during the inspection as a benchmarking exercise. The strength of the Garda is 11,747, which includes 1,700 detectives who always operate in civilian attire. There are, in addition, 1,140 civilian support staff who are primarily civil servants employed by the Department of Justice. Only detectives carry firearms – it is a tradition of the service that standard policing is carried out in both rural and urban areas by uniformed officers equipped only with a wooden truncheon.

3.50 There has been limited civilianisation within the Garda, primarily because of significant legislative and historical barriers that exist. Control rooms, for example, are

entirely staffed by police officers and those officers working in that environment were doubtful that civilians would be able to perform the task.

3.51 Garda technical staff provide technical support for the communications area. Most police officers with technical or specialist skills are recruited into the Garda with pre-existing qualifications and experience in those areas. Such people are fully attested into the Garda but with limited police training – amounting to a few weeks rather than the full two years probationary and training period that a 'full' Garda officer would need to do. Such specialist officers are known as 'Special Regulation' officers. For Special Regulation Garda to move into 'normal' policing activities they would have to resign their commission and start the probationary period and training again from scratch. Police officer powers are never required or exercised by Special Regulation officers in the technical areas.

Key issues and themes

3.52 So what does comparative analysis tell us about civilianisation and workforce modernisation? Some key issues and themes include the following:

- The variation in the percentage of police staff in the organisations surveyed is marked, ranging from 3% in Greece and 4% in Portugal to 22% in New Zealand, 30% in Ottawa and 35% in Las Vegas.
- Forces in England and Wales have one of the highest ratios of police staff to officers and use their police staff in a wider range of roles and responsibilities, including front-line roles, than almost any other country.
- The historical development of civilianisation in many countries shows a period of rapid growth, during which a range of clerical, administrative and operational support roles are civilianised, followed by a period of consolidation and much slower growth. Again, this tends to mirror historical development within England and Wales.
- There are significant similarities in terms of the criteria applied to guide civilianisation decisions and the perceived advantages and disadvantages of the process across the various countries surveyed.
- Budgetary constraints and cultural issues – including officer and trade union resistance and the need to accommodate police officers no longer fit for the full range of duties – are important constraining factors in terms of limiting further civilianisation.
- Some evidence was found in many of the organisations examined of an element of 'them and us' and a perception of police staff as 'second-class citizens', although further detailed analysis is required in this area.
- Limited evidence was found of a structured regime of strategic planning and performance management.

3.53 Whilst there were strong similarities in approach, there are also some important differences which are worthy of further analysis. For instance, the New Zealand Police appears to have moved some way towards more integrated terms and conditions and pay arrangements for officers and police staff performing similar roles and all staff are represented by the same staff association. The ability of the Commissioner to temporarily swear in staff required to perform some of the duties of a sworn officer is also of interest. Similarly, the management and use of community service officers and investigative aides in some US police departments could provide important insights into the long-term management of CSOs and other front-line roles in England and Wales.

Modernisation in other occupational sectors

3.54 Reform in other public services, in particular the introduction and development of non-core professionals, has been a noticeable feature in their growth in recent years and may provide useful parallels with the expansion of police staff. Coverage of these issues is necessarily brief but this short résumé is included to give a flavour of activity in other areas of employment. The literature review, which is included as Appendix J, covers them more fully.

Education

3.55 One service that has seen a large expansion of support staff has been state education. The introduction of teaching assistants has been a major on-going investment in the education system over the past years and there has been significant work completed in increasing skill levels of other support posts, including information and communication technology (ICT) technicians and bursars, who are increasingly being seen as business managers. Teaching unions have been cautious in their acceptance of some reforms and there are still wide differences in some areas with the largest teaching union declining to sign up to some agreements.

Health

3.56 Within the National Health Service (NHS) there have been extensive changes to the delivery of services with reform of personnel practice and responsibilities. Greater media emphasis has been placed on other reforms such as the future role and management of foundation hospitals, but it is argued that the growth of 'support workers' is a far more significant change. These support workers are expected to play an increasingly important role in delivering patient care and include nursing auxiliaries, care assistants in nursing homes, pharmacy technicians and occupational therapy assistants. The introduction of the role of nurse practitioner to deal with ailments and injuries that do not require the full training and expertise of a doctor is particularly noteworthy.

3.57   Government proposals for the health service are outlined in the NHS plan and it seeks to break down old hierarchical structures of working and replace them with flexible team working between different clinical professionals. It cites nurses in Accident and Emergency departments who are freeing up doctors' time by treating a wider range of ailments themselves and it is expected that these responsibilities will increase further as the number of support staff expand. A series of 'interprofessional health care' projects are being developed so that doctors, nurses and other healthcare professionals can be trained together in common skill areas.

3.58   A modernisation agency has been developed within the NHS to oversee reforms, to embed best practice and to bring stakeholders and professional groups together to deliver change.

Legal services

3.59   The expansion of the 'paralegal' sector has been extensive both in the UK and in the United States. In this country a paralegal is a legal assistant who is qualified through a combination of training and work experience. Their qualifications fall short of the demands made of a solicitor and they are employed in a variety of public and private sector arenas. They perform a range of tasks and work under the direction and supervision of a solicitor. The Law Society now accepts paralegals and their qualifications, some of whom will go on to qualify as solicitors but others will remain as career paralegals. They allow solicitors to concentrate on more complex cases and early research indicates that they increase the productivity of law firms.

Prison Service

3.60   The Prison Service is a large and complex organisation with responsibility for 136 establishments, a workforce of approximately 45,000 and a budget that represents 16% of the total spending on the criminal justice system. There is an ongoing commitment within the service to advance performance against targets and to increase efficiency.

3.61   Reform of the Prison Service began with the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994, where the terms and conditions of prison officers were amended and their right to strike removed, although this is now subject to replacement by a voluntary agreement.

3.62   The Prison Service has also been subject to a radical programme of outsourcing, with nine prisons currently being run by private companies.

3.63   Operational support grades were introduced a number of years ago and are now employed on a wide variety of duties; these include checking in and supervision of visitors, patrolling the perimeter and grounds, searching buildings, switchboard duties and administrative work. More recently, the development of the National Offender

Management Service (NOMS) involves the transition of the Prison Service and the National Probation Service into an integrated service aimed at providing end-to-end offender management.

Probation Service

3.64   The National Probation Service has a total staff complement of 18,000. Its objectives include minimising the impact of crime on communities and especially on victims of serious crime. The service is committed to the rehabilitation of offenders given community sentences and those released from prison. In recent years, the technician role of the probation service officer has developed and these employees are now taking on much of what was traditionally the role of fully qualified probation officers.

3.65   The Probation Service has been subject to very considerable upheaval in the recent past, moving in 2001 from an organisation of 54 quasi-autonomous independent probation services to the National Probation Service that year. In January 2004 it was announced that this would itself be replaced by the NOMS, which would combine both the Probation and Prison Services.

3.66   Along with the planned major restructuring of the Probation Service, it is intended that there will also be major changes in the provision of service. This follows on from the Correctional Services Review conducted in 2003. In this review the benefits of competition from the private and voluntary sectors were highlighted and a process of 'contestability' will commence shortly for the provision of correction services.

Fire Service

3.67   There are 58 separate fire brigades in England and Wales, run independently under the command of a chief fire officer. In Scotland, there are eight brigades under the command of a Firemaster.

3.68   In 2002 the Fire Service was the subject of the Independent Review, headed by Sir George Bain, which made a number of recommendations concerning the management and operation of the Fire Service. While the Review was impressed by the quality of service given by the Fire Service to the community, it also found that it operated within a system of 'rigid prescriptions and restrictive practices'. This meant that it was not always in the right place at the right time to respond most effectively and efficiently to the community's needs. Because the structure of the Fire Service was out of date and inflexible, it concluded that change was 'long overdue'. The review is currently being implemented.

Her Majesty's Customs & Excise

3.69   A modernisation strategy was introduced about three years ago with regions giving way to divisions. The service has had ring-fenced funding introduced in areas like tobacco smuggling and has used this funding to increase overall resources. It is bringing ideas and people in from outside for the first time and is disrupting supplies beyond the UK, an area it has not worked in before.

UK Immigration Service

3.70 The UK Immigration Service (UKIS) comprises a mix of warranted and non-warranted staff. Warrants are granted to staff when the role they are performing requires it. UKIS has introduced a modernisation programme and the measures that are required to deliver this. As part of this work, the role of assistant immigration officer has been introduced and these members of staff are now undertaking many of the tasks that would have previously been carried out by sworn immigration officers. There has also been an increase in detention space in order to satisfy increasing demands and this function has largely been given over to the private sector.

Vision Statement

A service where all staff are equally valued, where professional expertise is given just recognition in all fields and a service that acknowledges the benefits of a diverse workforce in providing the best possible service to local communities.

Key Message

Civilianisation has been significant in terms of introducing large numbers of women and ethnic minority staff to police organisations. However, many police staff still perceive that they are treated as second-class employees; there is a 'them and us' attitude within the service and the majority of police staff work in low grade, low status roles.

Chapter Summary

This chapter will outline:

- Issues relating to the cultural integration of police officers and police staff in the workplace
- Ways in which police staff and police officers receive different treatment, including their role in managing specialist departments, the impact of funding, terms and conditions
- Diversity issues impacting on cultural integration
- The value placed by the service on the contribution of police staff
- The way in which police staff feel they are treated; and
- Improvements in cultural integration in recent years

Introduction

Key issues

4.1   The seemingly simple question – "What does it feel like to be a police staff member?" – is crucial because there is an important relationship between the quality of public service and the treatment and status of staff who deliver the service. In particular:

- Are there significant differences in the way police staff and police officers are treated?
- If so, what are they and what are the implications of this differential treatment?
- How well integrated are officers and police staff in the workplace?
- Is there a difference in the perceived worth of the contribution of police staff and police officers to the service?
- How do police staff feel they are treated as members of the police service?
- What has been, and what will be, the impact of the police culture on present and future reform and modernisation?

4.2   These are complex matters with a strong historical and cultural dimension, but it is important to explore the differential status and treatment of officers and police staff within police organisations.

4.3   The traditional perception of civilianisation as a cost-cutting measure, and thus seeing police staff as cheap labour, is pernicious but still persists in parts of the service. It is reinforced both across the service and within forces by a number of unintentional, but highly symbolic, signals regarding the relative worth of officers and police staff to the organisation. A striking example of this is the very different emphasis placed on the training and development of police officers as opposed to their police staff colleagues. This discrepancy cannot easily be accounted for by a rational organisational calculation of need.

Management of specialist departments

4.4   The inspection team found many practices which police staff perceive as devaluing their professional expertise and experience and which they saw as suggesting they were less capable than officers. There is a tendency, for instance, in some forces, that if a department headed by a police staff member is seen to be performing poorly, the solution is to appoint a senior police officer to take charge. This is seen in a very negative light by other police staff members. Selection of individuals for key positions should be based on whether they possess the correct set of skills rather than whether they are a police officer or not.

4.5   Also, there are still a number of police forces where officers head specialist non-operational departments, such as HR management. The main arguments for this approach appear to be the importance of having police experience and a police perspective in such departments, or to provide important career development opportunities for police officers. Overall, HMI was not convinced by these arguments. Modern HR management is a very specialist field and chief officer teams need to be assured that they have the highest level of professional advice and support. This is not to devalue the importance of police experience, but there are many ways of introducing this, even at senior level. Police staff highlighted examples of police officers with very limited experience and no professional background or qualifications being 'parachuted' into such roles for short periods of time. In some cases, this was done to find a temporary home for recent graduates of the Strategic Command Course looking for ACPO posts.

Impact of funding

4.6   The current funding regime, the political pre-occupation with police officer numbers and the lack of a longer-term planned approach to civilianisation in forces all help reinforce negative perceptions of police staff worth. Often, when cuts need to be made, it is the police staff establishment that is cut rather than police officers. In addition, the large number of short-term, ring-fenced Home Office grants, many of which are funding police staff posts, tends to generate not only feelings of job insecurity, but the feeling that forces are neither truly committed to the process nor genuinely value their police staff. HMI appreciates that these matters are complex but it is clear nonetheless that they have a significant impact on police staff perception.

Terms and conditions

4.7   There are many roles within the service, such as in communication centres and in scientific support, where police officers and police staff are working side by side performing the same job. The fact that officers are generally on a higher pay scale, have different terms and conditions of employment and often have better access to training and development opportunities, can and does cause friction, as well as raising issues relating to equal pay. However, in general, the inspection uncovered high levels of integration in mixed teams working under these circumstances. Many police staff clearly enjoy their role, are committed and dedicated to the service and feel part of an integrated team, although in many cases this is as a result of individual interactions and group dynamics, rather than being formally encouraged and championed by senior managers.

Cultural acceptance

4.8   The strong resistance to the increased use of police staff, so apparent in the service only a few years ago and still present in some quarters, is undoubtedly weakening. However, some senior police officers are still reluctant to accept the increasing use of police staff. To quote one:

> *"It could all go too far…when is it going to stop?"*

4.9   Tensions were found in some forces around mixed supervisory relationships, particularly where police staff are supervising police officers. This often resulted from a lack of understanding of the different pay, terms and conditions that relate to each group.

Diversity issues

4.10   The high proportion of women police staff is a positive feature of the civilianisation process. However, examples were found where female police staff were clearly perceived by some officers in a negative way. One senior police officer commented that:

> *"The type of work available suited the second bread winner."*

4.11   This gave the clear implication that their pay, development and other career needs were less important. Equally, the high proportion of women police staff should not be seen as an easy answer to developing a diverse workforce, as a disproportionate number of women occupy the lowest paid roles.

4.12   These negative perceptions affected members of the inspection team. The team was relatively large and comprised a mix of officers, police staff and Home Office civil servants, visiting a number of forces across the country. The only members of the team who experienced any difficulties entering police buildings were female police staff, who on a number of occasions had to be 'vouched for' by accompanying police officers in order to gain entry, despite the fact that they carried their own force identification or warrant cards. Also striking were the comments of a very senior police staff member working in a large metropolitan force. Despite his success, seniority and influence at both a force and service level, he saw himself as a member of:

> *"…the largest minority group in the service."*

4.13   Another member of police staff in a provincial force spoke of discrimination in the workplace and said that she felt discriminated against least of all because of her ethnic origin, then for her disability, more significantly still as a female but most of all as police staff member.

4.14   Overall, the inspection team found limited evidence of forces proactively identifying and dealing with these cultural issues as part of a wider approach to diversity and ensuring fairness in the workplace.

Findings from research

4.15   Parrett (1991 and 1998) provides a comprehensive assessment of civilianisation across the service and used Norfolk Constabulary as a case study to examine a range of issues, including the integration of officers and police staff. This research identified some evidence of 'cultural problems' and a 'them and us' divide. A questionnaire to officers and police staff in Norfolk highlighted some interesting differences in perception and a divergence of views between officers and police staff over a range of matters. Some of these questions were repeated in a questionnaire that was sent to a number of forces for random distribution amongst officers and police staff. Whilst this research suggests that some cultural issues still remain, there has been significant progress in a number of areas. Some of the most significant findings from a comparison of the two pieces of research include:

Supervision

4.16   In 1991, 89% of officers disagreed with the statement **"Only police staff should supervise other police staff"** with only 7% agreeing and 5% neutral. In 2004, only 64% of officers disagreed, with 22% agreeing and 14% neutral. In 1991, 90% of officers disagreed with the statement **"Police staff should be able to supervise police officers"**; 6% agreed and 4% were neutral. However, in 2004 only 60% of officers disagreed, with 30% agreeing and 10% neutral.

4.17   This suggests that, whilst police officers are still broadly resistant to the prospect of police staff supervising officers, there has been a significant shift in the opinion of officers between 1991 and 2004, with many fewer officers being opposed to this concept.

Likelihood of industrial action

4.18   In 1991, over half (56%) of officers agreed with the statement **"Police staff will go on strike sometime in the future"**; 10% disagreed and a third (33%) were neutral. However, in 2004 under a third (31%) of officers agreed with this statement, a quarter (25%) disagreed and 44% were neutral.

4.19   In 1991, there was a significant difference between officer and police staff responses to the same statement, with 56% of officers agreeing (10% disagreed and 33% neutral) whilst only 13% of police staff agreed (53% disagreed and 36% neutral). However, in 2004 there was considerably less difference between the officer and police

staff responses. 31% of officers agreed, 25% disagreed and 44% were neutral whilst 20% of police staff agreed, 43% disagreed and 38% were neutral.

4.20   There has been a convergence of opinion between police officers and police staff on the likelihood of police staff taking industrial action in the future, with officers regarding this as a significantly less likely scenario in 2004 than in 1991.

Public perception

4.21   In 1991, 45% of officers agreed that **"The public cannot tell the difference between police officers and police staff"**; 43% disagreed and 12% were neutral. In 2004, only 18% agreed with the statement, 68% disagreed and 14% were neutral.

4.22   In 1991, there was a significant difference between officer and police staff responses to the suggestion that **"When going to a police station the public prefer to see a police officer"**, with 81% of officers agreeing, just 7% disagreeing and 12% neutral. Some 35% of police staff agreed, 25% disagreed and 41% were neutral. However, in 2004 there was very little difference between officer and police staff opinion, with 66% of officers agreeing, 16% disagreeing and 18% neutral, whilst 55% of police staff agreed, 22% disagreed and 23% were neutral.

4.23   It is the view, therefore, of police officers that members of the public appreciate the difference between police officers and police staff more clearly in 2004 than they did in 1991. Interestingly, more police staff feel that the public prefer to see a police officer at a police station in 2004 than was the case in 1991.

Officer perception of police staff contribution

4.24   In 1991, 60% of officers agreed with the statement **"Most police staff do a good job"**; 18% disagreed and 21% were neutral. In 2004, however, an overwhelming majority (83%) of officers agreed with only 4% disagreeing and 12% neutral.

4.25   In 1991, only 28% of officers agreed with the statement **"The police service is more effective in terms of service delivery as a direct result of employing police staff"**. Almost half (44%) disagreed and 28% were neutral. However, in 2004 the results are almost the exact reverse with 44% of officers agreeing, 24% disagreeing and 32% neutral.

4.26   In 1991, there was a significant difference between officer and police staff responses to the suggestion that **"Most police staff do a good job"**, with just 60% of officers agreeing, 18% disagreeing and 21% neutral, whilst 87% of police staff agreed, just 4% disagreed and 10% were neutral. However, in 2004 there was almost no difference between officer and police staff opinion, with 83% of officers agreeing with the statement, 4% disagreeing and 12% neutral whilst 88% of police staff agreed, 3% disagreed and 9% were neutral.

4.27 There has been very little change in opinion of police staff from 1991 to 2004 in respect of their views on whether **"Police staff are an essential part of modern policing"**. In 1991, 95% of police staff agreed, 0% disagreed and 5% were neutral, whilst in 2004, 96% agreed, 0% disagreed and 3% were neutral. However, the difference of opinion between officers and police staff was greater in 1991 with just 68% of officers agreeing, 14% disagreeing and 17% neutral compared to 82% of officers agreeing in 2004, 6% disagreeing and 12% neutral.

4.28 The responses to these questions suggest that, whilst some difficulties do still remain in terms of the acceptance and valuing of the contribution of police staff by their officer colleagues, there has nonetheless been a significant shift in the opinion of police officers over the past twelve years. Police staff are now more valued and their contribution to policing better recognised by officers.

Openness to change

4.29 There has been negligible change in opinion of police staff from 1991 to 2004 with regard to the question of whether **"There is still scope within the service for further use of police staff"**. In 1991, 80% of police staff agreed, 5% disagreed and 14% were neutral, whilst in 2004 83% of police staff agreed, 6% disagreed and 10% were neutral. However, the difference of opinion between officers and police staff was greater in 1991 with just 55% of officers agreeing, 31% disagreeing and 14% neutral, compared to 67% of officers agreeing in 2004, 14% disagreeing and 19% neutral.

4.30 Perhaps surprisingly, given the significant degree of civilianisation that has taken place between 1991 and 2004, a higher proportion of officers now see further scope for the use of police staff than did thirteen years ago.

UNISON Survey 2002

4.31 During 2002 UNISON, which currently represents around 55% of police staff in England and Wales, commissioned an independent survey by NOP Research to obtain a more accurate view of the way police staff work and how they feel about their jobs and their treatment at work. *Equal Before the Law: Attitudes and Aspirations of Police Staff* was the first national attitude survey of police staff. The survey very usefully attempted to identify differences in perception and attitude across a number of occupational groups, including staff performing the following roles: clerical and administrative, control room, analyst and intelligence, crime and incident, management, criminal justice, custody, public enquiry offices, scientific support, IT and traffic wardens.

4.32 The largest occupational group, nearly a third of UNISON's police staff members, are administrative and clerical workers. Around 87% of these are women and nearly half fell into the lowest pay bracket used in the survey. Perhaps not surprisingly for

these staff issues relating to grading, equal pay and fair treatment for part-time workers were prominent. The second largest occupational group of UNISON members, accounting for about 15% of police staff membership, are staff who work in control rooms. Around 71% of these are women. Of all the occupational groups surveyed, control room staff felt least supported by their managers and over half stated they would not recommend their job to others. Other key findings from the survey include the following:

- Over half of respondents did not feel valued by their force, although this varied across occupational groups. Control room, public enquiry staff and traffic wardens felt least valued.

- 63% of those who responded felt there was a status divide between officers and police staff.

- Low and unequal pay were major concerns – half of all respondents earned between £200 – £300 per week and 15% between £150 – £200 per week. There was also a significant gender divide in terms of pay – 59% of women, compared to 38% of men, earned £250 or less. Men were four times more likely than women to fall into the top weekly pay scale of £350 and over per week.

- Lower wage earners, women and older staff received the least amount of work related training. Over 40% of staff aged 45 or over did not have a current personal development plan.

- 66% of respondents said their stress levels had increased when compared with the same period in the previous year, although in some occupational groups the figure was much higher. For example, 82% of control room staff felt that stress levels had increased over this period, while 63% felt their morale had declined over the same period.

- 76% considered that their workload had increased and 38% indicated that staff levels within their department had fallen, suggesting that higher demands are being made of fewer staff. Some 49% did not feel adequately supported by their manager in relation to workload pressures.

- Perhaps most worryingly from a service perspective, the principal reason for staff wishing to leave the service was that they felt undervalued.

- The survey also highlighted issues of abuse and harassment – 41% of respondents had been subject to, or had witnessed a colleague being subject to, verbal abuse. The figure was 32% in respect of racial harassment, homophobia or bullying.

- 63% felt police staff in general were not resistant to change and 88% felt that they as individuals were not resistant. Some 71% supported the granting of additional powers and duties to police staff.

4.33 The UNISON/NOP survey highlights a number of important issues. The perception of unequal status, of not being valued by the service and the very real danger of the polarisation of police staff by gender, age, pay and training fault lines, is of real concern.

4.34 Whilst HMI was pleased to note that a number of police forces decided to conduct their own attitude surveys amongst their police staff in the wake of the NOP research, limited evidence was found during the fieldwork of active action planning in the wake of either the national NOP or local surveys to address these important issues.

Vision Statement

A planning framework underpinned by a longer-term resourcing strategy and a performance management regime that reflects efficient and effective use of resources and can apply across the extended policing family.

Key Message

The service urgently needs to develop a coherent and long-term national strategic vision and planning framework to support workforce modernisation and the effective utilisation of all its staff.

Chapter Summary

This chapter will outline:

- The impact of the national strategic and policy making framework on workforce planning
- How the funding of the service, in particular the CFF, has impacted on civilianisation and modernisation initiatives
- The need for funding to adequately cater for the management of growth, including supervisory arrangements, training and equipment
- The fragmented approach that has existed to police staff issues up to now and the need for a more joined-up approach if workforce modernisation is to be successfully progressed
- How performance management needs to be developed to better reflect the support infrastructure, optimisation of resource usage and the extended policing family; and
- How improved benchmarking, across forces, within the wider public and private sector and abroad can help provide a more integrated approach to knowledge management in the field of workforce modernisation

Overview

5.1 Current arrangements for funding the police service, together with the way in which strategy is set and performance monitored, do not support the workforce modernisation agenda. Strategy, funding and performance follow the National Policing Plan but they are based on historical formulae for determining police force size and strengths in officer numbers alone. There is a pressing need to change the current emphasis on officer numbers alone to reflect a more rounded workforce with the skills and abilities to contribute to the effective building of safer communities.

5.2 The inspection confirmed the absence of a service-wide vision for civilianisation and workforce modernisation. This is replicated by a lack of corporate vision and strategy at a force level, where a lack of ownership was often apparent within chief officer teams and police authorities. This lack of strategic direction means there is a real danger of the service stumbling from one initiative to the next without synthesising the benefits.

5.3 The traditional approach to civilianisation and decision-making around the mix of staff and skills has been ad hoc and initiative-driven. It can most adequately be characterised as a 'cut and paste' approach, ie the simple substitution of a police officer by a police staff member in a particular post or function. The workforce modernisation agenda opens up very real opportunities for a more holistic and integrated approach which challenges traditional resource allocation, including that relating to front-line service delivery, and encourages process re-engineering and an examination of new ways of working.

National strategic framework

5.4 Policing strategy in the 43 Home Office police forces in England and Wales is led and influenced by a tri-partite governing structure consisting of the Home Secretary, police authorities and chief constables. In simplified terms, the Home Secretary produces the National Policing Plan, which provides the framework for local police planning over the next three years. In turn, each police authority is responsible for producing a three-year strategic plan for its force and the chief constable is responsible for delivering the plan.

National Policing Plan Priorities 2004 – 2007

- Providing a citizen focused service to the public which responds to the needs of individuals and communities and inspires confidence in the police, particularly amongst minority ethnic communities.
- Tackling anti-social behaviour and disorder.
- Continuing to reduce burglary, vehicle crime, robbery and drug-related crime in line with the government's Public Service Agreement targets.
- Combating serious and organised crime, both across and within force boundaries.
- Narrowing the justice gap by increasing the number of offences brought to justice.

Vision

5.5 The government's recent green paper *Policing: Building safer communities together* sets out a vision for a "more unified, truly representative police service – with a better mix of skills at all levels, to ensure the best quality of service to communities." The document places a strong emphasis on community engagement in policing and provides a genuine opportunity to seize the initiative and link 'safer communities' work with workforce modernisation to ensure that the police service and partners are in an optimum state to deliver the outcomes of this strategy. The absence of a national strategy for HR in the police service, however, is a significant inhibitor in taking this issue forward. Furthermore, a number of aspects of the current planning structure are acting as barriers to the development of such a vision. Examples include the tri-partite structure, funding, force structure, local policing and performance management.

Tri-partite structure

5.6 The tri-partite structure gives some freedom to determine local needs whilst retaining a national policing framework and whilst in many ways this has succeeded, there are growing indications that the current structure is creating tensions that need addressing. It has proved particularly difficult, for example, to ensure consistency of approach across the service in a number of areas, such as the provision of training and IT services to the police service through the respective agencies, Centrex and the Police Information and Technology Organisation. Other examples include the approach to road safety cameras and the deployment of CSOs.

5.7 The tri-partite structure has been a significant factor in maintaining a balanced approach to policing but it has produced a system where all three parties need to agree before any standardisation is possible. Individual chief officers have operational

autonomy and they hold great sway in deciding whether nationally recommended initiatives, equipment or procedures are adopted. Whilst ACPO has issued guidance in many areas, it has no mandating powers and this leads to widespread inconsistency. Police authorities have also exercised their influence on localised spending and this has added to variable take-up of national ideas.

Funding

5.8   Each police authority receives funding from three main sources:

Central funds:

1. Police Grant – distributed by the Home Office and derived from Formula Spending Shares
2. Revenue Support Grant, including business rates – distributed on the basis of Formula Spending Shares and resident population

Local fund:

3. Council Tax Precept – set by the police authority and collected by local authorities

In addition, there are numerous small grants provided centrally for specific expenditure, such as the CFF, Airwave Grant, BCU Grant and CSO Grant.

An example of a typical force budget

5.9   A typical force of 2,140 officers and 1,010 police staff had a budget for 2003/04 totalling £143.6m, financed as follows:

Figure 1 – Example of a typical police force budget

Financing of 2003/04 budget

	£m	%
Police Grant	65.8	45.8
Revenue Support Grant and business rates	38.1	26.5
CFF Grant	4.0	2.8
Private Finance Initiative Grant	2.5	1.8
Airwave Grant	1.0	0.7
PNB – Special Priority Payments Grant	0.7	0.5
CSO Grant	0.2	0.1
Collection Fund Surplus	–	–
Council Tax	31.3	21.8
Total Net Expenditure	143.6	100.0

5.10   Whilst the CFF provides only 2.8% of the total funding for this force, the pressure this creates on forces to maintain or increase police officer numbers is significant.

5.11 In addition to the large number of short-term, ring-fenced funding streams, force budgets are only determined in the autumn preceding the start of each financial year. This lack of a longer-term funding and resource allocation strategy results in a 'famine and feast' mentality and prevents effective medium to long-term workforce planning.

> ### Recommendation 1
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> HMI recommends that the Home Office develops a national police resourcing strategy to underpin the next release of the National Policing Plan, which will enable forces to plan more effectively in the medium term.

Crime Fighting Fund

5.12 The CFF provided chief officers in England and Wales with resources to recruit 9,000 officers over and above forces' previous recruitment plans in the three years 2000/01 to 2002/03. It further supported the recruitment of an additional 650 officers in 2003/04. During the first phase, 8,000 of the extra CFF-funded recruits were allocated to forces in proportion to their funding from the police grant formula. The remaining 1,000 were distributed between forces that made the best CFF bids. To qualify for a share of the CFF, all forces had to meet strict criteria set out in the CFF bidding guide.

Impact of the CFF on officer numbers

5.13 The CFF was designed to ensure that funds were used exclusively to increase officer numbers, as a previous funding stream had been diverted to other resources. In that respect, the CFF must be regarded as a success, with record numbers of officers being employed. As can be seen in Figure 2, since the inception of the CFF in April 2000, officer numbers have risen from just under 122,000 to more than 132,500. This represents an increase of 8.6% over a three-year period. This figure is likely to increase further to nearly 140,000 by the end of year 2003/04.

Figure 2 – Number of police officers[2]

Number of Police Officers, September 1997–March 2003

5.14 The CFF has, however, perpetuated the political preoccupation with police officer numbers at both national and local levels that was so evident during the inspection. Despite its success, many chief officers and BCU commanders commented on the negative impact the CFF had had on their ability to develop civilianisation or workforce modernisation initiatives. This lack of flexibility is exacerbated by the significant number of time-limited, ring-fenced grants that have become the favoured means of providing national support for local initiatives. To quote one finance director:

> *"I could save the police authority £400,000, but I am unable to do so because I cannot lose officers."*

5.15 Another force quoted a lengthy list of civilianisation initiatives that had effectively been put on hold because of the reduction in flexibility caused by the current funding regime.

5.16 Analysis of the practical impact of the CFF suggests that much of the criticism levelled at it may be unfounded. Many forces have recruited significantly above the level needed to meet the requirements of the CFF and the majority of the substantial growth in police officer numbers in 2003/04 is as a result of decisions at force level. However, forces remain unhappy about the principle of central influence on decisions relating to the most appropriate resource mix. Political pressures locally to maximise officer numbers have undoubtedly had a significant impact too. Furthermore, the fact that the police service's capacity to deliver is still seen in terms of officer numbers inevitably puts pressure on forces to maximise police officer recruitment. The 'Mixed

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2   Source: Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy Statistics

Economy' project in Surrey Police, referred to elsewhere in this report, is supported by the workforce modernisation implementation fund. Initial indications from this project suggest that it may be possible to deliver a more effective service at a lower cost with a workforce that contains fewer sworn police officers.

5.17 One example was found of a force that had planned during financial year 2002/03 to replace police officer supervisors with specialist members of police staff in their performance units and return these officers to front-line duty. This process was to have been funded by natural wastage and was therefore a one-for-one replacement. The CFF meant that the force needed to raise police officer numbers and consequently they were only able to fund the increase in police staff numbers by a rise in the precept. This has resulted in growth for which the force had not planned. The force explained that after financial year 2006/07 it would be left with three choices once CFF money had expired:

- To backfill the civilianised posts with police officers and make the police staff members redundant;
- To increase the precept further in order to continue the funding of the police staff posts; or
- To reduce police officer numbers by natural wastage.

5.18 Despite the significant increase in police officer numbers since 1997, police staff numbers have also increased substantially over the same period, funded in many forces by significant increases in local precept charges.

5.19 Whilst political considerations mean that, in the short term, a focus on police officer numbers is likely to remain, the allocation of funds needs to develop over time to fully reflect the force's commitment to front-line policing – including the contribution of police staff and the wider policing family – and its achievement of performance targets. Any changes to funding must also acknowledge the need to consider management and infrastructure costs when front-line resources are increased.

Recommendation 2

HMI recommends that the Home Office develops the CFF into a broader workforce modernisation fund, linked to a revised front-line policing measure that more fully reflects the contribution of police staff to service delivery.

Balancing efficiency with modernisation

5.20 A government review of efficiency, led by the Cabinet Office and the Treasury, commenced in the autumn of 2003. The review, headed by Sir Peter Gershon, is entitled *Releasing Resources to the Front-line* and applies across the range of public services. Two specific issues being considered as part of the review are particularly relevant to this inspection – back office functions and productive time.

Back office

5.21 Back office functions (such as HR, finance, ICT, and estate management) are essential in supporting front-line staff in their work and in managing resources effectively. The review team believes that significant improvements are possible across the public sector and is considering what improvements could be made if back office functions were provided on a more efficient basis and if best practice was achieved consistently and rapidly. This has obvious implications for the effective management and deployment of police staff.

Productive time

5.22 Within public services, most resources are spent on front-line staffing, but many staff are frustrated about the proportion of time front-line staff are able to spend meeting customer needs. Productive time can be reduced if people have to spend too much time serving the organisation rather than their customers, if support functions are inefficient or if too much time is spent customising straightforward tasks. The review is considering what measures could address these issues, along with reducing time lost due to factors such as high levels of turnover.

5.23 Overall, the review highlights the need to consider efficiency when progressing the modernisation agenda. Key to this must be the breaking down of many of the artificial barriers that currently exist between officers and police staff and a recognition of the holistic nature of the efficiency of policing, taking account of the contribution of the wider policing family.

Reduction in front-line supervision and management

5.24 The CFF approach has resulted in genuine difficulties in managing sudden growth across the service. After many years of declining officer numbers there has been a dramatic rise, but this has not been accompanied by investment in the supervisory, management and support infrastructure. This runs counter to rational workforce planning and organisation.

5.25 Figure 3 shows graphically the dramatic rise in officer numbers from a low point of over 420 head of population per officer in the year 2000/01 to fewer than 390 head

of population per officer in the year 2003/04. However, this increase in constables has not been matched with a similar growth in the number of sergeants (see Figure 4).

Figure 3 – Head of population per officer[2]

**Head of population per Officer England and Wales
1996/97 to 2003/04**
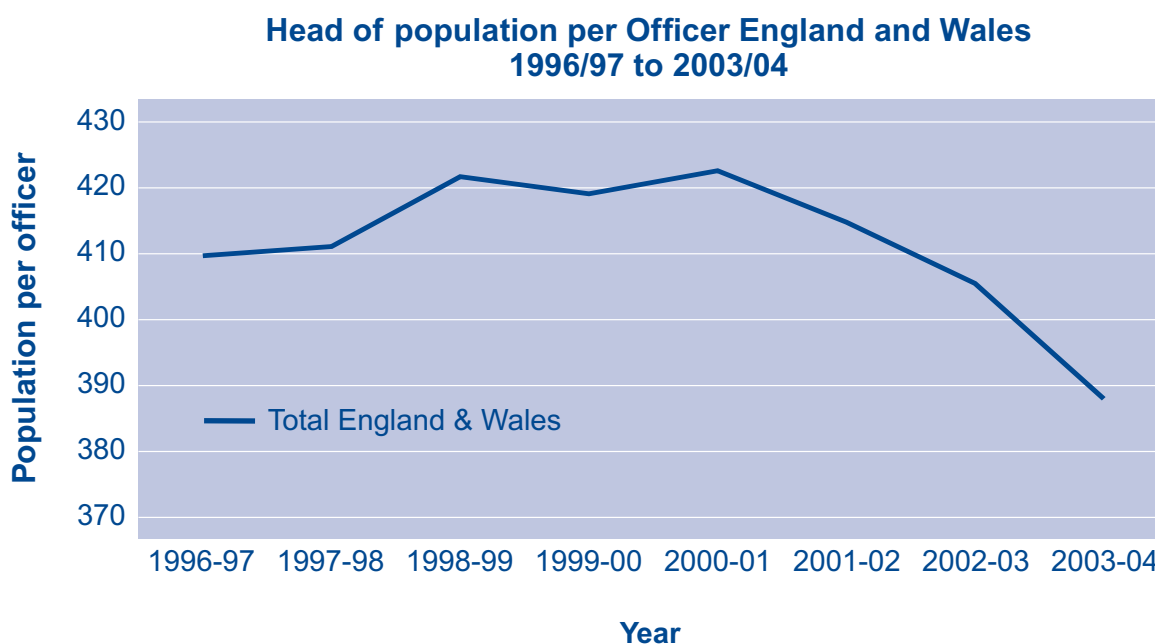
Figure 4 – Ratio of constable to sergeant[2]

**Ratio of Constable to Sergeant for England and Wales
September 1997–March 2003**
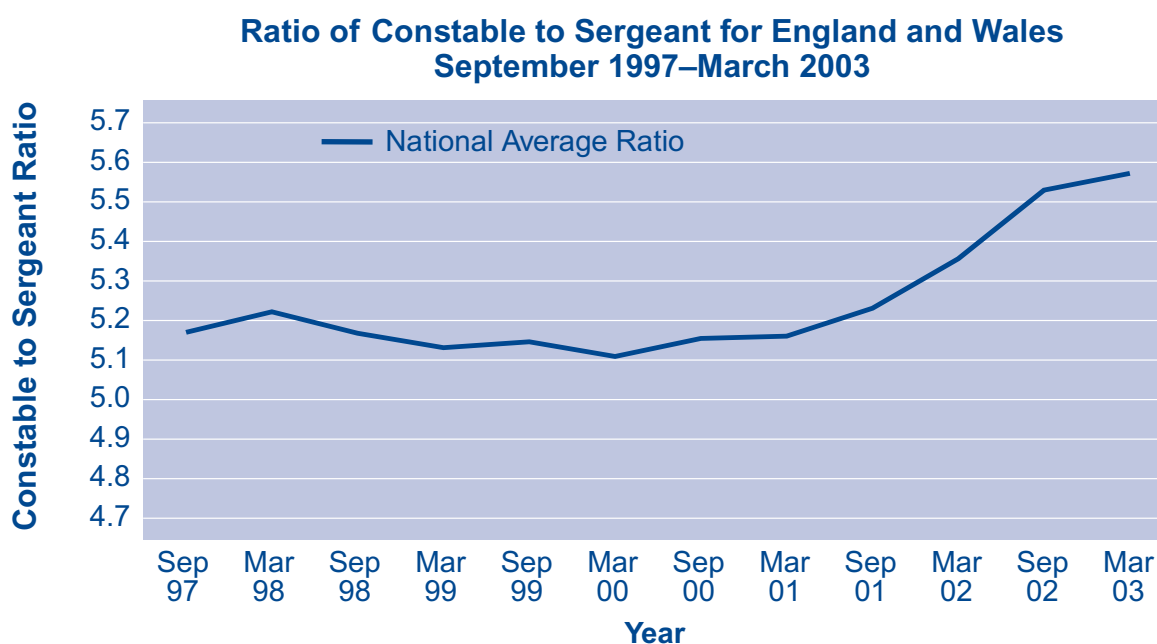
5.26 From 1997 – 2001 the ratio was consistently around 5.1:1 nationally, but it had risen to almost 5.6:1 by 2003. Many front-line supervisors have also been given added responsibilities during this period, such as the supervision of CSOs. It is well documented in force inspection reports that the typical profile of those delivering front-line policing is decreasing in both age and length of service and that the ability of

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2 Ibid

front-line supervisors to supervise effectively is declining. The CFF, though successful in its primary aim of increasing officer numbers, may have had a detrimental effect on front-line supervision. When linked with other demands arising from the workforce modernisation programme, the drain on supervision and management is exacerbated.

5.27 A by-product of this change in ratio is that management on-costs – the total cost of all police officer management ranks from sergeant upwards, expressed as a percentage of the total cost of all constables, but excluding police staff – have fallen (see Figure 5). This may appear to be an efficiency saving, but supervision for those at the front-line is essential. This is particularly so given that the majority of those officers performing front-line duties are younger, less experienced officers. Forces visited were aware of this consequence of increasing constable numbers and were considering means of redressing the balance, but felt that they were constrained by ring-fenced funding.

Figure 5 – Management on-cost ratio[2]

Management on-cost ratio (%) for Police Service in England and Wales September 1997 – March 2003

Management of police staff

5.28 The lack of a commonly adopted management structure or pay scale for police staff means that no data exists on supervisory ratios for police staff. As well as stifling innovation in terms of the mix of staff, the CFF effectively negates attempts at the devolution of financial and ultimately service delivery responsibility. BCU commanders are tightly constrained by force directives, meaning that the bulk of their discretionary budget must be spent on additional officers if the force is to meet its CFF requirement.

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2 Ibid

Role of the Home Office

5.29 The Home Office has historically adopted a 'hands off' approach to police staff matters. Its recent move towards more involvement in the PSC and the establishment of dedicated staff within the PPU to take forward modernisation issues provides the foundation for a more proactive and integrated approach. This is part of a wider Home Office restructuring, whereby the needs of the police service will be more effectively met. HMI welcomes this move, which has already delivered significant benefits. Work on police modernisation and reform, however, encompasses a huge and complex programme of change involving a multitude of stakeholder groups. It is questionable whether the current structures have the capacity to deliver what is required in an effective and co-ordinated way.

5.30 There are also questions in relation to the synthesis of portfolios, for instance the separate development of CSOs and other designated police staff roles. As the extended policing family concept grows, there will be issues around the ability to ensure joined-up working and vision between government departments, such as the Home Office and the ODPM. Examples were found during the inspection of parallel work and initiatives, for instance the separate development of CSASs, the neighbourhood warden quality standards scheme and quality standards for the private security industry through the British Security Industry Association (BSIA).

5.31 It is not clear whether the police service has the HR capacity to deliver police reform. HR capacity in this context means having the right people in the right places at the right time with the right skills to deliver what is required. This lack of clarity has led to work that is very much in its early stages, which will result in the development of a national strategy for HR in the police service and the establishment of a monitoring group to drive forward key strategic HR issues. It is vital that workforce modernisation is considered in the context of this work on HR capacity. A modernisation agenda will only be delivered if the service has the HR capacity to deliver it.

Recommendation 3

HMI recommends that the Home Office ensures that work being undertaken on workforce modernisation and the assessment of the service's HR capacity are effectively co-ordinated.

Role of police authorities

5.32 Police authorities are independent bodies charged with ensuring the provision of an efficient and effective local policing service that delivers best value. Police

authorities set the force budget, and establish local policing priorities and targets. In addition, they monitor performance and hold the chief constable publicly to account. Implicit in this role is a joint responsibility for decisions on the staffing mix required to deliver policing in the most efficient and effective way. However, local political pressure to maintain police officer numbers, combined with the impact of the CFF, resulted in many authority members not feeling they were in a position to progress civilianisation and modernisation initiatives.

Role of ACPO

5.33 Each year the government conducts a spending review, which allocates resources to its priorities, linked to targets for improvements in key public services. In its strategic assessment to inform the bid for the 2004 spending review, ACPO has recognised the need to set out a workforce requirement for the service in a more robust way than had been done previously. This is a positive step, which needs to be built upon to develop a more sophisticated approach to understanding and articulating the capability and capacity of the service to deliver what is required of it and the resources needed to do this.

5.34 Another piece of ongoing strategic work within ACPO (Project 2010) offers a vision for policing in England and Wales in 2010 and identifies the work needed to deliver this, including the workforce requirements. HMI commends ACPO for the work done to date, which will help overcome the growth issues currently faced by the service as a consequence of this failure to plan over the longer term. What is now needed is to build into any ongoing strategic assessment process a stronger emphasis on community and citizen focus, which are not yet fully integrated into this work.

> ### Recommendation 4
>
> HMI recommends that ACPO further develops its Project 2010 and strategic assessment to more fully encompass community and citizen focus, in order to ensure buy-in from all stakeholders.

A Modernisation Agency

5.35 Taking forward workforce modernisation is a huge challenge. Work related to police modernisation is currently being undertaken within the Home Office – primarily the PPU – but related pieces of work are ongoing elsewhere, for example in the Cabinet Office (Prime Minister's Strategy Unit), ACPO, the APA, HMIC, the ODPM and Skills for Justice. There may well be others and the sheer complexity of the task and the number of stakeholder groups involved in delivering different elements of the

modernisation programme make it very difficult for this work to be co-ordinated effectively and in a coherent way within existing structures. HMI recommends the establishment of a modernisation agency for policing drawing from the experience of the NHS. This would open up the potential for a more joined-up approach to community safety development within the extended policing family, neighbourhood renewal, etc. across the Home Office and the ODPM.

5.36   The agency could also develop a role as a national policy clearing house for the service to develop policy strategically and assess its impact. This would prevent duplication as is often found in the current arrangements, for example 43 forces each developing policy independently in respect of human rights, CSOs etc. Additionally, it could help facilitate co-ordinated policy development across the extended policing family. Whilst many recommendations contained in this report are targeted at existing units or organisations, a modernisation agency, if established, could act as the vehicle to take forward a great many of these recommendations.

5.37   Work is currently being undertaken by the Cabinet Office to develop proposals for what is currently being termed a 'National Policing Improvement Agency'. This work is at an early stage, but provides an ideal means of taking forward the issues set out in this section.

Recommendation 5

HMI recommends that the Home Office, in developing its proposals for a Policing Improvement Agency in concert with ACPO and other key stakeholders, fully embraces the requirement for a co-ordinated approach to workforce modernisation and development of national policing policy.

Strategic approach at force level

5.38   The inspection found no forces with effective civilianisation or workforce modernisation strategies. Some forces such as Surrey and Thames Valley have recognised this and are attempting to develop such a framework. Others, including the MPS and the National Crime Squad, are in the process of strategically reviewing their approach. However, we did not find a fully developed approach to this issue in any of the forces visited and only seven of the 41 forces who responded to an HMIC questionnaire had any form of civilianisation plan or strategy. Furthermore, many forces did not have a clearly identifiable champion to drive forward civilianisation or workforce modernisation initiatives.

5.39 A number of forces stated that they would welcome central guidance on this subject and such guidance has been provided previously in respect of the development of force training strategies, where Home Office Circular 53/2003 set out a template for forces to follow.

Recommendation 6a

HMI recommends that the Home Office designs a template to assist forces in the development of local workforce modernisation strategies.

Recommendation 6b

HMI recommends that forces use the template produced by the Home Office to develop a local workforce modernisation strategy and identify a champion to drive this strategy forward.

5.40 This lack of an effective strategic framework is a major factor in the wide variation in approach across forces. Forces have very different views on what the most desirable or optimum mix of staff might be and the singular focus on officer numbers exacerbates this lack of vision. Coupled with this, the lack of clarity concerning the number of police officers, together with the numbers of police staff in operational and support roles, required to deliver an effective service across forces can further inhibit workforce modernisation.

5.41 What is now required is a move towards 'capability building' with workforce levels, organisation and mix based upon the current needs of the service, not on historical anomalies. This will move the emphasis from maximising officer numbers alone to enabling chief officers to ensure the optimum mix of staff in support of effective service delivery. In particular, there is a need to articulate a more coherent and integrated strategic vision regarding the role and value of police staff to policing.

Local policing

5.42 Local policing has worked on a structure of BCUs for a decade and many have evolved into larger entities over time. The picture across England and Wales is not, however, consistent. BCUs vary in size from over 1000 police officers to under 200. Most, but not all BCUs are commanded by a chief superintendent. In some forces, they are commanded by superintendents and in others the rank varies. There are further variations in coterminosity with local authority boundaries. In most forces,

BCUs have common boundaries with local authority areas, whilst in others re-alignment has either not taken place or is impractical to consider.

5.43 The degree of devolution of decision-making and budgetary control varies between forces. Some BCU commanders interviewed believed that they had delegated financial authority but in many cases this amounted to little more than responsibility for spending of police overtime, a factor over which they often had limited control due to central demands for public order policing. In some forces, there has been a significant reduction in recent years in the degree of financial authority devolved to BCU commanders. Inevitably, where this happened, the CFF and the imperative on the force to maintain police officer numbers were given as the primary factors contributing to this change. Even in those BCUs where the commander enjoys a theoretically high degree of delegated control, there is often limited opportunity to influence the workforce mix at the point of delivery.

The police role

5.44 Any work to develop a future vision for policing will be inhibited by a lack of clarity around the core police role. This has obvious implications in terms of developing and modernising the service and the extended policing family. To take forward modernisation effectively requires a fundamental, objective and evidence-based review of policing. *The Operational Policing Review*, Posen and Cassells Inquiries in the 1990s, were the last significant attempts to more clearly define the role and function of the police. It identified the core role in terms of: management of emergency response; maintenance of order; contributing to community cohesion and reassurance; prevention and reduction of crime; and investigation of crime. Whilst this core role remains relevant, the mixed economy approach means it is not necessarily the police or police officers who will deliver all these things.

5.45 The Prime Minister's Strategy Unit and the Home Office are currently undertaking a joint review of police reform. This review addresses the issues highlighted above and is working towards a vision of:

> *"A high-performing, responsive and accountable system of policing, with clearly defined roles and responsibilities and a flexible, representative workforce."*

5.46 HMI welcomes this review, which should help provide clarity around the role of the police and the contribution made by all staff, including the extended policing family.

Performance management

5.47 It is currently very difficult to demonstrate clear links between variations in staffing mix, resource allocation decisions and performance. Only 22% of forces[3] stated that they had conducted any form of analysis of posts before and after civilianisation to assess its impact and there were very few examples of any robust analysis in this regard. This reflects the large variation in approach between forces in terms of the overall ratio of officers to police staff and their application to particular roles and functions. The service needs a performance management structure that enables senior managers to benchmark performance and to measure how effectively forces are utilising their staff and how changes to the mix of staff impact upon performance.

The Policing Performance Assessment Framework

5.48 Performance across the police service is currently measured using the PPAF, which is a comparatively new and still developing initiative. Led by the Home Office with the support of ACPO, the APA and HMIC, it has been designed to support the improvement of police performance across four domains as illustrated in Figure 6.

Figure 6 – PPAF Domain Structure

Citizen Focus (Domain A)

This domain is affected by all other aspects of performance and reflects satisfaction with service delivery as well as trust and confidence plus fairness and equality

Priorities set nationally and locally

| **Reducing Crime** (Domain 1) Where police activity helps to prevent and reduce crime | **Investigating Crime** (Domain 2) Where police activity solves crime and brings offenders to justice | **Promoting Public Safety** (Domain 3) Where police activity promotes public safety and reduces anti-social behaviour | **Providing Assistance** (Domain 4) Where police respond to general requests for assistance and support |

Resource Use (Domain B)

Outcomes in the above domains are affected by the level of resources available and how they are deployed

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3   HMIC questionnaire to all forces in England and Wales, February 2004. 41 of 43 forces replied to this questionnaire

5.49 The framework is designed to reflect 'policing' in a broad context and considers the contribution of local communities and other organisations as well as the police service itself. In addition to focusing on operational effectiveness, the framework provides measures of satisfaction, plus overall trust and confidence in the police, as well as measures that put performance into context in terms of efficiency and organisational capability. It also captures performance against national and local priorities, including the five key priorities of the National Policing Plan for 2004 – 07.

5.50 The first release of the PPAF introduced 13 headline indicators on 1 April 2004. Within the Home Office, the PSU is leading on the monitoring of forces against these interim indicators, as well as the dissemination of this performance data to police forces, police authorities, crime and disorder reduction partnerships and the public. It is intended that further indicators will be developed over time, particularly in respect of those areas that lend themselves less easily to quantitative measurement.

5.51 In order to support workforce modernisation effectively, the development of the PPAF should enable the efficiency and effectiveness of the support infrastructure to be assessed. Furthermore, the framework needs to reflect the contribution of the extended policing family. It should be able to assess the performance benefits and outcomes not only of a different resource mix within the service, but an increasingly complex blend of CSOs, wardens, private security staff etc. By focusing the police efficiency planning process on resource optimisation, incentives can be provided to develop an improved performance management regime of this nature.

> ### *Recommendation 7*
>
> HMI recommends that, in developing the PPAF, the Home Office develops performance criteria to assess the efficiency and effectiveness of support infrastructures and the contribution of the extended policing family.

Front-line policing measurement

5.52 In an age of ever-increasing accountability, it is essential that the public can understand the effort and resources that forces are giving to front-line policing. Traditionally, this has been done through the collation and publication of police officer numbers in each force and therefore collectively across the whole of England and Wales.

5.53 The simple measurement of police officer numbers, however, takes no account of the proportion of officers engaged in front-line duties, nor of the increasing effort given to operational policing by police staff. Furthermore, it is estimated that on average, about 61% of officers' time is currently spent on front-line duties, although there is

significant variation between forces from 44% to 69%[4]. Benchmarking with other public sector organisations, including the NHS, suggests that the optimum front-line figure is likely to be in the region of 75-80%. The Home Office believes that it is possible for the police service to reach the lower end of that range over time. On the current baseline, that would represent additional front-line duties equivalent to 19,700 extra officers.

5.54   The inspection team is well aware of the political pressures to maintain the emphasis on officer numbers, but the debate should now move on in a way that recognises the important contribution made by an increasing number of police staff engaged in the front-line and the contribution they make. Only then will the input made by police staff be fully recognised and public attention rightly focused on the quality of service provided by the service as a whole.

5.55   HMI acknowledges the development of a front-line policing measure. However, in its current form, the headline measure, which links to the government's Public Service Agreement targets, only captures police officer time on front-line duty. The contribution of police staff is included, but only as a subsidiary measure. This is a lost opportunity to recognise the changing role of police staff in the modern police service. Forensic staff, for example – particularly crime scene examiners – deal directly with numerous victims of crime and in some forces provide the sole initial response to victims of burglary. There is also a lack of recognition of the impact of designated police staff on high visibility policing and the reassurance agenda as a whole. For example, CSOs were introduced with the intention of providing high visibility reassurance patrols. It is imperative, therefore, that their contribution is recognised alongside that of their officer colleagues.

Recommendation 8

HMI recommends that the Home Office conducts a further revision of the headline front-line policing measure to ensure that equal recognition is given to the contribution of police staff and police officers to front-line operational policing.

5.56   It is important to stress, however, that the development of such a front-line policing measure should not be seen as a panacea in terms of gauging overall resource optimisation. There is a danger that, if maximising front-line deployment is seen as an end in itself, forces could become unbalanced, negating potential benefits in terms of service delivery.

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4 Data provided by Home Office (PRU)

5.57   Some have expressed the view that CSOs do not need to be included in any measure of front-line policing, as they will be fully engaged on high visibility patrols. The inspection team has found, however, that there is a temptation in some forces to increase the scope of CSO duties beyond such patrols in order to maximise their potential, to enhance retention prospects and to provide more attractive careers. Whilst recognising the benefits of such an approach, it does mean that CSOs can be abstracted from the very task they were brought in to fill, namely that of high visibility patrol.

5.58   Forces were asked to provide details of the proportion of time their CSOs spent on visible patrol[3]. The results from the 24 forces that were able to supply this information is shown in Figure 7.

Figure 7 – Percentage time spent on visible patrol by CSOs

Percentage range of time spent by CSOs on visible patrol	Number of forces
40 – 49%	1
50 – 59%	3
60 – 69%	2
70 – 79%	8
80 – 89%	7
90% +	3

5.59   It is clear, therefore, that in many forces, CSOs are being used for other tasks beyond that of high visibility reassurance patrolling.

Recommendation 9
HMI recommends that, to ensure the most appropriate use of CSOs, forces are required to measure and publish annually the percentage of time spent by CSOs on visible front-line patrol and details of how the remaining time is spent. This should be linked to the front-line policing measure and will help forces ensure that CSOs are being appropriately deployed.

Tracking the release of officers

5.60   During the inspection, widespread evidence was found of a failure to monitor the full impact of resource allocation decisions, particularly around civilianisation. For instance, the release of officers to operational duties in many forces is taken as given and is not adequately monitored. In too many forces such a tracking system is absent

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3 Ibid

and the force is therefore unable to demonstrate the full benefits from the initiative and individuals or posts can easily slip back into non-operational roles. As one police constable commented:

"Old police officers know where to hide!"

5.61 Only 56% of forces stated that they monitored the impact of employing police staff in terms of releasing officers to operational roles, whilst just 46% stated that they were able to track the release of officers to ensure they are not drawn into non-operational roles[3].

5.62 Even where forces state they have such a tracking process, it is not always sufficiently robust. One exception was in Thames Valley Police, which has established a process to track the release of both posts and officers to front-line roles with a commitment to maintain this tracking for a minimum of three years. This has shown that, whilst police officer **posts** may move to front-line positions as a result of civilianisation initiatives, it may take considerably longer before such posts are actually filled. This can be because the officer who is redeployed retires, transfers or is placed on restricted duties. The post may then not be filled until a new probationary constable is allocated to the BCU and completes his or her probationary period. Furthermore, as modernisation initiatives develop, police staff posts may also be redeployed to the front-line.

> ### Recommendation 10
>
> HMI recommends that when evaluating redeployment initiatives, forces establish processes to enable the tracking of both people and posts that are redeployed to the front-line. Such monitoring will enable forces to satisfy themselves that any benefits resulting from such initiatives are maintained.

Benchmarking

5.63 Benchmarking between forces is extremely difficult due to the lack of consistency in grading arrangements, organisational structures, allocation of job titles, etc. Even within forces we found that police staff performing very similar roles are often described very differently. Beyond this, structures for international benchmarking are underdeveloped. Some embryonic work has been conducted by the PSU and this needs to be progressed as part of an integrated approach to knowledge management in this area. An improved approach to benchmarking would give the service a much enhanced knowledge base of what works and why in the field of workforce modernisation.

> ## *Recommendation 11*
>
> HMI recommends that the Home Office extends its approach to inter-force and international benchmarking exercises to encompass workforce modernisation, the role and deployment of police staff. This should be a regular exercise and form part of an integrated approach to knowledge management in this area.

Evaluation

5.64 Evaluation of civilianisation initiatives is generally poor, with little systematic before and after comparison. As a consequence, the service does not have a good knowledge base as to what works and why. One force, for instance, has for many years deployed non-sworn surveillance staff – something which has not been replicated across the service, although there was evidence from force questionnaires of one similar local scheme. Is this approach effective or not? We were unable to establish the answers to this and other similar questions during the inspection, largely because of the lack of systematic evaluation. We also found one force operating three different approaches to the provision of custody, but with no structured process of evaluation to help inform their decision as to which approach was best.

5.65 Structures to identify and disseminate good practice both within and across forces are poor and need development. The service should also introduce a more effective means of disseminating good practice across the extended policing family, including the private security industry. Once established, this would be a key role for a modernisation agency for policing, as advocated in this report.

Vision Statement

To move towards a more integrated and professionalised service in which all staff are treated fairly, are effectively managed and deployed and in which their respective contribution to service delivery is equally valued, recognised and rewarded.

Key Message

Workforce modernisation raises profound issues about the way the service manages its people. In particular, there needs to be a more flexible and integrated approach to the recruitment, development, training, retention and deployment of officers and police staff.

Chapter Summary

This chapter will outline:

- The need for forces to determine the most appropriate mix of staff to deliver policing services in the most effective and efficient way
- The skills, standards and accreditation framework needed to support workforce modernisation
- Issues relating to the recruitment and retention of police staff and of police officers insofar as they impact on police staff employment
- Training and development issues for police staff
- Career development needs for police staff and work that is underway to establish a more effective career pathway structure
- Issues relating to the different terms and conditions under which police staff are employed
- Leadership issues and senior appointments for police staff members
- Consultation arrangements and engagement with all staff
- The ways in which retired police officers are being used to deliver policing, highlighting both the positive and negative aspects of this approach; and
- The way in which staff who become unfit to perform the full range of duties can be most effectively managed within the terms of the DDA

Achieving the right mix of skills

Overview

6.1   A key part of this inspection was to assess how forces identify the optimal mix of sworn and non-sworn staff in order to deliver the most efficient and effective policing service. This is not a new question. The *Posen Inquiry* (Home Office, 1995), for example, sought to distinguish between core and ancillary policing roles. It made recommendations regarding further civilianisation of gaming, betting and liquor licensing functions, transcription of interview tapes, warrant enforcement, new powers for civilian gaolers, more civilian involvement in crime prevention and the possibility of an increased role for traffic wardens. This has since been reinforced by other pieces of work, such as the *Policing Bureaucracy Taskforce* (2002) and in many ways typifies the traditional approach to civilianisation and decision making around the mix of staff and skills – ad hoc and initiative driven.

6.2   The workforce modernisation agenda opens up very real opportunities for a more holistic and integrated approach that challenges traditional resource allocation, including that relating to front-line service delivery. It also encourages process re-engineering and an examination of new ways of working, although to date there is limited evidence of this change taking place.

Variations in staffing mix

6.3   HMIC categorises posts within the service as being 'operational', 'operational support' and 'organisational support' and forces supply data each year on the distribution of staff in each of these three categories as part of the Annual Data Requirement (ADR). Data for the financial year 2002/03 illustrate the very significant differences that exist between forces in the percentages of the workforce in each of these three categories who are police staff.

Figure 8 – Percentage of police staff in operational roles

% Police staff in Operational Roles

Forces of England and Wales
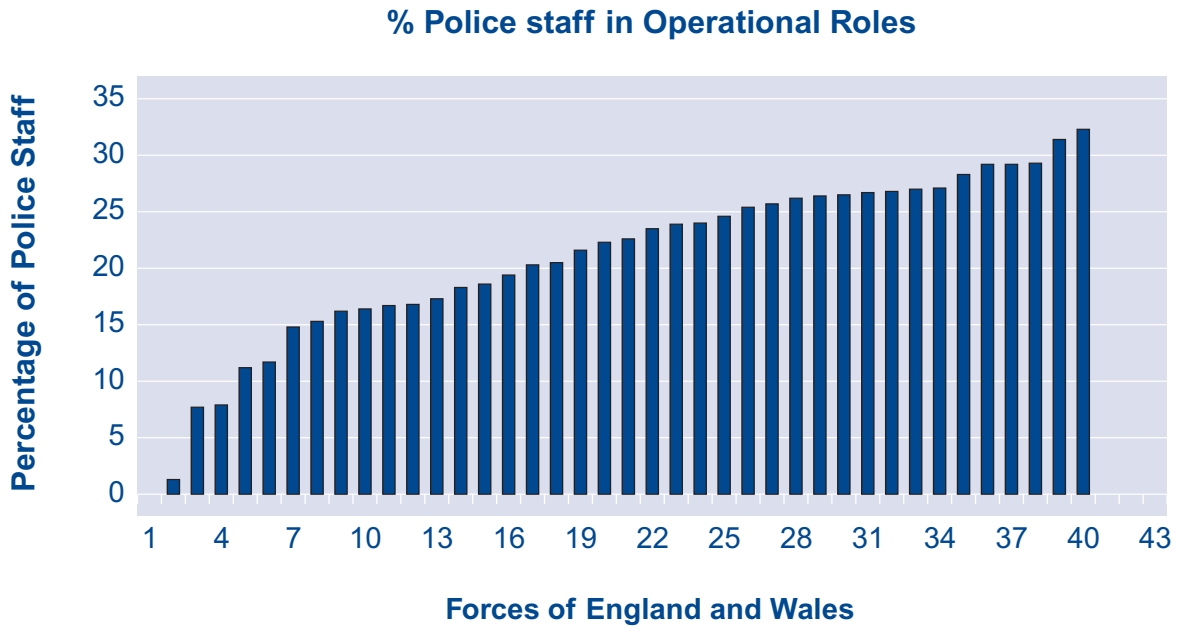
Figure 9 – Percentage of police staff in operational support roles

% Police staff in Operational Support

Forces in England and Wales
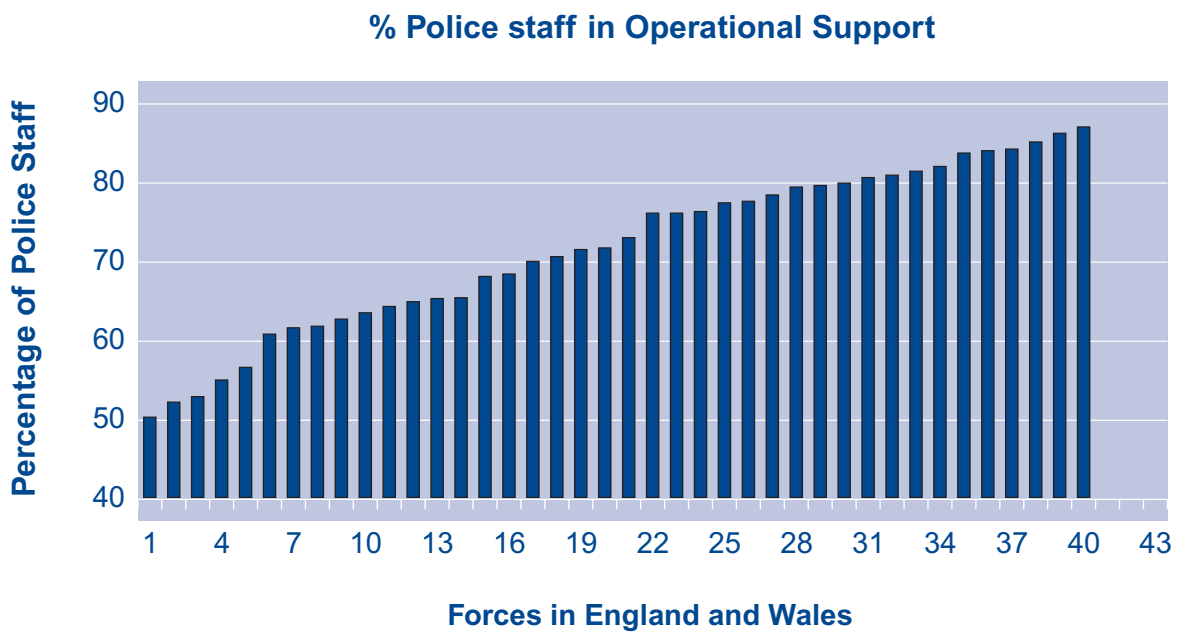
Figure 10 – Percentage of police staff in organisational support roles

% Police staff in Organisational Support
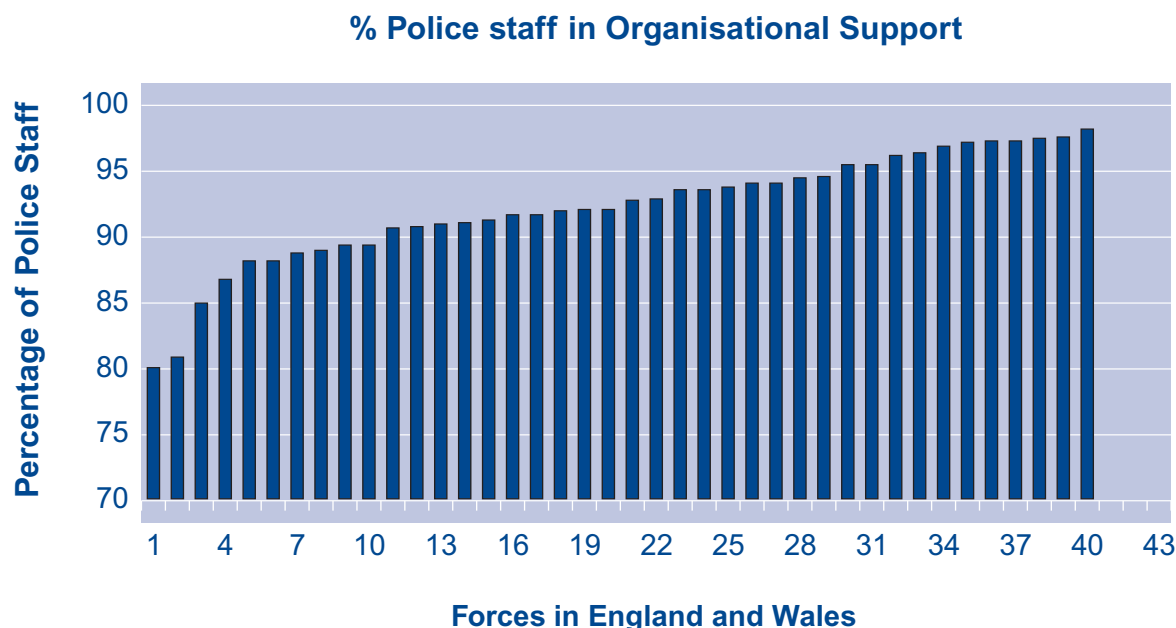
6.4   Forces are provided with guidelines on how to classify specific roles within each of these categories. Whilst it is likely that there is some variation in how these guidelines are interpreted, the differences are nonetheless stark. The percentage of police staff in operational roles, for example, ranges from 0% to 32.3%. In operational support roles, the percentage of police staff varies between 50.4% and 87.1% and in organisational support roles the range is from 80.1% to 98.2%.

6.5   These figures do not, of course, tell the whole story. The issue is complicated when one considers the extended policing family and also those services that have been contracted-out by different forces. It may be that other factors such as the size of the force and the preferred policing style will impact on the appropriate mix of staff. However, these data do raise important questions in respect of the profile of the police workforce. It was clear from the inspection visits that some forces believe that, due to the differences in terms and conditions, police officers can be asked to do almost anything and therefore provide greater flexibility, but this is questionable. Indeed, a national focus group of HR managers was clearly of the view that, in reality, police staff provided just as much flexibility as police officers. This view was reinforced in focus groups with trade union representatives, who felt that the issue was one of a lack of understanding of differing terms and conditions.

Staffing mix in specific policing functions

6.6   Forces were asked to provide data regarding the mix of police officers and police staff in a number of policing functions[3]. The responses are summarised in Figure 11.

Figure 11 – Staffing mix in a range of policing functions

Role	No. of officers (FTE)	No. of police staff (FTE)	% police officers
Control Room, call handling and deployment	3,839.37	8,878.49	30%
Front office/public enquiry	212.00	4,041.61	5%
Custody functions	2,143.58	1,699.99	56%
Criminal Justice Units	1,363.95	5,859.76	19%
Central HQ Intelligence Units	1,503.00	1,135.68	57%
BCU Intelligence Units	2,202.50	1,330.30	62%
Crime/Incident Management Units	3,288.60	1,266.74	72%
Scientific Support, Scenes of Crime, Fingerprints	350.00	3,091.84	11%

6.7   In addition to the overall percentages, there were wide variations in the mix of police officers and staff in some specific functional areas. The most dramatic disparity was found in crime and incident management units, where 72% of personnel were police officers, but this varied between 24% and 99%. In headquarters intelligence units, 57% of the workforce consisted of police officers but this varied between 21% and 83%. Wide variations, with no logical rationale to explain them, were also found in call handling and control rooms, public reception and enquiry offices, custody suites, criminal justice units and scientific support. In scientific support, for example, the inspection team could find no justification for the high proportion of police officers in some forces, which was as high as 60% in one case. HMI dismisses the often-used argument about the need for experience as a police officer to effectively fulfil this role.

6.8   Forces submit information on staffing mix to the Home Office as part of the ADR. Examination of these data for 2002/03 indicates that police officers were still working in notable numbers in fields such as coroner's officers, drivers, finance, fingerprints and property. Again, whilst there may be justifiable reasons for some of these posts being held by police officers, this does raise obvious questions about whether some of the back-office functions are being staffed in the most appropriate and cost-effective way.

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3 Ibid

Civilianisation initiatives

6.9 Difficulties in recruiting and retaining police officers have been particularly evident in the south-east of England, largely due to the high cost of living compared to other parts of the country. This has been a driver for a number of forces to develop civilianisation initiatives designed to ensure that they make best use of the officers they have available to them. Many such initiatives have impacted upon police staff employment in those forces. Specifically, these have highlighted some important issues:

- **Releasing police officers to the front-line** – Most initiatives of this type set out to release police officers from roles that could be performed equally effectively by police staff and to redeploy officers into front-line roles.

- **Tracking posts** – The experience of a number of forces shows that, whilst police officer **posts** may move to front-line positions as a result of such an initiative, actually having a person in that post often takes considerably longer. This emphasises the importance of having an effective system to keep track of those posts that have been redeployed, so that forces can be sure that they do not 'slip back' into other non front-line roles

- **Evaluating other benefits** – Several initiatives seen alluded to wider benefits, such as improvements in operational performance, increased public satisfaction and reduced sickness absence. This is critical. The release of police officer posts only represents an increased input and added value will only be realised when the output and outcome benefits are maximised. HMI was disappointed, therefore, to find that in most cases, the evaluation of such initiatives did not include the measurement of these wider benefits.

- **Improving career development opportunities for police staff** – Any initiative of this nature brings with it a number of new police staff roles and consequently new career development opportunities. This has been a positive benefit for many police staff, although in most cases this was not enshrined in any form of overarching career development strategy.

- **Funding police staff growth** – Many forces claim that initiatives of this type, which involve substantial police staff growth, can only be funded by significant rises in the local council tax precept. HMI has some reservations about the validity of such claims, as some forces have been proactive in securing external and partnership funding, thereby allowing increased police staff numbers without large precept rises.

● **Growth management** – Programmes of this nature inevitably result in a substantial degree of organisational growth, which in turn highlights the importance of effective growth management. An appropriate infrastructure needs to be developed if the additional HR investment is to have the maximum impact. This includes such things as training, equipment and accommodation. These issues were often given inadequate consideration in local projects.

6.10 Two specific examples from Thames Valley and Hertfordshire serve to illustrate many of the points made above.

CASE STUDY

The Police Redeployment Programme, Thames Valley Police

In common with many forces in the south east of England, Thames Valley Police has difficulties in recruiting and retaining police officers. At the beginning of the project the Force had a target strength of 4,117 police officers, against an actual strength of 3,842 – a shortfall of 275. The number of officers transferring out of the Force rose from just 11 in 1998/99 to 152 in 2002/03, 53% of whom transferred to the MPS. The Force launched Phase 1 of its Police Redeployment Programme on 1 April 2002, setting out to redeploy 240 police officer posts to front-line policing roles. Phase 1 exceeded its original target and in total redeployed the equivalent of 280 posts. In addition, the turnover rate for police staff employed through the programme was 6.9% compared to a Force average of 11.6%. Phase 2 commenced on 1 April 2003 and the combination of both phases is on track to redeploy between 380 and 400 police posts back to front-line operational policing.

The programme has generated significant national interest, largely due to the scale of civilianisation that it entailed in a relatively short timeframe, leading to the redeployment of experienced police officers back to the front-line. The actual number of officers redeployed in this way has been less than had been expected as it has not been possible to redeploy the incumbent officer for reasons such as ill-health. Nonetheless, the Force has developed an effective process for tracking those posts that were civilianised as a result of the programme to ensure that they remain front-line posts. This type of tracking process was found all too rarely during the inspection. Other benefits were less effectively evaluated; for example, there was no process in place to capture public satisfaction and there was no formal monitoring of impact on visibility, performance or quality of service.

The programme has helped promote cultural integration at front-line level between police officers and police staff, with the contribution of police staff in investigation roles, for example, being valued by their police officer colleagues. That said, the fact that each police area was able to approach the issue in its own way has led to some roles being performed in some areas by police officers and in others by police staff. This has resulted in some striking inequalities in terms of pay and conditions. For example, Community and Race Relations officers – a vital role within the Force – are police constables on some areas, earning up to £30,000, whilst on other areas they are members of police staff, earning around £18,000.

The project was funded with the aid of a significant rise in the council tax precept, making it particularly important that the project was effectively communicated both externally and internally.

The programme has had additional benefits in the Force by creating more police staff roles and so providing career development opportunities for police staff, but this has not yet been enshrined in any form of career development strategy, limiting the benefits to some degree.

Finally, the programme has resulted in a substantial amount of organisational growth, which has in turn highlighted the importance of effective growth management.

Bus advertisement promoting the benefits of the police redeployment programme

CASE STUDY

Front-line First Project
(Hertfordshire Constabulary)

Hertfordshire Constabulary's 'Front-line First' project is another example of an initiative in a south-east force designed to return police officers to front-line roles. The key driver was the boundary change in April 2000, when the Force assumed responsibility for a significant area that had previously been part of the Metropolitan Police district. A number of Metropolitan officers were seconded to Hertfordshire to assist them with the transition, but the subsequent return of these secondees created a shortage of operational officers in 2001. This situation was exacerbated by the developing problem in retaining officers, with significant numbers leaving on transfer to the MPS, where they received significantly higher allowances and the benefit of free travel.

To assist the returning of officers to operational policing roles, the Force produced the following definition to help decide which posts were suitable:

"The underlying principle is that police officers should be deployed in roles where they are required, in the routine course of their work, to exercise police powers.

'Front-line' is primarily those staff who respond to emergencies. Also of key importance to policing are those staff who are involved in intelligence-led crime reduction and investigation and/or community-based problem solving.

On top of this it was recognised that police officers of senior ranks are required to carry out strategic, tactical and line management roles where police experience is vital and the use of police powers is a secondary – although still integral – part of their duties."

> One example of the impact of the initiative has been in scientific support, where police sergeants operating as crime scene managers were replaced with police staff. The drive behind this move was the need to expand capability in line with expansion in DNA funding and the realisation that the function was now so professionalised there was no need for police officers to be involved. A further consideration was the difficulty the Force was experiencing in recruiting sergeants.
>
> Police staff in this area were not seen as a cheaper option and in many cases they could cost more than police officers. However, the Force found that they were easier to recruit and retain, and were more productive than the police officers they replaced.

6.11 Both examples quoted above are 'civilianisation' initiatives, involving the replacement of officers with police staff in appropriate roles in order to release officers to front-line duties. The next step is to consider more radical programmes to re-engineer the workforce and in doing so increase capacity and improve performance.

The Workforce Modernisation Implementation Fund

6.12 The Home Office has provided a £13m workforce modernisation implementation fund, which is currently supporting pilot schemes in ten selected forces. These pilot initiatives are designed to test out varying approaches to staffing mix, whilst maintaining operational capability, an example being the use of police staff in traditional police roles in order to release police officers back to the front-line. Details of the schemes being funded are shown in Figure 12.

Figure 12 – Summary of initiatives supported by the Workforce Modernisation Implementation Fund

Force name	Project Title	Project Summary	Grant	Duration
Surrey	Mixed Economy of Policing	Piloting the re-configuration of new staff, new management procedures and new working practices in three front-line services: the investigation of volume crime, reassurance (neighbourhood) policing and the investigation of major crime.	£1.5m Year one	1-2 years

Force name	Project Title	Project Summary	Grant	Duration
MPS	BCU re-engineering	Changing the types of staff used at a police command unit to get extra officers on the front-line, for example by using more CSOs.	Estimated: £1.2m Year one	1-2 years
Northumbria	Integrated Offender Management Project	Changing services for victims, witnesses and offenders to improve the level of service and release 88 officers to front-line duty.	£4.4m	2 years
Dyfed-Powys	Custody Detention Officers	Using two new types of police staff with powers for detention and escort in custody suites.	£339,887	1 year
Staffordshire	Outsourcing Custody	Using a contractor to run custody for a police station so that police officers can be freed up for patrol.	£438,000	2 years
Wiltshire	Local Investigating Officers	Use of staff with investigating powers to support officers in investigating volume crime, such as thefts, vandalism etc.	£389,592	2 years
Lincolnshire	Use of Investigating Officers and Case Builders	Bringing in staff to work on preparing files for prosecution to cut down on the amount of time that officers are spending on paperwork. Also use of staff with investigating powers to support officers in investigating volume crime.	£341,206	1 year
Nottingham-shire	Integrated Community Approach to Anti-Social Behaviour	Setting up new mixed teams involving police staff, police officers, local authority and extended policing family to tackle anti-social behaviour.	£493,482	1 year

Force name	Project Title	Project Summary	Grant	Duration
West Yorkshire	Civilian Staff in Community Involvement	Using police staff to work with communities to prevent local crime, for example by taking on some basic crime prevention activities.	£199,032	1 year
Humberside	Use of Civilian Staff in Major Incident Rooms	Using more police staff to undertake roles in major incident rooms to release police officers to do specialist work, and to improve response times in setting up major investigations.	£488,430	1 year

6.13 One of these initiatives – the Surrey Police 'Mixed Economy' project – is focused on finding new ways of configuring the workforce to deliver a policing service in a more cost-effective way and increase capacity within existing resources.

CASE STUDY

'Mixed Economy Project', Surrey Police

Surrey Police has developed a project entitled *The Mixed Economy of Policing* that has been successful in securing funding from the government's workforce modernisation implementation fund. The project aims to:

● Create opportunities to significantly increase policing capacity from existing resources.

● Create a more flexible workforce providing the opportunity to adjust policing resources to track fluctuations in demand.

● Rationalise police officers around specialist roles within the core capabilities of the service and the consequent disaggregation of tasks to a range of police staff, thereby ensuring a much closer alignment of task to skill level producing a more cost-effective service – achieving the 'optimal mix'.

● Improve cost-efficiency in each activity by better matching resources to a specified capability.

● Create a regime where police staff and managers have greater accountability for performance and standards.

The project will pilot the re-configuration of new staff, new management procedures and new working practices in three front-line services: the investigation of volume crime, reassurance (neighbourhood) policing and the investigation of major crime. The Force has identified that each of these service areas currently suffers 'gaps' in provision (capacity) and ever-increasing demands.

The project work seeks to demonstrate that the rationalisation of police officer roles and the introduction of a 'mixed economy' of staffing, supported by new working practices, will significantly increase capacity and introduce cost efficiency into policing capabilities currently being applied to high volume demands. The first phase of the project has demonstrated these efficiencies at a conceptual level.

The project outlines two models of workforce integration. The first option relates to the tactical integration of staff drawn from agencies and other providers into mainstream support and service delivery. The second option proposes the reconfiguration of the regular police officer role around 'core' capabilities within a more flexible and relevant employment structure. The Force sees the development of the first (tactical) option as being both necessary and complementary to the second (strategic) option.

The early conclusions are based on an analysis of police officer demographics, the anticipated recruitment shortages in the south-east over the next five years, the outlook for the future funding of the service and the opportunities offered in the provisions of the Police Reform Act 2002. The Force sees these opportunities as including the potential to reconfigure police resources towards the achievement of an 'optimal mix' of regular police resources with, where appropriate, other more flexible and cost-effective options.

Utilising the life skills of the workforce

6.14   A diverse workforce brings with it diverse skills and experience, not just in a policing context, but also in what might be termed wider life skills. The MPS has sought to harness these wider life skills through the establishment of its Cultural and Communities Resources Unit.

CASE STUDY

Cultural and Communities
Resources Unit, MPS

The MPS has established a Cultural and Communities Resources Unit to manage a confidential database of the life skills of MPS staff, to assist operationally with critical incidents. London is one of the most diverse cities in the world and this diversity adds extra dimensions to a complex and challenging policing environment. It therefore makes sound operational sense to utilise the life skills that exist within the workforce. The aim of this initiative is to enable the MPS to resolve critical incidents and solve major crime more quickly and to the satisfaction of its communities.

The life skills are captured on a voluntary basis. Such skills will include details of lifestyle, knowledge of a community, language or hobby, the details of which will be stored on a confidential database. The database will enable incident commanders or senior investigating officers to identify and access staff when they need them.

Operational resilience

6.15 If the workforce modernisation agenda is to be successfully progressed, there needs to be much greater clarity concerning the number of police officers and other operational resources required to deliver an effective operational service across forces. The service and forces need to define and specify a level of operational resilience, linked to preferred policing style, in order to manage risk and to experiment creatively with the mix of staff without threatening core responsibilities. Only nine forces stated that they had made any attempt to do this[3]. Of those, few had applied a scientific approach to defining this level of resourcing, with professional judgement being identified as the defining factor in many cases.

6.16 ACPO is currently considering this issue as part of its capacity and capability building studies in Project 2010. This work recognises that not every force needs to possess the capability to do everything and as such is effectively linked to concepts such as the development of strategic alliances between forces that seek to best utilise specialist resources through a process of collaboration. HMI welcomes this work and sees it as a critical factor in informing the modernisation process.

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3 Ibid

6.17 Work currently being undertaken within the Research, Development and Statistics (RDS) Directorate of the Home Office will also be key to developing a clearer understanding of operational resilience in the context of workforce modernisation. A number of important considerations have been identified. These include forces' approaches to resource management and rostering, mutual aid requirements, resilience in terms of both volume and skills, predictable major incidents and events, the impact of staff abstractions on performance and the cost of maintaining resilience (eg overtime or rest day working). Informed by this work, the service needs to develop a clear understanding of the skills mix required to deliver improvements in service delivery.

6.18 An illustration of the factors that forces might consider in defining an appropriate level of operational resilience is shown in Figure 13:

Figure 13 – Defining operational resilience
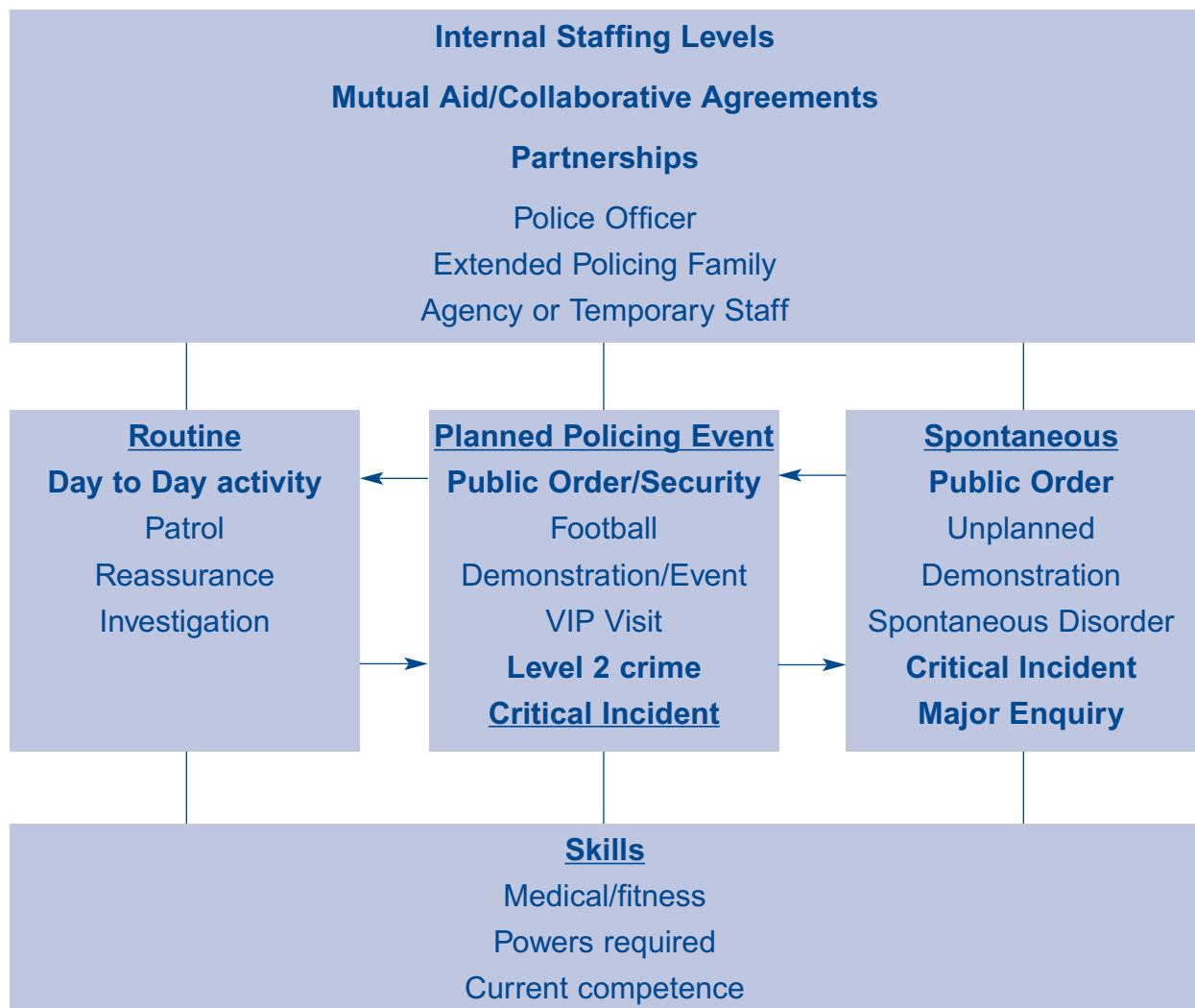
6.19 This model would be equally applicable at force or BCU level. Normal day-to-day policing will involve regular patrol, reassurance and investigation work and will be carried out by a mix of police officers and staff drawn from within the police service and extended policing family. There will normally be an agreed contingency plan to move quickly to the next level of spontaneous activity, which may include a serious crime, an outbreak of spontaneous disorder, or a planned event such as a football match, VIP visit or series of planned arrests. Single, regular events that are large scale, such as the policing of planned major events, would also be included in this category. These situations will normally require skilled staffing beyond BCU level and may call for collaboration with partners. The next level of contingency is the serious unplanned event, wide-scale public disorder or an unplanned major crime enquiry. Apart from the number of staff, certain specific skills, qualifications or powers may be required from individuals or groups performing each role.

Recommendation 12a

HMI recommends that, in time to inform the 2005/06 planning cycle, each force command team, in consultation with police authorities, staff associations and unions, identifies and sets staffing levels that ensure operational resilience, tailored to local need, is maintained.

Recommendation 12b

HMI recommends that forces take account of all those agencies outside the service who deliver community safety services, to help ensure effective co-ordination and deployment of all such resources.

6.20 Several other strands of work will be significant in delivering this level of understanding. The development of the ICF, National Occupational Standards and an associated framework of recognised qualifications, accreditation and professional registers will be particularly important in underpinning this work, as will the work on career pathways being progressed jointly by ACPO and Skills for Justice.

Skills, standards and accreditation

Skills for Justice

6.21 The PSSO was set up as the national training organisation for the police service as a result of a thematic inspection of police training undertaken by HMIC in 1999, entitled *Managing Learning*. The Department for Education and Skills is encouraging national training organisations to merge into larger sector skills councils and on 1 April 2004, the PSSO was subsumed into the new Justice Sector Skills Council, 'Skills for Justice'. It acts as an expert body for the police and is recognised as the standard setting body for the sector. Its national responsibility covers the police sector, community justice, custodial care, court services, customs and excise and the prosecution process.

A framework for integrated people management

6.22 A key factor in developing an effective career structure for all staff is the development of a structure to define skills and standards and an associated framework of professional development and accreditation. Skills for Justice has been involved in a number of key pieces of work that relate directly to this inspection. More recently, it has sought to draw these strands of work together with other initiatives to develop a system of integrated people management for the service as illustrated in Figure 14.

Figure 14 – Framework for integrated people
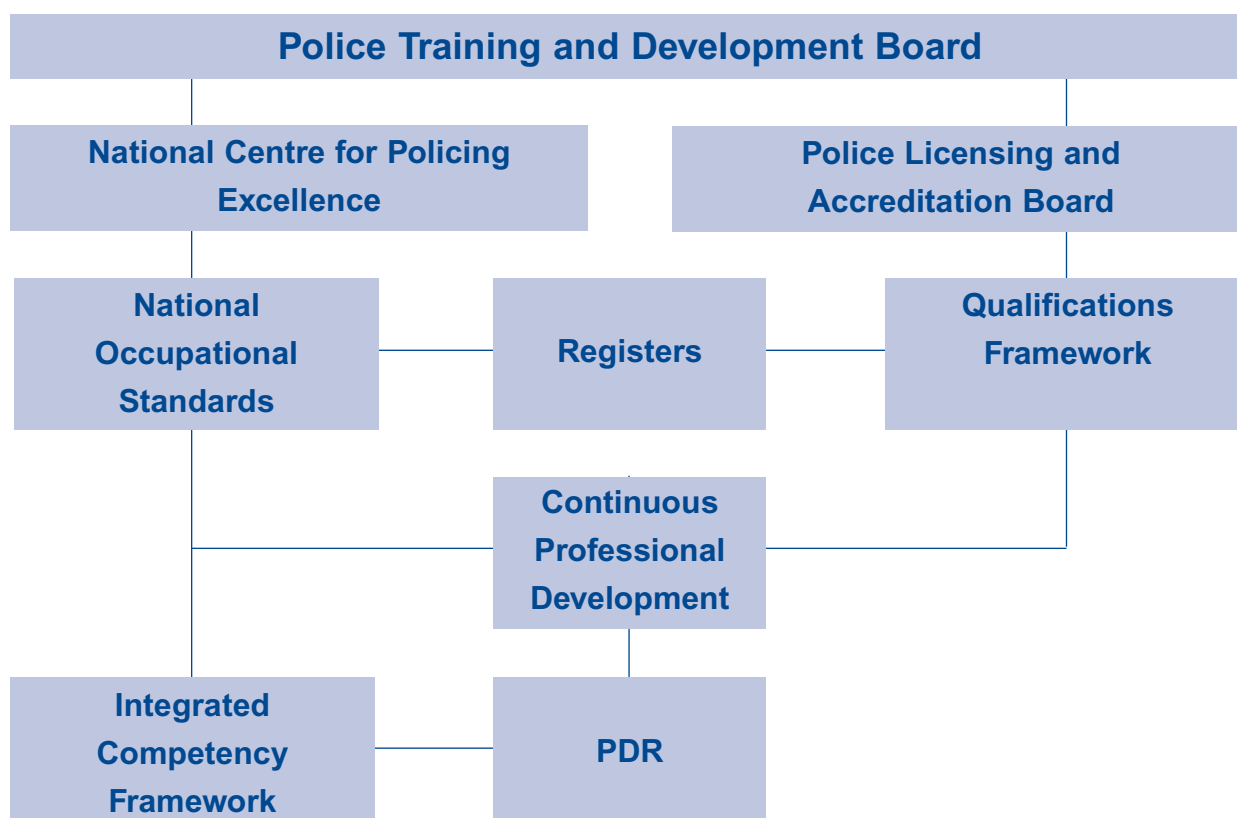
6.23 A Police Licensing and Accreditation Board has now been established and has responsibility for quality assurance of training delivery by, for example, maintaining a register of licensed training providers in further and higher education. It is also responsible for accrediting policing skills with nationally recognised qualifications, building these into a qualifications framework through which to promote professional career development.

6.24 Underpinning the model is the development of policing doctrine by the NCPE. The doctrine seeks to provide a framework of guidance for policing activities and in order to be effective, the NCPE must be able to ensure that its developed doctrine is disseminated effectively through the profession. This dissemination must be done in a timely and controlled way to ensure all practitioners pick up and use best practice. Furthermore, in order to support workforce modernisation effectively, the NCPE needs to move from the development of doctrine applicable to the police service alone, to an approach that applies across the extended policing family.

> ## Recommendation 13
>
> HMI recommends that the work of the NCPE expands from the development of doctrine applicable to the police service alone, to an approach that can be applied across the extended policing family.

6.25 The framework for the professionalisation of the service set out in this project links the development of doctrine to the already developed National Occupational Standards and the ICF. In order to support this, more work is needed to develop a framework of qualifications and professional registers, which presently only exists in a sporadic way, for example for qualified firearms officers. However, the model is well thought through, has received support from unions and staff associations alike and provides a clear framework to support a career pathway structure for all staff.

6.26 One of the key features of the integrated people management model is that it says nothing about whether any of the roles in the service should be warranted or not. This raises fundamental questions about the possibility of staff being able to move in and out of warranted posts according to the needs within each specific role, accepting the legislative and cultural barriers that would need to be overcome.

6.27 The establishment of Skills for Justice as the sector skills council for the justice sector opens up a real opportunity for the development of common standards across the various criminal justice organisations. In order to support career development across the extended policing family in a broader context, this work should be expanded further to include the application of the framework outlined in this section, not only to criminal justice organisations, but across the security sector as well.

Recommendation 14

HMI recommends that Skills for Justice works together with the justice sector and security industry agencies to adopt a common model of integrated people management that would in turn help facilitate career development and progression for staff from across these two sectors.

Recruitment and retention of police staff

Overview

6.28 Whilst the recruitment and retention of minority ethnic police staff (as well as their progression) are actively monitored as part of the 'Breaking Through'[1] action plan, the focus nationally and in most forces is police officers. This has been reinforced by initiatives such as the CFF that have placed a premium on police officer numbers.

6.29 A recent consultation exercise conducted by UNISON with its police branches cited the following as the major reasons for police staff recruitment and retention difficulties:

- Low wages.
- Loss of staff to higher paying forces.
- Bullying in the workplace.
- Uncompetitive salaries in specialist posts.
- Lack of career progression.
- Poor training opportunities.
- Poor middle management.

To quote one respondent:

> *"There has been little or no progression for police staff and therefore anyone with any drive or ambition moves on. We therefore lose younger and potentially high flying police staff to more forward thinking organisations."*

Terms and conditions

6.30 Differences in terms and conditions for police officers and police staff create a number of anomalies. Police officers are subject to national conditions and Police Regulations but a similar structure does not exist for police staff. Chief constables assumed responsibility for police staff under the terms of the Police and Magistrates'

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1   Ibid

Courts Act 1994, which had been intended to revise prevailing attitudes that police staff, previously employed by the police authority, were a separate entity.

6.31 Academic research highlighted in the literature review supports the fieldwork findings that two distinct workforces still exist and a 'them and us' culture remains. Research highlights significant difficulties in having two distinct sets of terms and conditions in the workplace and suggests that many police officer supervisors have only a limited knowledge of police staff terms, conditions and disciplinary arrangements. Evidence obtained during the inspection suggests that these factors are becoming ever more important as increasing numbers of police staff are line managed by police officers.

6.32 Police officer pay is subject to a national negotiating machinery, through the PNB. The absence of a similar nationally adopted grading structure for police staff means that forces are able to match police staff salaries to local norms, but it has also created immense variations that cannot be explained by local conditions alone. Conversely, the presence of a rigid national framework for police officers has created barriers to retention in south-east forces, which have been unable to respond satisfactorily to the pay lead and free travel arrangements negotiated by the MPS. This situation is not sustainable in the longer term. What is needed to support modernisation effectively is a more unified approach for all staff, which provides a national framework but does so in such a way as to allow flexibility to respond to local need. Such a move is some way off and until the PSC becomes a stronger and more influential body, this approach will not be achievable. It should, however, remain a long-term aspiration.

Police staff recruitment

6.33 Unlike police officers, police staff recruitment is often handled at a local (BCU) level. Whilst this approach has many advantages, it can mean that issues relating to recruitment and retention are not monitored centrally within forces. Many of the forces visited did not have an organisational overview of recruitment and retention of police staff, and this is likely to have implications in terms of the flexibility with which staff can be deployed across the force. One possible consequence of this local approach to police staff recruitment may be that, whilst increasing civilianisation has undoubtedly brought benefits to the service in terms of the diversity of the workforce, staff associations for under-represented groups were rarely used in promoting recruitment of police staff. In one force, a recruitment campaign was promoted in the gay press, but this campaign related only to the recruitment of police officers, not police staff.

Retention of staff

6.34 Some work has been started which pushes against the barriers of Police Regulations. In Surrey, a retention package was offered to attempt to stem the flow of officers to the MPS, and in the National Criminal Intelligence Service (NCIS) work has started to make it easier to employ police officers in a direct capacity by enhancing pension provision. Police pension regulations are a significant barrier to workforce modernisation. The current 30-year career structure offers no incentive to leave the service early and provides no exit points for those who may wish to consider other careers. HMI welcomes work that is under way in the Home Office on revised pension regulations for police officers, which will make it easier for staff to leave the service at different stages in their career.

6.35 Retention packages themselves are seen by some as divisive, although this is not their intention. The MPS was only able to incorporate police officers in their travel concessions, as the travel operating companies would not consider extending the arrangement to include police staff at a cost that was affordable. This caused considerable resentment and internal division, particularly from special constables. A limited concession has now been arranged for some operational police staff whilst on duty. Surrey Police offered a substantial retention package to officers in an attempt to combat a significant retention problem. Retention of police staff was much less problematic and although a package of pay increases was delivered to police staff, many perceived that they had been treated less favourably than their officer colleagues. Notwithstanding the business reasons behind this approach, it did lead to significant dissatisfaction amongst some sections of the workforce. A more harmonised approach to terms and conditions would make it easier for forces to apply a consistent approach to all staff and in doing so, avoid some of the tensions that can result from adopting different approaches.

6.36 Certain police staff roles, such as analysts, who are well trained and highly skilled, become very attractive to other employers in both the public and private sectors, leading to retention difficulties within forces.

Emerging career structures

6.37 Of all the problems around recruitment and retention, poor career development and limited opportunities for progression were the issues most commonly highlighted. Progression within a number of police staff roles is often restricted to junior or middle management level – the so-called 'glass ceiling' – and this inevitably contributes to retention difficulties. In some fields, however, there is evidence of a professionalised approach, linked to training, development and a career structure. The role of analysts provides one such example.

> **CASE STUDY**
> ## Analysts
>
> The introduction of the National Intelligence Model has led to an increasing importance across the service in the role played by analysts. Typically, analysts are managed through a matrix structure, whereby they are accountable, via senior analysts, to their BCU commander, but maintain a 'dotted-line' responsibility to the head of profession, normally the principal analyst.
>
> NCIS has been successful at establishing an effective career structure for its analysts, which facilitates movement across the organisation. The organisation has introduced a seven-point grading scale for all staff through an internal job evaluation programme. Analysts are placed at an appropriate level within this scale, helping to develop a transparent route by which staff can progress their careers both laterally and vertically. NCIS believes that this is a major factor behind the fact that it does not suffer the same retention problems with analysts as many other public sector employers.
>
> The Police Service of Northern Ireland has introduced a comprehensive 'Analyst Development Programme', designed to recruit, train and retain analysts for their entire service. It incorporates a career development structure and introduces the concept of career pathways for analysts. The Force Analysis Centre has received national training awards and is a multiple recipient of the Tilley Award for Problem Oriented Policing.

6.38   The development of National Occupational Standards, accreditation schemes and professional registers across the criminal justice and security sectors will undoubtedly impact significantly on this issue and should open up career development opportunities across the security and criminal justice sectors, which would bring substantial benefits.

Variations in police staff pay

6.39   The examples of specific retention difficulties revealed during the inspection tended to focus on areas where external market pressures existed, for example intelligence analysts. This situation reflects similar problems encountered with IT specialists in the 1990s. It is often difficult for police forces to be competitive employers in such situations unless job evaluation schemes and rewards enable the force to respond flexibly to local market forces. Some forces have achieved this by

implementing a broad banding approach. This involves reducing significantly the number of grades within the police staff structure and widening the range of pay scales within each grade. This allows flexibility to recruit at various points within the agreed pay scale in response to specific local market factors.

6.40 However, whilst the ability to respond flexibly to market forces is seen as a positive benefit, some of the differences in pay for police staff in similar roles in different forces cannot be explained in this way. These differences were highlighted in research commissioned by UNISON and conducted by the Labour Research Department in 2003. The Department studied rates of pay for 17 police staff posts across the country, including Scotland. Work conducted by PSSO, the skills foresight report, supports this identification of big variations across the country that cannot be explained by local market forces. The results are summarised in Figure 15:

Figure 15 – Results of Labour Research Department survey into comparative pay for police staff roles

Role	Bottom of Pay Scale		Top of Pay Scale	
	Lowest	Highest	Lowest	Highest
Director of Finance	£34,965	£64,679	£35,658	£71,336
Payroll Manager	£15,990	£45,302	£19,194	£49,422
Scenes of Crime Officer	£10,494	£21,135	£14,487	£38,061
Fingerprint Expert	£12,104	£23,853	£19,194	£27,231
Vehicle Mechanic/Technician	£10,171	£19,056	£13,251	£22,506
Crime Analyst/Intelligence Officer	£14,793	£21,834	£18,453	£28,851
Criminal Justice Unit File Preparation Clerk	£10,171	£19,056	£13,251	£20,379
Control Room Operator	£11,724	£16,896	£13,745	£23,181
Enquiry Desk Clerk	£11,550	£16,896	£13,251	£21,135
Traffic Warden	£10,494	£16,896	£12,951	£18,453
CSO	£12,816	£16,896	£13,713	£20,485
Receptionist	£10,149	£14,793	£11,633	£16,404
Word Processor Operator	£10,149	£14,793	£12,633	£16,404
Cook	£10,494	£13,563	£10,494	£15,990
Detention Officer	£11,634	£15,219	£13,251	£17,931
Security Officer	£10,149	£12,633	£10,735	£13,252
Cleaner	£10,149	£11,322	£10,149	£12,744

6.41 Whilst it is likely that some of the roles involved are quite different in nature, the differences in pay suggested by the survey raise a number of issues about the need for greater standardisation of pay across the country. It would be important, however, in any such move, to retain an element of local flexibility as outlined above.

Job evaluation

6.42 One way of ensuring a consistent approach to the issue of pay and gradings, both within forces and across the country, is through a system of job evaluation. The PSC 13-factor job evaluation scheme is favoured by UNISON, but take-up of this scheme has been negligible. Of the 41 forces that responded to an HMIC questionnaire, only two stated that they operated this scheme[3]. Thirteen forces stated that they did not operate any form of job evaluation at all, three forces operated more than one scheme and in total, 11 different schemes were in use across the country. It is difficult to see how a fair and consistent approach to police staff pay can be developed without a common process of job evaluation, although the need to retain local flexibility through the ability to pay market and grade supplements is equally important. Such a move would assist staff in developing their careers between forces by establishing a consistent approach to grading. It would also help forces when collaborating with other forces. Developing a common approach to job evaluation would need to reflect the significant investment made by a number of forces in existing schemes and is therefore a medium to long term objective.

> ### *Recommendation 15*
>
> HMI recommends that ACPO, in consultation with the Home Office and the PSC, agrees to a common approach to job evaluation for police staff roles to ensure fairness and consistency, whilst retaining the flexibility to respond to local need.

Training and development

Overview

6.43 The Police Training and Development Board is the key strategic body with responsibility at a national level for bringing about improvements in training and development. Responsibility for delivery of training and development at a national level rests principally with the Central Training and Development Authority, which trades under the name 'Centrex'. Foundation Training, which has a responsibility for the core programme for new police officers, is by far the biggest single directorate within Centrex. Centrex's portfolio additionally contains forensic science and IT services as well as leadership development and crime and operational support products. Its remit extends beyond this, through the creation of the NCPE, to advancing the professional capacity of policing by capturing and deploying state-of-the-art knowledge on critical issues and events.

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3   Ibid

The role of Centrex

6.44 Centrex was subject to its first statutory inspection by HMIC in 2003. This inspection highlighted a lack of clarity about the specific role played by Centrex and raised issues about its relationships with key stakeholder organisations such as ACPO. Recommendation 2.1 in the inspection report stated that:

> *"By April 2004, the whole service, through the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO), should engage with Centrex to clarify the purpose and role of the organisation. The Home Office must then ensure that Centrex has the resources necessary to deliver what is agreed."*

6.45 This lack of clarity manifested itself in a number of ways during the inspection, for example, in the difficulties in identifying national training issues relating to new posts such as CSOs. Work in taking this recommendation forward is progressing positively, which should help ensure that such difficulties are less likely to arise in the future.

Highlighting 'high potential' police staff

6.46 The Centrex HPDS is not currently open to police staff. Largely this is because there exists a 'talent spotting' process for police officers but not for police staff. It therefore follows that if there is no mechanism to identify 'high flyers' or exceptional talent amongst police staff, then it would be difficult to ensure fair access to a leadership training programme based on exceptional ability. There are no current plans to change this situation, with the lack of structured career paths for police staff being given as the major reason. As one interviewee commented:

> *"The service hasn't got to grips with a rank or role structure for police staff."*

However, the application of the ICF to all roles within the service now provides the basis on which to take this issue forward.

6.47 The inability of police staff to access the HPDS is perhaps all the more surprising given that four out of ten programme modules – leadership and self, leadership of people, management of organisation and diversity leadership – are not police officer specific. Increasingly, the finance and resources management module, which is also not police officer specific, is being delivered to police officer potential leaders. So, in effect, 50% of the programme modules are already designed for generic application. It would not be difficult for these modules to accommodate police staff, if only there was a mechanism to identify them as having 'high potential'. The national position reflects the situation at force level – during the inspection we were unable to find any force with such a scheme.

> ## Recommendation 16a
>
> HMI recommends that at a national level, the Home Office develops a similar scheme to the HPDS for police officers to identify and actively develop police staff with high potential.

> ## Recommendation 16b
>
> HMI recommends that at the force level, systems should be in place to identify police staff with high potential and actively develop their careers.

Leadership training – Strategic Command Course

6.48   The Strategic Command Course is designed to prepare delegates for appointment to chief officer positions. Five members of police staff are undertaking the current course and in each of the previous three years, four police staff have attended. The total number of participants on each course typically varies between 40 and 60. A representation of around one in ten does not adequately reflect the current level of chief officer posts held by police staff. The 2004 course is the last before being replaced by part II of the Senior Leadership Development Programme (SLDP).

Leadership training – Senior Leadership Development Programme

6.49   Centrex runs the SLDP, the current version of which follows changes mandated by the reform agenda. Part I (SLDP I) is accessed generally by chief inspectors and newly promoted superintendents, with relatively few police staff attending. In the financial year 2003/04 for example, 913 police officers attended SLDP I, compared with only 73 members of police staff (7.4% of attendees). Part II (SLDP II), which is still in its pilot phase, is targeted at 'executive level' for those with potential to be chief officers in the future. It will replace the Strategic Command Course later in 2004. Work to help clarify the role of Centrex and to identify the learning requirement for the service may assist in opening up these programmes to greater numbers of police staff in the future.

Leadership training – Core Leadership Development Programme

6.50   Centrex has recently developed the Core Leadership Development Programme (CLDP) for leadership roles below chief officer level. It is aimed at both police officers and police staff and includes a development module for those not yet in leadership positions. The programme will be centrally monitored, but primarily self-managed and delivered locally. This work has evolved from the development of the ICF and the core modules will be supported by a series of workshops.

6.51 CLDP is a very positive development in the provision of leadership training. As well as being designed with both police officers and police staff in mind, HMI was pleased to note that the planned evaluation strategy for this programme will include the issue of equality of access for officers and police staff. Improving access for police staff will be a key issue in the overall success of the programme at meeting the needs of the service. Some plans are already in place to help achieve this. It is intended that the programme will be included in the Centrex franchise scheme, which will incorporate a service level agreement for users. The option for delegates to self-manage their way through the programme by way of e-learning will help make it more accessible to staff who might find it difficult to attend lengthy residential courses, provided their forces are able to provide sufficient access to IT systems. This self-managed part of the programme will be supplemented by workshops that will be convened on an eight-hour, weekday basis.

A learning requirement for the police service

6.52 During the inspection, senior Centrex managers expressed a strong commitment to develop a more joined-up approach, especially in listening to the police service requirement. The emphasis was very much on designing training products for local delivery in line with ICF and Skills for Justice profiles. ACPO has since April 2003 been engaged in identifying a national learning requirement for the police service. Responsibility for highlighting learning needs has been delegated to each of the ACPO business areas and these are then fed into a commissioning process to identify the most cost-effective means of meeting those needs. The learning requirements identified to date do include both police officers and police staff but this is yet to be reflected in training and development opportunities open to police staff. Research commissioned in 2000 by National Police Training (the forerunner of Centrex) suggested that less than 5% of training capacity in a selected region was utilised by police staff.

> ### Recommendation 17
>
> HMI recommends that heads of all ACPO business areas ensure that police staff learning needs are fully considered in the process of identifying a learning requirement for the service in order to ensure that police staff have appropriate access to training and development opportunities.

CSO training

6.53 The training of CSOs serves to highlight the lack of an effective process for identifying and addressing new training issues at a national level.

> ## CASE STUDY
> ## CSO Training
>
> The government first announced the introduction of CSOs in the Police Reform Act 2002 and 27 forces took advantage of the first round of government funding to appoint CSOs in the financial year 2002/03. Despite the clear training need relating to this new role, no national co-ordination took place and forces were left to devise their own programmes. These varied from 15 days to 6 months in length[3], although it is likely that the longer training periods quoted by forces include a significant element of on-the-job training. The reasons for the lack of co-ordination are not wholly clear, although Centrex and ACPO have since agreed to develop a national programme. This has revealed a great degree of commonality between the content of the programmes conducted in each force. A pilot modular programme has recently been developed, linked to the ICF and National Occupational Standards. Some modules will be generic (eg personal responsibility), whilst others (eg relating to specific powers) will only relate to some forces. The total CSO package would amount to six weeks. This approach opens up the possibility of the accreditation of this learning for those CSOs who go on to join as regular officers. The new programme was due to be piloted at around the time this report was going to print (May 2004), with the results of the evaluation expected later in the year. HMI is encouraged by this approach and looks forward to seeing how the programme develops.

Training and development at force level

6.54   Induction training for police staff was poor in many of the forces visited. This is becoming increasingly important as the proportion of police staff grows and as a growing number of operational police staff roles are developed. Some forces had recognised this and were starting to build induction programmes for all staff in order to help promote integration.

6.55   Many forces visited placed a high priority on management training and HMI was encouraged to see that a number of forces had introduced harmonised training programmes for sergeants, inspectors and police staff supervisors and junior managers. This was not universally the case, however. One force, for example, having suspended management training for a number of years, had recently

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3   Ibid

introduced a new programme for sergeants. The content was very task-focused and not readily applicable to police staff.

6.56 A concern was raised on numerous occasions throughout the inspection about the funding of training associated with new initiatives. Whilst this was normally funded as part of a project, there was often a lack of clarity about how ongoing training for new entrants would be funded once the project had concluded. A typical example was of forces providing training for all staff on new PDR processes.

6.57 Many forces were supportive of individuals who wished to attend role-related external training such as the Certificate or Diploma in Management Studies. In general, however, forces were less willing to assist staff who wanted to undertake external training in respect of roles to which they aspired in the future. One exception to this was found in Northumbria, where the Force had made funding available for such a course, decided to include those aspiring to management posts and circulated this offer by e-mail to every member of police staff. In Herefordshire (West Mercia), effective partnership working had assisted in providing developmental opportunities, as well as improving the working environment.

CASE STUDY

Herefordshire Partnership

Herefordshire Partnership includes healthcare, probation, charities etc. There are a number of jointly funded posts within the partnership, although each post has an allegiance to one particular organisation for contractual purposes. Shared facilities have been developed through the partnership for organisations that cannot afford or have insufficient demand to produce their own. Examples include childcare facilities and car-pooling. This partnership also encourages career development between agencies through the use of secondments in similar or developmental roles.

Investment in police staff training and development

6.58 The inspection team was keen to establish the comparative investment in training between police officers and police staff. Forces should have been in a position to provide this information as part of the 2003/04 national activity based costing returns. However, 83% of forces did not have systems that enabled them to provide a breakdown of training costs in this way[3]. It is nonetheless apparent that the training needs of police officers in most cases take priority over those of police staff.

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3   Ibid

> ### *Recommendation 18*
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> HMI recommends that forces develop systems to ensure they can identify the training spend on police staff and police officers.

> ### *Recommendation 19*
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> HMI recommends that forces conduct a training needs analysis, linked to the PDR process, to ensure police staff have appropriate access to training and development opportunities, linked to business need or an individual's development plan.

6.59 Examples of how this inequity has been addressed were found in Dyfed-Powys Police and in the MPS.

> ### CASE STUDY
> ## Police Staff Training, Dyfed-Powys Police
>
> The Force recognised the need to provide training for its police staff to help them develop and obtain skills to perform their roles effectively. There was also a wish to provide skills to help them progress their career and appreciate their value. In addition to an external study budget of £10k per annum, which is fully utilised, the Force introduced a scheme in June 2003, which is open to all police staff. Linked to the PDR system, staff can apply for training courses from a prospectus of 15 courses that are delivered in-house to maintain consistency and to reduce costs and abstractions from work. They vary from 3 hours to 2 days and trainers visit BCUs to deliver the training. The pilot scheme was due to be evaluated shortly after the completion of the fieldwork visit, but early indications were that it was likely to become permanent. The scheme was launched by ACPO with UNISON and line mangers present, marketing was by Force newsletter and posters, supplemented by an e-mail being sent to every member of staff.

CASE STUDY

Police Staff Development, MPS

Recognising that it had been unable to offer police staff the appropriate level of career development, the MPS commissioned a project to identify ways in which this could be addressed.

It found that there was insufficient training capacity to meet the current needs of police staff within existing resources and that the needs of police officers took priority. Pockets of good practice were revealed and these were invariably linked to the presence of a local 'champion'.

The resulting process is based on some key principles and is showing early signs of effectiveness:

- Effective identification of development needs by line managers and individuals using the PDR process and competency framework as a basis.
- Protected development time for individuals and ring-fenced local provision to ensure opportunity.
- Generation and promotion of alternative development options to supplement contact training.
- Provision of a local staff development manager to support line managers, generate development options, encourage local partnerships internally and externally and champion development activity at all levels.
- Provision of a central police staff development advisory unit to support the network of local development managers, act as a conduit between centrally identified needs and local provision, act strategically to generate development options with or through external organisations, secure external funding where appropriate and trigger quality assurance of local provision.
- Provision of a police staff development management board, analogous with existing training management boards, to prioritise centrally identified development needs and agree police staff development strategies.

Staffing of the training function

6.60 At both national and force level, the training function is typically staffed with a mix of police officers and police staff. The rationale for this is sound. Police officers are able to bring an operational policing context to the training and also add to the credibility of training that relates to operational matters. Police staff, on the other hand, can bring the expertise of education specialists to the police training arena, something that is vital if the training and development of the police workforce is to be professionalised, as well as an element of stability and continuity.

6.61 This mix of staff, however, once again raises significant issues around terms and conditions, with police officers and police staff often performing in essence identical roles, but with vastly different pay and conditions applying to them. Those police officers on secondment to Centrex, for example, have the benefits of central service conditions. Directly employed staff receive no such allowances, despite performing essentially the same role.

Career development and career pathways

Overview

Police staff scenes of crime officer

6.62 A constant theme throughout the inspection has been the lack of a strategic approach to the career development of police staff. Police reform has brought with it a significantly broader range of career opportunities for police staff. The traditional approach to career development of police staff has been in terms of promotion within a series of mini 'career pyramids', each with its own 'glass ceiling', above which progression can only be made by leaving the organisation. These historically existed in areas such as administration and HR, but more recently have developed in areas such as intelligence analysis and scientific support.

6.63 Scientific support provides an excellent example of the professionalisation of police staff roles and how this has led to the development of an effective career structure.

CASE STUDY
Scientific Support

The civilianisation of scientific support units was touched upon in the HMIC thematic inspection *Under the Microscope* (2000). At that time, 85% of staff within scientific support units were police staff, since when the proportion of police staff has increased further. Figures supplied by forces as part of the Home Office's ADR reveal that during the 2002/03 financial year, 91.7% of scientific support employees were police staff. By that time, 14 forces had no police officers working in scientific support functions.

Whilst fingerprint and photographic units have been fully civilianised in most forces for many years, by far the biggest change during the period since 2000 has been in scenes of crime roles, where the total number of people working in scenes of crime posts increased by 57%. During this time, the number of police officers employed in these posts has actually decreased by 4.8%. Consequently, the vast majority of the additional people employed in this field since the publication of *Under the Microscope* have been police staff, who by 2002/03 accounted for 86.7% of scenes of crime officers. The term 'scenes of crime officer' is used as it is still the most commonly understood term, but staff in this role are increasingly being referred to by other terms such as 'crime scene investigators', reflecting the front-line and professional status of the role.

During the inspection, it was clear that scientific support was a discipline that in many forces was associated with the development of a strong professional culture. As supervisory and managerial roles have become increasingly civilianised, so career pathways have opened up for staff in this area. Scientific support has a nationally accredited training regime associated with it and is an area that in many forces is underpinned by a strong performance culture. All of this has led to an increasing acceptance of police staff in these roles by their police officer colleagues, something that was clearly evident from the fieldwork.

In a number of forces, police staff scenes of crime officers wear a uniform appropriate to their role and are deployed in marked vehicles, helping increase police visibility and reassurance.

There remains, however, something of an anomaly regarding the heads of scientific support departments, typically referred to as scientific support managers. In over 30% of forces, the person in this role is a police officer and HMI can see no obvious rationale for this position.

Examples of effective working within scientific support identified during the inspection included Kent County Constabulary, which has developed a career pathways structure for forensic investigators. It produces a forensic investigation welcome and induction pack for new staff, which gives clear information regarding the organisation of the department, roles and responsibilities of staff and guidance on career development and pathways. It has also introduced a scheme of planned and evaluated attachments and training to develop skills and to enable staff to move into specialisms such as fingerprints and imaging. Staff maintain a forensic investigator's development file, which includes a structured training matrix and guidance on career pathways.

In the MPS, scenes of crime officers are being used as the sole initial response to residential burglary, an initiative that has since been taken up by a number of other forces. This involves broadening the role to include taking basic statements and conducting immediate enquiries in the vicinity of the crime. It avoids the need to deploy two police resources to the same incident and is therefore designed to provide a more effective service to victims.

Police staff scenes of crime officer

6.64 Many police staff spoke in positive terms about the support they had received, or felt they would receive, to develop their careers laterally. Others had struggled to develop their own careers, with little support from their forces. There were, however, few examples of structured approaches at a force level. A number of forces stated that they did plan to produce a career development strategy that would apply to both police officers and police staff, but work to develop these strategies had not yet started[3]. In some forces, attachments to other departments and secondments out of forces were open only to police officers.

6.65 Work on developing an effective career pathways structure for a modern police service is currently being progressed by ACPO through the NCPE. Their work sets out a vision of *"a synthesis between the complexity of the tasks facing policing and qualified multifarious skills within the workforce, in sworn and unsworn staff alike".* HMI is greatly encouraged by the fact that this work seeks to embrace all staff in its proposals, which link very closely to the development of national standards, the specification of competencies and a general framework of career development.

A modular framework of career pathways

6.66 A modular concept of career development is a natural progression from the identification of competencies and the shift to qualification and accreditation. Within such a structure, it is easy to identify opportunities for lateral or vertical development. Some modules will be more complex than others and the costs both in opportunity terms and direct investment through training means that career development should be planned rather than being solely self propelled. Such a plan should, however, be sufficiently flexible and should allow in principle for people to change course, to allow for effective management, and for future leaders to gain a broad view.

6.67 The adoption of such an approach would make it easier for police staff to cross force boundaries, facilitating developmental secondments outside the home force as well as movement into and from other forces and potentially other justice sector organisations.

6.68 The pathways model as being developed by ACPO is illustrated in Figure 16. It can be seen that it is not only based on the concept of specialisation, but allows for development within each of the three broad pathways outlined to 'advanced status'.

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3   Ibid

Figure 16 – Career Pathways Model Being Developed by ACPO/NCPE

6.69 It can be seen that this model, which applies equally to police officers and police staff, reflects a profound change in thinking, particularly where police officers are concerned. The approach advocated affirms a solid commitment to develop real depth and experience in the career specialism for which selected, rather than a career that is based around movement throughout every branch of the service.

6.70 In developing a more specialised service, the issue of diverse opportunity for police officers needs to be considered. One of the attractions of a police career is the range of opportunity it provides and whilst the business need must always be first, too much rigidity could cause difficulties. Managers would be more restricted in how they might develop their staff and cater for their personal circumstances and individuals could be in danger of being de-motivated by a reduced sense of opportunity.

Summary of ACPO/NCPE work

6.71 ACPO has, in consultation with a range of stakeholder groups, set out the principles it believed necessary to underpin its work on career pathways, and HMI is encouraged that these principles strongly emphasise the need to move towards a more harmonised workforce. They are that:

- Career pathways are applicable to all employees and not the sole pre-requisite of the attested.
- There is potential for the use of a common induction process for all employees based on shared basic skill requirements.

- The service moves from a 'de-selection' approach to recruitment to a process supporting career pathways with equality of entry and opportunity key.
- Recognising the benefits of a holistic approach would allow the development of an unfettered skills base with opportunity to grow and develop throughout the organisation.
- The implementation of the National Standards embodied within the ICF will enhance the professional status of the service. The wider use of recognised qualifications and accreditation for all employees will support this approach.
- The service is committed to the continuous development of all employees, supported by a body of professional knowledge and accreditation under the auspices of the NCPE.
- The potential for multi-point entry to the organisation is considered for all employees incorporating variable timescales of employment, flexibility and fast tracking, recognising the relevant skills and experiences that individuals have acquired prior to their point of entry.
- Recognition is given to the importance of developing leaders of the future who have a broad and balanced experience that commands respect and allows effective and efficient discharge of the service's responsibilities to society.
- The police service is only a job for life subject to continuous development and linked to a credible and effective individual PDR.
- The commitment to training recognises that the skills required for the various roles in the service can be trained/taught and are not expected to be present and established from the outset.
- The approach should be developmental and incremental to help achieve a fully competent workforce that can deliver a first class service to all communities in a continually evolving environment dealing more effectively and efficiently with complexity.

Building a flexible employment framework

6.72   A more flexible approach to employment rules for police officers would facilitate the development of a more representative workforce, one where it is easier to transfer between occupational roles and which in turn becomes more highly skilled and specialised. Indeed, a future scenario could potentially allow for necessary powers to be attached to specific roles, allowing for easier recruitment of police staff who have acquired specialist skills elsewhere to operational tasks.

6.73   In some law enforcement tasks which do not need core policing experience (such as financial investigation and crime scene examination), it could be argued that the status and accountability of staff performing these functions should be more closely aligned to that of sworn officers. This further highlights the potential for more flexible rules of employment, with the possibility of powers tailored to roles.

6.74   Policing struggles to achieve recognition as a profession when most staff are still managed in ways which would earn them the label 'blue collar' in other fields. A tightly regulated employment framework that sets remuneration only by hours of labour and years of service rather than by level of skill required or complexity of responsibility is surely no longer fit for purpose and needs to be reviewed.

> ## Recommendation 20
>
> HMI recommends that the Home Office, in conjunction with the Police Advisory Board for England and Wales, leads a detailed and fundamental review of Police Regulations to provide a flexible and enabling employment framework for police officers.

Building a representative workforce

6.75   A 30-year commitment to a single employer or service is less appealing to those joining the recruitment pool today, whether at the start of their working life, or returning to it. A number of CSOs interviewed during the inspection gave this as a reason for becoming support officers rather than constables.

6.76   Clearly, the service needs to be best placed to attract the best available talent from the recruitment pool. This is no longer simply a matter of attracting those aged between 18 and 25 years who have an interest in public service. The demographics of an ageing population and an increasingly diverse society drive the service towards improving its ability to attract women, people from minority ethnic communities and older people.

6.77   In order to achieve the business benefits this will bring, and to be an employer of choice, the police service must, in addition to addressing issues of organisational culture and discrimination, offer more flexible career patterns and opportunities for interchangeability which allow people to move in and out of the service at different times in their working lives.

Leadership and senior appointments

Overview

6.78   At many levels the service sends out signals, which, although largely unintended, suggest that police staff are less valued or less capable than officers. For instance, there is a tendency that if a department headed by a police staff member is perceived to be performing poorly, the solution is to appoint a senior police officer to take charge. Where this had occurred, it was sometimes difficult to identify an obvious rationale for

the decision, which is invariably perceived in a very negative light by senior police staff in the organisation.

6.79 Whilst there may be a case to support police officer involvement at a senior level in some non-operational departments, such as HR management, HMI finds it difficult to understand the rationale for having a police officer as a head of specialisms such as this. Some 22% of forces responding to an HMIC questionnaire[3] reported having a police officer as head of HR. In some forces this appears to be seen as a career development opportunity for senior officers, or worse still, as a convenient parking space for those waiting for ACPO vacancies following completion of the Strategic Command Course.

Police staff representation on force command teams

6.80 The recruitment of police staff to chief officer positions and their representation on a high-level national policy-making forum have sent out an important and valuable signal regarding their worth to the service. However, there is considerable variation in the number of police staff granted chief officer status across forces, even of similar size and make-up. In one force visited during the inspection, the command team of eight comprised four police officers and four members of police staff, all of whom were ACPO members. By contrast, in another (larger) force, the five members of the command team were all police officers and no members of police staff were ACPO members. Of course, structures and other variables may dictate a difference in approach. Nonetheless, there is a perception amongst many senior members of police staff that some chief officers are resistant to the involvement of police staff at the most senior levels and will artificially place an Assistant Chief Constable (ACC) between a senior police staff head of profession and the chief officer.

> ### *Recommendation 21*
>
> HMI recommends that chief constables ensure that the professional expertise of senior members of police staff is appropriately recognised through their representation on force command teams.

ACPO membership

6.81 There is also a lack of awareness amongst police staff and police authority members as to the criteria for them to become ACPO members. The ACPO constitution allows for *"senior members of the civilian staff..."* to become members, with the sole criterion being that each individual concerned has a status equivalent to

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3   Ibid

that of a chief police officer. The chief constable is required to nominate the individual and confirm that he/she meets the criterion. There is no one test of this criterion, but the essence is that the weight of the post-holder's job must match at least that of an ACC in the force concerned. ACPO suggests that chief constables consider a number of issues such as whether the individual is a member of the force policy team; whether they are appraised directly by the chief constable; whether they are corporate decision-makers (rather than specialist advisers) and whether, if the post were to be filled by a police officer, the appointment would need to be made by the police authority.

6.82 Membership of ACPO allows senior police staff professionals to contribute to the development of national policing policy and for this reason, differences in approach to the granting of ACPO membership may make some forces more attractive to senior members of police staff than others.

6.83 It is a concern that a police staff member has never been the head of an ACPO business area, even in a discipline where they have the professional expertise – this raises obvious questions as to why this should be. Once again, many senior police staff perceive this negatively across the service.

Recommendation 22

HMI recommends that ACPO works with the Home Office, PSC, APA, trade unions and the staff associations to develop comprehensive guidelines to ensure greater consistency of approach to the granting of ACPO membership to senior members of police staff across all forces.

Developing senior police staff leaders

6.84 In wider terms, there has been considerable debate regarding the quality of leadership in the service, although this has principally focused on police officers. There is a need to develop an integrated and coherent 'talent strategy' which enables the service to be attractive to as wide an audience as possible and which ensures opportunities for rapid progression for the most able as part of a managed career structure. The lack of a national HPDS for police staff has been discussed earlier in this chapter, and in core areas of business the service is not growing or nurturing talent. For instance, we could find no evidence of a finance director who had commenced their career within the police service. There is a very well developed training and selection process for chief police officers, but similar processes are not in place for police staff.

6.85 Police authorities appoint chief constables and police officers at chief officer level. It is chief constables, however, who appoint police staff chief officers. Whilst in some forces, police authority members are involved to varying degrees in senior police staff appointments, this involvement is patchy and this inequality of approach cannot be justified. There should be a more integrated approach to finding both officers and police staff for the most demanding leadership roles in the service.

> ### Recommendation 23
>
> HMI recommends that ACPO and the APA develop an agreement, to be implemented locally, to ensure greater consistency in the appointment of police officers and police staff to chief officer roles.

Consultation and representation

Trade unions and staff associations

6.86 UNISON is the major trade union representing police staff across the country. In total, around 55% of police staff are UNISON members. This varies across the country, however, with membership density ranging from 26% to 94%. The reasons for this degree of variation are not clear, although it is thought likely that it relates in some way to the industrial relations climate in each force and the attitude of chief officers to trade unions and consultation. UNISON does not represent police staff in the MPS. MPS police staff were historically civil servants and are represented by a range of trade unions, with a Trade Union Side structure through which industrial relations issues are dealt. A number of smaller unions represent specific groups of police staff and a significant proportion of police staff are not represented by any union.

6.87 The Police Federation represents police officers up to and including the rank of chief inspector. The Superintendents' Association represents the superintending ranks and chief officers are represented by the Chief Police Officers' Staff Association.

6.88 In addition to the statutory associations, a number of bodies exist that focus on the interests of under-represented groups. Examples include the Gay Police Association, the British Association for Women in Policing and the National Black Police Association. Significantly, all these groups have membership that is inclusive of both police officers and police staff, unlike the statutory associations.

National consultation

6.89 At a national level, whilst established negotiating fora exist for the main police officer association bodies, police staff trade union representatives are excluded from many of these and there is no formal forum for all of the staff associations and the

major trade unions to come together. Given the current drive towards workforce modernisation in the service, there is an increasing need to have a shared platform where all such groups are able to discuss strategic aspects of this issue. There may also be a need for a pan-police consultative forum, the need for which is highlighted by the fact that initial discussions on the police reform process took place without UNISON being present.

6.90 UNISON made a submission to HMI about the need to develop more consistent and effective consultation and negotiation in the service along the lines of a 'social partnership' model, and involving trade unions and staff associations.

6.91 There is an argument that the current two-system approach, where police staff issues are represented at the PSC while police officers are represented at the PNB, has created and enshrined two types of consultation at every level in the service. In police forces, the inspection teams found some areas of good practice, but they also discovered very different styles of consultation that varied from inclusive to divisive. Variations were found in the way ACPO teams, BCU commands and police authorities consulted and involved personnel in operational and environmental issues. An example of this type of occurrence that was found was in the drawing-up of force or local strategies and policies. The management side would claim that effective consultation was being exercised but when tested in interview with the staff side it became apparent that this consultation had amounted to little more than the sight of the final draft with no realistic time to comment.

6.92 The UNISON view is that consultation, negotiation and decision-making should be based on a model of social partnership, thereby creating a more productive and open culture within the police sector.

Police Staff Council

6.93 The PSC, formerly the Police Support Staff Council, negotiates pay and conditions and includes all forces except for the MPS, the City of London Police, Kent and Surrey. The reasons for this are complex. In the case of the MPS, police staff historically had the employment status of civil servants and their terms and conditions are therefore linked to those of the civil service. In respect of Kent and Surrey, they relate to the fact that the respective county councils had opted out of the local government negotiating machinery prior to the creation of the PSC in 1996. As a result, when their staff transferred to the new police authorities they were not covered by the successor arrangements to the Local Government National Joint Council – namely the PSC.

6.94 Both Surrey Police and Kent County Constabulary have their own local pay and bargaining machinery. These forces may be concerned that signing up to the PSC will remove any local bargaining flexibilities, but in fact the PSC handbook is a framework

agreement that leaves much to local negotiation. The legitimacy and ability of the PSC to become a more strategic body are hampered by the fact that not every police force in England and Wales is represented on the Council. In order to accommodate the MPS, agreement would need to be sought for the MPS Trade Union Side and staff associations to be represented on the council.

> ### Recommendation 24
>
> HMI recommends that forces outside the PSC join the council and adopt the agreements set out in the revised PSC handbook.

6.95 Police officers have a tightly defined set of terms and conditions, which are enshrined in statute. Police staff, on the other hand, rely upon the willingness of their force locally to apply the PSC framework and in the case of those forces who are not represented on the PSC, even this safeguard is not in place. There is also some confusion over the role and responsibilities of the PSC and its members. The ACPO Personnel Management Business Area produces a range of guidance for police forces, which one might expect to be the subject of collective bargaining. Examples include the ACPO model sickness absence policy and model service confidence procedures. The fact that this approach was not adopted sits uncomfortably with the key PSC objective of *"…the promotion of good industrial relations…".* For police officers, the Police Advisory Board exists to facilitate consultation on the range of issues covered by ACPO advice. The PSC currently has no such mechanism to ensure similar dialogue.

6.96 Given this background, the PSC handbook has recently been restructured to comprise the following key elements:

- Agreed core national terms and conditions of employment for all police staff, updated and clarified as necessary.
- Joint advice and guidance on key employment issues.
- Proposed new joint advice and guidance to cover:
  - Conduct.
  - Equalities.
  - Training and development.
  - Work/life balance.
  - Job evaluation.
  - Working time.
  - Health, safety and welfare.
- Proposed review of the Council's role and responsibilities, particularly with reference to Police Advisory Board type issues in relation to police staff.

6.97 The wording of the handbook is much improved in terms of clarity, and in addition the revised handbook harmonises a number of police staff terms and conditions with those of police officers. These changes are modest, but do begin to address some areas of unfairness in the two sets of terms and conditions. The challenge now for the PSC is whether its constituents can agree the way ahead for the Council in the context of the second wave of police reform.

6.98 In addition to revising terms and conditions of employment, the revised handbook also redefines the role and function of the PSC, which is projected to become a far more important body, wherein all police stakeholders can debate any matter pertaining to police staff. The fact that the Home Office has now joined the machinery should move this goal closer to being achieved. However, a number of obstacles remain, including the need to secure adequate resourcing of the Council and the absence from the machinery of certain police forces.

Local consultation and communication

6.99 Consultation is always a difficult issue and HMI recognises that, however comprehensive, there will always be those who feel they have not been consulted. However, throughout the inspection, a lack of meaningful consultation and engagement in respect of modernisation initiatives was a common complaint from both unions and staff associations. Many such complaints related to the fact that trade union representatives were often only involved at a late stage in the decision-making process, once decisions had in effect already been made. A more inclusive approach is needed.

6.100 The inspection revealed a fragmented approach to consultation and engagement with police staff in many forces. Examples included different chief officers in the same force dealing with different staff associations with no mechanism to pick up common concerns and issues. There were also significant variations in the different levels of engagement we found amongst chief officer teams and police authority members.

6.101 Some forces, such as Surrey Police, are trying innovative approaches to improve communication with their staff.

CASE STUDY
Internal Communication in Surrey Police

Surrey Police operates a scheme called the 'People Involvement Panel'. There are 14 such panels across the Force area, based either on BCUs or departments. The panels give staff a vehicle through which they can to raise issues and identify solutions. Each panel is chaired by a member of staff, irrespective of rank, who attends quarterly meetings with the Deputy Chief Constable. Each panel has a budget of £2,000 and can bid for extra funding with the support of the chief officer group. The chair is given training in chairing meetings. In one BCU visited during the inspection, the chair of the panel sits on the senior management team, where he is expected to contribute actively and act as a mechanism for consultation through the panel. On the same BCU, an open invitation was given to first line supervisors, both police officers and police staff, to participate in senior management team meetings, a policy that was well received by staff at all levels.

Effective internal communication was reinforced through the Force newspaper, 'Off Beat'. Representatives of trade unions and staff associations are involved in the editorial process for the publication and write their own columns.

Concerns raised through the panel process led the force to run an 'Open Space' event. This process, chaired by the Deputy Chief Constable, allowed people to air their views or raise issues and was attended by more police staff than police officers. The outcomes of the event have resulted in a detailed action plan, progress on which is reported via 'Off Beat'.

The challenge for the Force is that, despite an innovative and committed approach to internal communications, there was still a sense amongst some groups that they were not effectively engaged in the change process.

Use of retired police officers

Agencies supplying retired officers

6.102 A significant demand and market exists for the set of skills that retired police officers possess and forces are adopting a range of approaches to meet this demand. The *Policing Bureaucracy Taskforce* report (2002) highlighted this trend and suggested that maximum benefit would be gained from a co-ordinated, national database. This would require agreement within ACPO and the Home Office, leading to development of a database specification and invitation to tender.

6.103 During the spring of 2004, a national agreement was established for short-term supply of temporary staff under the jurisdiction of ACPO and incorporating the use of retired officers. The majority of forces in England and Wales have now subscribed to the agreement that sets out the criteria that forces should build into any contract with an outside agency, but do not tie them to using any particular agency.

6.104 Across the country, several ex-officers have established agencies supplying retired colleagues back to their host force and there are some concerns about potential integrity issues, the currency of training and some significant differences in charging rates. There is a need to introduce a structure of accreditation and quality assurance that could be applied to all external suppliers. In doing so, a more open and transparent approach would be developed, allowing anyone with the required skills to be employed and therefore remove the 'retired officer only' label associated with many such posts. A further danger associated with an over-reliance on using retired officers is that the majority of such staff seen during the inspection were white and male, which has obvious diversity implications.

> ### *Recommendation 25*
>
> HMI recommends that Skills for Justice works to develop agreed standards and accreditation for the use of retired officers and other staff under contract.

6.105 Allied to this is the '30-plus' retention scheme that was introduced as a means of encouraging more officers to remain in the service beyond 30 years. However, the workings of the police pension scheme make it unattractive for many offices to serve more than 30 years and take-up of this scheme has been low. It needs to be reviewed and improved if it is to be an attractive option, given this growing market for the skills of retired officers, whilst recognising the need to carefully balance incentives for individual officers with the business case for the force.

Employment of retired officers by forces

6.106 A particular issue of concern that the service needs to confront is what might be termed 'pseudo-civilianisation'. Currently, a significant proportion of civilianisation, particularly in specialist operational support roles, takes place when the officer incumbent retires. Although the post is advertised as a police staff role and a competitive selection process takes place, the role requirements are so police-specific that the appointment of the retired officer is a foregone conclusion. Few examples were found of attempts to undertake any form of succession planning and equip other police staff with the skills and experiences to meet the role requirements. This results in the strong perception amongst police staff of nepotism that in turn limits their career development opportunities.

6.107 It is not an isolated occurrence but there is no central monitoring of the proportion of police staff roles occupied by ex-officers and it is difficult to be specific about the extent to which this situation occurs. Evidence from questionnaire research showed that only ten out of 41 forces monitor this area[3]. Of those forces that do, the proportion of police staff who are retired officers varied between 2% and 10.1%. The limitations of the current approach should be recognised and attempts made to open up such opportunities to as wide a range of staff as possible.

Impact of the Disability Discrimination Act

Overview

6.108 In recent years, the government has placed considerable pressure on the police service to reduce the number of medical retirements of police officers. This has created obvious tensions with civilianisation and workforce modernisation, the need to provide meaningful roles for officers not fit to perform the full range of duties and the impact of the DDA 1995. This Act is already in force and the provisions will apply to police officers from October 2004. Not all officers currently classified as 'unfit for full duty' will be covered by the Act. It is equally important to distinguish between those members of staff with a permanent disability and those whose condition is temporary, making the use of recuperative or restricted duties the most common approach.

Preparations for the Act

6.109 Once again forces are considering a variety of approaches to manage the impact of the DDA, but most are at a very early stage and we found limited evidence of a strategic solution. A Home Office-led working group is developing guidance on a range of issues related to the Act and a process of consultation is being undertaken to refine

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3   Ibid

the guidance documents. HMI was disappointed, however, to note that early drafts of the guidance did not take account of the links between workforce modernisation and the implications of the Act.

6.110 At the time of the inspection fieldwork, little evidence of preparation for the DDA was available. In questionnaire data[3], 15 forces (37%) indicated that the DDA was likely to have a negative impact on their ability to civilianise posts.

6.111 As part of the modernisation agenda there may be scope to consider the retention of disabled officers within the organisation in non-sworn roles. Whilst a more flexible approach to the deployment of officers and police staff lends itself to this conclusion, there are dangers in sending out a signal that the service is simply using police staff posts as a dumping ground for unfit officers. There is already a concern amongst some police staff that one impact of the DDA will be to limit still further their career development opportunities. Likewise, the Police Federation has expressed the view that care should be taken in civilianising posts currently held by police officers. It is concerned that the very posts that could be deemed suitable for civilianisation might also be posts required for officers on recuperative or restricted duties. Posting police officers in this way could act as a potential barrier to civilianisation and workforce modernisation.

Managing recuperative and restricted duties

6.112 Most forces rightly identify that the management of officers on recuperative and restricted duties needs to involve consideration of each individual's circumstances. This is often achieved by a 'case conference' approach, involving for example an occupational health practitioner, the individual concerned and their line manager. Restrictions on duty, though, are often very broad in their nature. One force has sought to take a different perspective when considering this issue. Rather than describe the restrictions placed on an individual – ie the things that they **cannot** do – they describe the individual's current capabilities in terms of what they **can** do. Likewise, various police officer roles will be described in terms of what abilities are required, meaning that individuals can be matched to posts. The emphasis is on the ability of managers to be in control of the process, taking medical advice into account.

6.113 This contrasts with the policies in existence in some forces where a number of posts are reserved for officers on restricted or recuperative duties. In one force, for example, in order to preserve posts for officers on light duties under the DDA requirements, a 20:80 police officer to police staff ratio has been set in communications centres. It is difficult to reconcile long-term or permanent staffing

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3   Ibid

decisions such as this with the argument that police officers receive enhanced rates of pay because they can readily be deployed to other duties. This would clearly not be the case in this scenario, which would raise fundamental questions relating to equal pay for equivalent roles.

6.114 In developing their 'mixed economy' approach to policing, Surrey Police is of the opinion that workforce modernisation actually assists in providing posts that can be utilised by police officers in need of recuperative or restricted duties. This is because modernisation brings about a greater abundance of operational roles for police staff, such as those involved in prisoner processing, investigation, taking of statements etc. The Force would be relaxed about allowing a number of these civilianised roles to be temporarily filled by officers in need of recuperation or temporary restriction. This would not be seen as some sort of backsliding in terms of the civilianisation process but rather as an effective and flexible management tool. The problem with such processes comes when long term, effectively permanent restrictions need to be applied, and the individual is relatively young in service. It is still likely that such individuals will be ill-health retired and that this retirement will be acceptable in terms of employment law, Police Regulations and the DDA. The shift from ill-health retirement of police officers in the latter parts of their career to retirement in early or mid-career is already in evidence.

> ### Vision Statement
>
> That the service harnesses the full potential of the extended policing family. This will include the effective use of existing opportunities created by the Police Reform Act 2002 and the development of further roles to give more effective operational support to front-line police officers.

> ### Key Message
>
> Police reform has demonstrated the potential to further involve non-sworn staff in front-line policing. There are further opportunities to extend this involvement and to take a more holistic approach to the operational support of police officers. There is also a requirement to ensure a robust infrastructure is in place to support police reform and the extended policing family if it is to be effectively operationalised.

Chapter Summary

This chapter will outline:

- The background to the Police Reform Act 2002 and its impact on modernisation
- Development of the Special Constabulary
- The introduction and development of CSOs
- CSAS
- Neighbourhood wardens and street wardens
- Detention and custody officers
- The role of volunteers within policing
- Use of police staff investigators and the 'Professionalising the Investigation Process' scheme
- Involvement of other private and public sector organisations in policing
- Public perception of the extended policing family and how concerns in this area might be addressed; and
- Some potential future developments that could result from a holistic review of legislation and powers

Overview

7.1 The Police Reform Act 2002 has been a catalyst for a significant programme of change. The pace of this change has been remarkable and concepts that had been considered visionary and aspirational only ten years ago are now being embedded into the everyday fabric of policing. Change has happened more quickly in some places than others and there have been varying rates of progress both within and between forces. The private sector is beginning to make a significant mark in policing operations. The revolution of non-sworn police personnel on the front-line that started with traffic wardens over 30 years ago has continued with CSOs becoming a fixture in our towns and villages since their initial introduction less than two years ago.

7.2 The issue of funding has caused concern amongst chief police officers and police authorities at a time when there is a political premium on maintaining and increasing police officer numbers. Little consideration has been given to contingencies to reduce police numbers whilst retaining a larger overall workforce. However, much of the reasoning for those forces that have not, or did not bid for CSOs was grounded in their concerns over the future of police officer numbers, coupled with the short-term nature of the additional funding stream. There is a feeling of uncertainty in parts of the country about the way in which funding may continue; and in some cases the expansion has been funded by allied increases in the precept rate, a cause of great concern amongst local politicians and tax payers. It is doubtful whether these increases are sustainable.

7.3 This chapter starts by examining the role of the Special Constabulary and goes on to explore the ways in which police forces have begun to address the challenges and opportunities posed by the Police Reform Act 2002. It considers how forces are now working together with central and regional government, their local statutory and allied partners, business groups and the private sector to provide an effective policing service to their local communities.

7.4 For many years, police forces and police authorities worked in virtual isolation to reduce crime and to make their communities safer. Critical reports such as those arising from the Scarman[5] and Macpherson[6] enquiries in the 1980s and 1990s focused the service on the vital importance of interacting more effectively with the communities they police and this process is evolving. Legislation such as the Police and Criminal Evidence (PACE) Act 1984 and the Police and Magistrates' Courts Act 1994 have made administrative changes that have moved functions away from a comfortable

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5   Home Office, 1981, *The Brixton Disorders, 10 – 12 April 1981: Report of an enquiry by the Rt Hon The Lord Scarman*, OBE, London, HMSO, Cmnd 8427

6   Home Office, 1999, *The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry, Report of an Inquiry by Sir William Macpherson of Cluny*, London, The Stationery Office, Cmnd 4262–I and 4262–II

omnicompetence towards professional specialisms. The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 has additionally placed local partnerships on a statutory footing.

7.5   Acting with these events has been a slow and cumbersome bureaucracy, traditionally resistant to change and subject to a particular type of organisational culture which is, at best, a positive driver to perform complicated tasks quickly but at worst a critical barrier to change. Both positive and negative parts of this culture have been evident throughout the thematic inspection and have played a part in making the police service in England and Wales what it is today.

7.6   The term 'extended policing family' is one that is becoming more common since the Police Reform Act 2002. Whilst there is no universally agreed definition of this term, it is commonly understood to include police officers, special constables, CSOs, local authority wardens and private sector security patrols.

Special Constabulary

Overview

7.7   Special constables have actually existed since 1673, when King Charles II extended to common law a duty on citizens to allow anyone to be summoned and sworn in as a special constable to keep the peace. It was not until the Special Constables Act of 1835, however, that the principle of voluntary special constables was introduced.

7.8   Sometimes referred to as 'specials', special constables are volunteers with full police powers within their force and surrounding force areas. Their principal role consists of local, intelligence based patrols and crime reduction initiatives, targeted at specific local crime problems. Most special constables work a minimum of four hours per week, typically evenings or weekends and are suitably trained and wear similar uniform to regular officers. They receive out of pocket expenses only, although four forces are trialling locally funded allowance schemes.

Special Constables on patrol

7.9 Many special constables have no aspiration to join the police service as regular officers and are simply volunteers who wish to put something back into their community. Others may be seeking clarity of role before applying for the regular establishment, or may have been unsuccessful in their application to the regular force and are seeking development before re-applying. The latter category does not generally remain in the Special Constabulary long term. Since the advent of CSOs, there is emerging evidence of candidates wishing to join the police force as a constable, using the CSO route to gain their clarity of role or experience.

Special Constabulary strength

7.10 Special Constabulary numbers have been in decline for some time as can be seen from Figure 17.

Figure 17 – Special Constabulary strength
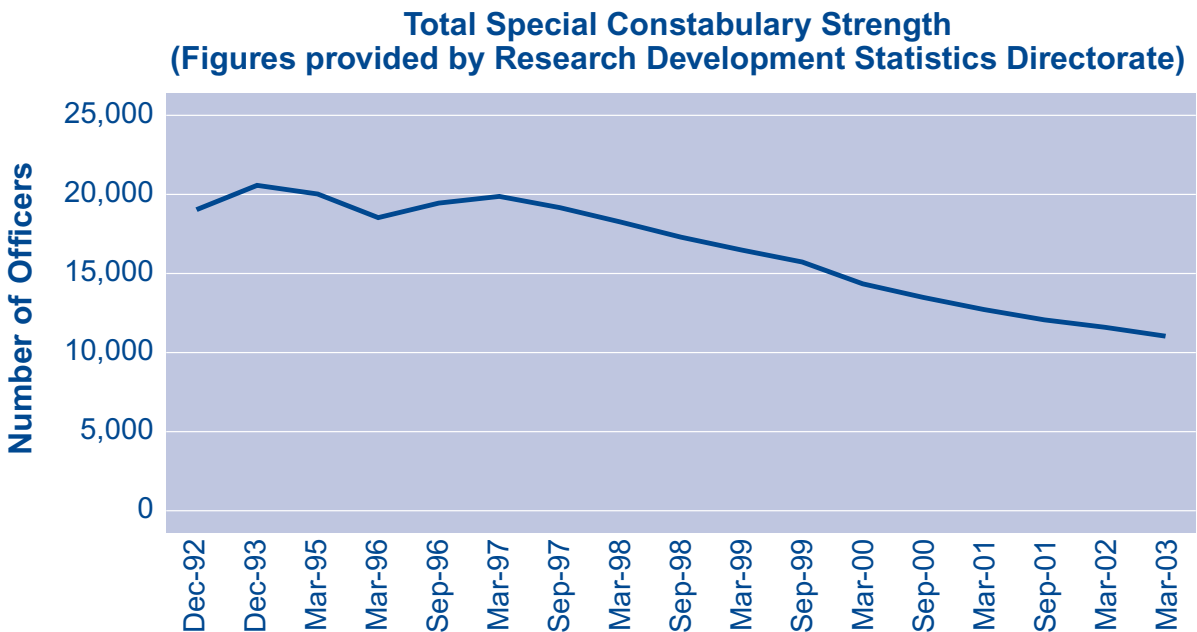
7.11 An annual turnover of around 23% compares favourably with other areas of volunteering and not all specials' resignations are a loss to policing. HMIC figures (from records supplied by 37 forces) show that 569 specials left to join the regulars in the year ending 31 March 2002. Research suggests that external commitments are the main reason for wastage, with poor management and deployment being other contributing factors.

7.12 The government does not currently set establishment levels for the regular or the Special Constabulary but is committed to increasing the numbers of specials and encourages forces to do so. Recruitment and retention of specials is a feature of the National Policing Plan. The Home Office is working with stakeholders (particularly ACPO) to address recruitment and retention through a range of measures to improve specials' recruitment, management and deployment. Amongst these is the provision of funding to assist forces in appointing Special Constabulary co-ordinators.

Payment

7.13 Special constables receive expenses and allowances. Opinion amongst specials who were interviewed during the inspection was divided on the payment issue. Some specials favoured this approach, but others felt it would devalue their volunteer status. It is also unlikely that the recruitment and retention difficulties currently being experienced within the Special Constabulary will be addressed simply by paying specials.

7.14 However, as some forces felt it would be helpful, in January 2003 the Special Constables (Amendment) Act 2002 was introduced, allowing forces (subject to the Home Secretary's approval) to trial the payment of retainers funded locally. Four such schemes have been approved in Humberside, West Midlands, Thames Valley and Cumbria.

Impact of the Special Constabulary on the extended policing family

7.15 Considerable work is in hand on maximising numbers and impact of the Special Constabulary, but little has yet been done to assess the effect of this work on the extended policing family, particularly CSOs.

7.16 The inspection team heard time and time again from both Special Constabulary commandants and individual special constables that the introduction of CSOs was having a demoralising effect on volunteers and could potentially lead to further reductions in numbers.

7.17 Forces have a responsibility to ensure that the Special Constabulary remains an attractive prospect by providing interesting and rewarding duties that add value to local communities. A number of recent initiatives have been undertaken to improve the recruitment and retention of special constables.

Innovative practice

7.18 Work is being carried out in individual forces and institutions to develop the citizenship and skill levels of specials and some of this work is government funded. Examples are the partial accreditation of the role in academic and vocational courses, such as that found in Thames Valley.

CASE STUDY

Thames Valley Police/Buckinghamshire Chilterns University College Special Constabulary Initiative

Thames Valley Police has established an agreement with Buckinghamshire Chilterns University College that enables students undertaking the University's Policing Studies degree course to gain credit by working as a special constable. This credit can be used by all of Thames Valley's special constables, not just those currently enrolled on the degree course.

Liaison with employers

7.19 Effective liaison with employers has proved an effective means of enhancing traditional Special Constabulary recruitment. Employer support can take a number of forms, including:

- Use of employers' facilities, such as notice boards, internal circulations, computers or office space to support recruitment of volunteers amongst employees.
- Recognition of volunteering achievement through appraisal procedures or a company award scheme.
- Participation in external recruitment drives with other local employers.
- The donation of products.
- Financial contributions or sponsorship.
- Flexibility in allowing employees to meet their volunteering commitments when necessary.
- Allowing employees regular time off, either unpaid or paid depending on the employer's commitment to the voluntary role being undertaken by the employee.

7.20 Norfolk Constabulary has been the lead force in developing a structured liaison scheme with employers through its STEP (Specials Through Employers Partnership) initiative.

CASE STUDY
Norfolk Constabulary STEP Initiative

STEP aims to encourage employers throughout the county to support the Special Constabulary by allowing employees who volunteer to become special constables time off work to fulfil their duties.

The Norfolk STEP scheme is the first of its kind in the country. Staff who are accepted into the Special Constabulary are allowed time off work to carry out the duties of a special constable. In return, individuals are expected to match the employer's time commitment in order to carry out a minimum of 16 hours service a month. This means that an employee would be given eight hours a month time off and would also give eight hours of their own time.

The Force trains the volunteers and equips them with valuable skills such as effective decision-making, team working and communications as well as developing their confidence, initiative and self-monitoring qualities.

At the present time, companies taking part in STEP include Norfolk Constabulary, Norfolk County Council and Norfolk Fire Service. Norfolk Constabulary is in discussion with a number of large and small employees across the county about the STEP scheme.

7.21   A comprehensive plan is being developed to provide an NVQ-based training provision for special constables. This is being funded via the Home Office. It is also hoped that generic forms of training will be delivered to detention officers, specials and CSOs as a group rather than on an ad hoc basis. Although in its early stages this work is a positive development.

The Police Reform Act 2002

7.22 The Police Reform Act 2002 is:

"An Act to make new provision about the supervision, administration, functions and conduct of police forces, police officers and other persons serving with, or carrying out functions in relation to, the police; to amend police powers and to provide for the exercise of police powers by persons who are not police officers; to amend the law relating to anti-social behaviour orders; to amend the law relating to sex offender orders; and for connected purposes."

7.23 The first part of this description is important to this thematic inspection as it introduced new powers for the provision of certain policing services and allowed chief constables and police authorities flexibility to consider ways in which their forces could be staffed in the future.

7.24 The most visible legacy of the Act is the CSO (or police CSO) but examples of other Reform Act initiatives, including accreditation schemes, custody and detention staff, privatisation, investigators and partnerships, were seen during the fieldwork and evidenced in questionnaires. In order to assist with the introduction of some Reform Act posts, some central government funds have been made available, most visibly for CSOs, but also increasingly for specific initiatives. The rate at which forces have introduced Reform Act posts has varied considerably, as has the way in which funding and contracts have been allocated.

Community support officers

Overview

7.25 CSOs were introduced by section 38 of the Police Reform Act 2002. The Act creates the possibility for police staff, endowed with limited powers, to undertake a variety of uniformed patrolling tasks. Some forces refer to these staff as 'police community support officers' (PCSOs). The two terms are interchangeable but the term 'community support officers' is that used in the Act and is used throughout this report.

7.26 The Act enables chief officers to designate staff and they can be endowed with a range of powers to enable them to tackle public nuisance offences and to provide support to police officers and communities. CSOs are employees of the police authority. Their primary function is to provide a high visibility reassurance patrol, dealing with low level disorder and anti-social behaviour, although in some areas CSOs have been appointed for other reasons. An example of this is in the City of Westminster, where CSOs are specifically deployed in a security role as part of the response to the terrorist threat in central London.

Newly recruited CSOs in London

7.27 The National Policing Plan sets a target to deliver 4,000 CSOs nationally, in as many forces as possible, by the end of 2005.

Take-up of CSO funding

7.28 The Home Office has provided significant funding for CSOs. This included full set-up costs as well as salary and direct on-costs in the first round of funding (2002/03). The scope of funding was less in subsequent rounds, but funding of at least 50% of salary and direct costs has been committed through to the end of financial year 2005/06. It is unclear whether central funding will continue for new CSOs beyond this point as this will depend on the outcome of the 2004 spending review. At the time of writing there were 3,538 CSOs (April 2004) with forces on course to meet the national target of 4,000. A total of 39 forces have either deployed CSOs or are in the process of doing so.

7.29 There is widespread recognition that the rapid take-up of CSOs has been partly due to the additional resources provided from the centre. Over two thirds of these posts as of April 2004 were fully or partly funded by the Home Office. The total number of fully locally funded posts at this time equated to 1,084 positions. Some forces were slower than others to take up funding for CSOs, partly due to uncertainty over their effectiveness, their impact on policing or future funding. There also appeared to be a wish to learn from the experience of forces already implementing CSOs before developing local schemes.

7.30 The lack of certainty over the long-term funding of CSOs has led to most forces employing them on fixed-term contracts. This approach is likely to limit the recruitment pool and makes it difficult for individuals to plan for their futures. Some CSOs said that they were considering leaving the service unless this situation was resolved.

Evaluation and impact

7.31 Evidence is emerging of CSOs being highly successful, particularly in terms of reassurance, where they are fulfilling a high visibility role that has been difficult for police officers to achieve in recent years. They are also playing a critical role in working with partners in the wider policing family and are beginning to become a fulcrum in ward-based communities. There is emerging evidence about their ability to break down barriers with community groups in a way that police officers have found difficult and there are also promising indications that CSOs are facilitating dialogue with minority ethnic groups who may previously have been difficult to reach. Most of this evidence is, however, anecdotal and the picture will not become clear until independent evaluation schemes have been completed, but the situation is promising nonetheless.

7.32 Further anecdotal evidence points to the role that can be played by CSOs as a valuable source of evidence following major incidents, due to their close, and in many cases unique, contact with local communities.

7.33 Most initial schemes are subject to independent evaluation, in many cases by local universities or educational establishments. At the time of researching for the thematic, most of this evaluation was 'work in progress' and little of value had been published.

CSO on patrol

7.34 Emerging findings from early evaluations suggest that CSOs' popularity and brand are based on their community patrolling function. If forces try to use them for minor support tasks, with a view to making their primary role to free up officers, it is possible that their impact on reassurance will decline. There is already evidence from fieldwork and questionnaires that alternative deployments are being considered.

Designation of powers

7.35 There is considerable variation in how chief officers use the Reform Act powers. Some 18 forces stated that they had decided not to grant CSOs any additional powers whatsoever[3]. In others, the full range of potential powers has been granted. Whilst some variation in local need is likely, the inspection team found little evidence of consistent thinking in relation to this issue. We found examples of different 'types' of CSO being given different powers in the same force.

7.36 In one force, CSOs were designated powers of former traffic wardens so that they could carry out traffic duty at football matches whilst in another force, a traffic warden was interviewed who was about to change role to that of a CSO. On the day she changed roles, she lost all her powers as her force had made a decision not to give powers to this particular type of CSO.

Partnership issues

7.37 Further variation is evident in respect of CSOs' relationship to other functions such as traffic wardens, and the extent to which there is co-operation with local authorities in funding and in relation to neighbourhood wardens.

7.38 Questionnaire data[3] reveals that 82% of those forces that employ CSOs have some form of funding from local government, business or other public or private sources. Work has commenced in the Home Office to develop joint guidance with the ODPM – the policy lead for wardens – and it is hoped that this will help develop consistency through the use of occupational standards.

Leaflet promoting Travel CSOs in Merseyside

7.39 The inspection revealed numerous examples of partnership working with external agencies, whereby the cost of some of the policing provision would be shared with an external body. Examples of such initiatives that had been introduced or were being considered included:

● The provision of visible policing on public transport in both Northumbria and Merseyside.

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3   Ibid

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CASE STUDY

Travel CSOs, Merseyside Police

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Mersey Travel is the overarching brand name for the transport executive and transport authority in Merseyside. It is responsible for the Mersey tunnels, the ferries, the bus network infrastructure and the local rail network. One of its strategic objectives relates to sustained regeneration of Merseyside.

Mersey Travel has recently provided 50% funding for 12 CSOs to be deployed in an intelligence-led way on the public transport network. Mersey Travel sees a clear business benefit to this investment, which is aimed at increasing reassurance and as a consequence leading to increased patronage of the network.

This initiative builds on a history of effective joint working between Mersey Travel and Merseyside Police. A high profile operation on a bus route corridor in 2001 (Operation Bream) was a major success in terms of both arresting offenders and reassuring the travelling public. It was followed by the appointment of a dedicated police officer to a linear beat based on a bus route. A subsequent increase in serious attacks on buses gave further impetus to this work and in autumn 2002 agreement was reached to second a police officer to Mersey Travel.

From this emerged the idea of CSOs and Mersey Travel has committed £75k for the current year and £150k for each of the following 2 years. There is a strong commitment that, if successful, the initiative will be sustained without Home Office funding. Training for these CSOs includes specific training in respect of issues relating to buses. A data analyst is currently being recruited by Mersey Travel who will help in the effective tasking of the CSOs.

- Local authority funding for CSOs to replace a warden scheme in Lancashire.
- Provision of additional CSOs from a neighbourhood renewal fund in Bradford.
- A proposed partnership between CSOs and community paramedics in Lincolnshire.
- Joint working between the police, fire and rescue and ambulance trust to fund 'Emergency Service CSOs' in Lancashire.

ECSOs in Lancashire

CASE STUDY
Emergency Service CSOs in Lancashire

A pilot scheme has commenced in Lancashire for Emergency Service CSOs (ECSOs) where police, the fire service and the ambulance trust make use of a single resource.

The scheme commenced in February 2004 and is piloted in rural parts of Lancashire. The broad aims for each of the services are as follows:

● Police: reassurance patrols in rural villages.
● Fire and Rescue: fire prevention, primarily amongst young people in schools and youth clubs.
● Ambulance: first responder service in rural areas.

The ECSO is employed by the police service and wears a uniform with the badges of all three services.

It should be stressed that this is a pilot scheme where funding is shared by all three services. The implications for future collaborations between the emergency services will be informed by the progress of this scheme, but conclusions could not be drawn at the time of publication.

Managing growth

7.40   There was evidence across the country of either emerging or growing concerns about the ability of the current police infrastructure to take on additional staffing. This can take a number of forms, such as:

- Concerns about the adequacy of existing police buildings to cope with additional staffing.
- Resources and equipment – each CSO requires a uniform and locker, as well as use of a radio and some form of office space for report writing.
- Managerial – additional staff need to be supervised, managed and briefed within the existing resource structure.
- Provision of appropriate levels of IT support.

7.41   The MPS has incorporated these challenges into its 'Step Change' programme. This programme considers the whole of the police reform programme, not just discrete funding projects, and attempts to match increases in police reform resources with corresponding shifts in structural and managerial resources. This does not necessarily mean additional staff, as in many cases an adjustment in staffing and managerial structure will make a difference. The programme does not claim to have resolved all the issues raised in this huge expansion programme, but it does provide a robust programme structure for solving problems as they arise. Whilst other structures for problem solving exist in other police forces, there was still evidence of poor reactive management leading to feelings of abandonment and exclusion by some CSOs.

Uniform and equipment

7.42   The lack of central guidance has led to each force adopting its own approach to the uniform and equipment that is issued to CSOs. Whilst some local decisions on protective equipment are based on detailed risk assessments, the variations are significant. Some forces provide their CSOs with body armour, whilst others do not, despite the fact that patrolling police officers in the same force may be provided with this equipment. Training in defensive tactics was also variable in the forces visited.

7.43   A new national uniform for police officers has recently been developed but CSO uniforms vary considerably. Whilst the wide variety of roles performed by CSOs may mean that a common national uniform is not appropriate, greater standardisation would make it easier for the public to understand who CSOs are and would help achieve economies of scale. Guidance on uniform and equipment would also help tackle some of the inequitable treatment of CSOs evident from this inspection.

Management of CSOs

7.44 Within the forces visited, CSOs were managed in a variety of ways. Some forces were considering imposing a whole new managerial structure to cater for reform staff while others were attempting to place them into existing structures in accordance with the needs of both individuals and the organisation.

7.45 Those placing police staff, including CSOs, under the management of police officers have often found that there is an additional challenge posed by the differing terms and conditions in which police officers and staff are employed. In one force, constables had been given supervisory responsibility for CSOs. This is an early example of the responsibilities of a constable expanding into the supervisory arena, raising issues such as reward and responsibility and the need to provide management training. An additional concern was one of 'second-class citizen', possibly a product of unintended police culture. Whilst not widespread, examples were found of CSOs being equipped with second hand uniforms and being excluded from briefings.

Risk assessment

7.46 We found some examples of CSOs being deployed on patrol under different conditions to their police officer colleagues. A striking example of this relates to the issue of double crewing. Different policies for the crewing levels of police vehicles and pairing of foot patrols exist across the country and all claim to be founded in comprehensive risk assessments. The provision of these risk assessments for CSOs was less well established and we found instances of CSOs being sent on patrol alone when there were policies in place to prevent this occurring with police officers. In one example, CSOs were tasked to prevent disorder outside identified troublesome public houses at closing time. The CSO was posted alone in a BCU where there was a standing policy to 'double crew' police officers on the grounds of personal safety.

7.47 Conversely, the inspection team found other examples where risk assessments had been appropriately applied and the single crewing of CSOs was being used to help create additional capacity.

Diversity

7.48 Whilst not in any way designed to do so, the introduction of CSOs is increasing the numbers of women and minority ethnic groups in the service. On 31 March 2003, 10.8% of the national total of CSOs were from ethnic minorities, compared with 2.9% for police officers. Some 36% of CSOs were female compared with 19% for police officers[7].

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7   Source: Police service strength 11/03 published by National Statistics on 1 October 2003

7.49 CSOs are now attending recruitment events, and being used to overcome barriers into minority ethnic communities. The reasons for this are varied but may include:

- Those individuals who have thought of a career as a police constable but have found the cultural barriers too difficult to cross to date.
- Those who have decided that they cannot become a sworn police officer but want to make a visible difference in their communities.
- Those who have tried, and failed to join the regular force. They may make additional applications depending on their experience and development.

7.50 There were also anecdotal indications during the fieldwork that more people with childcare responsibilities are finding it easier to accept the role of CSOs, particularly as many forces are now offering flexible and part-time working without the need to complete a lengthy residential training period. This offers a potential route into the service for carers returning to work, and for all sectors of society with family or other commitments that make the demands on the life of a sworn police officer an overwhelming barrier.

Developing guidance for forces on CSOs

7.51 Significant variation in forces' approaches to the use of CSOs was clearly evident during the inspection. Whilst in the early stages following the introduction of CSOs, this may have been helpful and encouraged experimentation, what is now needed is a detailed evaluation of the different models of deployment and designation of powers. This will enable the production of guidance to assist forces in developing suitable risk assessed deployment practices, designation of most appropriate powers and in providing the most appropriate uniform and equipment.

Recommendation 26

HMI recommends that the Home Office undertakes a national evaluation of CSOs in order to produce guidance for forces. This should include guidance on deployment models, risk assessment, designation of powers, uniform and equipment.

Community safety accreditation schemes

Overview

7.52 Accreditation schemes were introduced under Part 4 of the Police Reform Act 2002. They enable chief constables to accredit employees of organisations who contribute towards community safety. People accredited under such a scheme are referred to as accredited persons and wear a standard badge. Local authority employed wardens are one group that can be accredited and in a number of forces they are.

National CSAS badge

7.53 They can be given a range of limited, but targeted, powers to deal with specific nuisances such as dog fouling, cycling on the pavement and litter. Six forces have established specialist accreditation schemes for inspectors in the Vehicle Operator Services Agency. Inspectors are issued with the single power to stop vehicles for the purpose of testing. This allows them to test vehicles without police assistance and in doing so, frees police officers to focus on other tasks. Other forces have expressed an interest in this and plan to accredit inspectors over the course of next year.

7.54 Other than a small amount of pump-priming money, there has been no central funding for accreditation schemes so in the majority of cases they are created on the initiative of chief constables and police authorities. By February 2004 only seven forces had established such a scheme with a further 18 stating that they intended to do so. Therefore, 39% of forces have no scheme and have no intention of starting one[3].

Benefits of accreditation

7.55 Establishing accreditation schemes offers significant benefits to both employers and to the accrediting police force. Employers benefit from public confidence that their employees have reached acceptable standards of appearance, suitability for the post (including vetting and competence) and training. The public is also assured that the organisation itself has reached acceptable standards in management, supervision and

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3 Ibid

accountability. Their employees would be eligible for some minor police powers that could help to improve the impact they are having on community safety, anti-social behaviour and liveability issues.

7.56 By setting up accreditation schemes the police strengthen their links with organisations already contributing to community safety. Accreditation schemes help to ensure the standards of those working to assist them in their force area. By making targeted powers available to those working to promote community safety, accreditation allows them to deal with problems without the police and so save officer time.

7.57 The chief constable can work with employers to ensure that uniforms within a given area do not give rise to confusion. Accreditation also helps to improve the quantity and quality of police intelligence. Through accreditation the police can ensure that those carrying out patrols in the community are able to gather and present intelligence in a way that best suits police needs.

CASE STUDY
Lancashire CSAS

All 14 boroughs in the county wanted to be CSO pilots and agreed that police should be the lead agency in setting up schemes.

The existing structure in Lancashire was a significant enabler in this process. There is a county-wide chief officer group which includes local authorities, fire and ambulance and is chaired by the Chief Constable. The existence of this group allowed for aspirational discussions to take place and for an accreditation scheme to be agreed and set up. This scheme enabled the accreditation of local authority employed wardens across the county.

As each agency has signed up for the scheme, it is relatively easy to ensure that all new employees become accredited, and that any private sector schemes in the county also accredit their staff.

Neighbourhood Wardens and Street Wardens

7.58 As with CSO and PCSO, the terms 'Neighbourhood Warden' and 'Street Warden' are interchangeable, although both exist in different parts of the country and there may be semantic differences between the schemes. Street wardens are intended to provide visible uniformed patrols in town and village centres, public areas and neighbourhoods. Their focus is to:

- Care for the physical appearance of the area, tackling environmental problems such as litter, graffiti and dog fouling.
- Deter anti-social behaviour.
- Reduce the fear of crime.
- Foster social inclusion.

7.59 They may be granted local authority powers to assist in carrying out their duties, for example in respect of dog fouling and litter. The lead government department for warden schemes and other local authority based schemes is the ODPM.
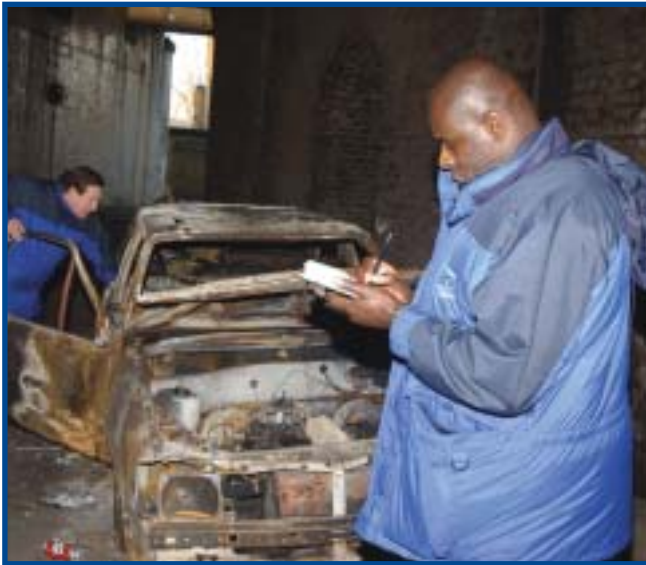
Neighbourhood wardens

7.60 Although dialogue with police did take place in the schemes visited, the extent of this varied and there was some duplication. Some positive examples were found. In Cleveland, wardens were effectively engaged in a process of intelligence sharing and tasking, although the lack of any evaluation made it difficult to establish the impact of this work on reducing crime and anti-social behaviour. In Bradford (West Yorkshire), the police authority had entered negotiations with the local authority with a view to abandoning an existing warden scheme in favour of a CSO scheme, partly funded by the local authority. In the end, this was not found to be practical and instead work was undertaken to establish a CSAS for these wardens. This complemented existing work in the local authority area that sought to link the neighbourhood wardens with their park ranger schemes into a new 'Visible Services Department'. West Lancashire District Council previously operated and funded a private sector warden scheme. Negotiations with the constabulary and police authority led to an agreement to disband this warden scheme in favour of a CSO scheme, partly funded by the council.

Detention officers

Overview

7.61 In addition to focusing on the provision of increased visibility and reassurance, the Police Reform Act 2002 introduced a number of additional police staff roles where specific powers can be designated. One example of this is the role of detention officer. The use of police officers in this capacity has reduced although it does still occur.

Some 32 forces stated that they used police staff in this capacity[3]. Of these, 16 had granted their detention officers powers under the Police Reform Act 2002. Such powers include those to take fingerprints and photographs, to search detainees and to take non-intimate samples.

7.62 Where police staff or contractors are used, an element of professionalism enters the equation. They have a vested interest, for example, in making custody provision comfortable for themselves and detainees, for ensuring that sustainable systems are in place for cleaning, provisioning and property handling and for ensuring that their place of work is as amenable as possible. This professionalism, whether from police staff or contractors, has impacted on custody provision and made management less of a short-term challenge.

7.63 With the advent of the Police Reform Act, there is now a greater focus on this area and opportunities are available to join together the roles within custody and detention with those in other areas. A pilot initiative in Northumbria will help create a more effective career structure for police staff in custody roles.

CASE STUDY

Career Structures for Custody Staff, Northumbria Police

As part of its successful bid for funding from the workforce modernisation implementation fund, Northumbria Police is piloting an integrated criminal justice management scheme in three BCUs. Among other things, the project will provide a career pathway for designated police staff in the roles of investigating officer, detention officer and escort officer; and for non-designated staff in a variety of roles. As the scheme will be integrated, there will be opportunities to move between roles and to manage and encourage the aspirations of individuals in the system. The scheme has end-to-end links throughout the criminal justice system from the employment of custody nurses through to integration with the Probation Service. This is intended to ensure a targeted approach to persistent offenders and more effective monitoring of offenders dealt with by the public protection panels and those subject to non-court based penalties such as conditional cautioning. The intended outcomes are an improved service to victims and witnesses, greater compliance with 'narrowing the justice gap' targets, increased confidence in the delivery of local criminal justice services and the release of police officers to front-line duties.

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3 Ibid

Private Sector Detention and Custody Services

7.64 West Mercia Constabulary, Sussex Police, the MPS, Thames Valley Police, British Transport Police and Wiltshire Constabulary were all identified during the inspection as having a degree of involvement with the private sector at some, or all of their detention sites. These either took the form of a private finance initiative (PFI), or a more simplified outsourcing contract to provide some or all of the custody facilities and/or staff. The schemes are all relatively new and had little evaluation at the time of the fieldwork visits. They varied from a complete PFI contract for all custody services to an outsourcing of detention staff.

CASE STUDY

Custody Services PFI, Sussex Police

Sussex Police has entered into a 25-year PFI contract with Reliance Secure Task Management Ltd to provide detention and custody services at six sites throughout the county. The scheme suited the needs of Sussex, whose police buildings were predominately small localised Victorian stations unsuited to modern detention needs. This approach does not necessarily meet the needs of other forces with more modern facilities.

A police sergeant operates as custody officer at each site and is supported by Reliance detention staff. Reliance are satisfied that they are developing lateral career structures with the potential for advancement within their own environment, as this, and other, contracts develop.

Private sector detention officer taking fingerprints

7.65 Sussex reports a good relationship with its PFI contractors but the same cannot be said throughout the country. Both West Mercia and the Metropolitan Police have reported some difficulties over aspects of some of their contracts. These difficulties include provision of cover for absence, ensuring adequate cover in smaller custody centres, sharing of resources between custody centres and responding to surges in demand. Other forces, such as Thames Valley, have learned from these experiences and developed improved contractual arrangements that address these difficulties. This suggests that PFI contracts do not fit the needs of all forces, and that when they are utilised, the contracts need to be carefully drawn together so that the needs of the police force are met effectively.

Volunteers

7.66 Volunteer cadet schemes have been in operation in a number of forces for some time. Schemes vary between forces, but in broad terms seek to make young people more aware of the role of the police in society, and at the same time develop their character and teach good citizenship. For those who are interested in joining the police service when they are older, cadet schemes also provide an insight into the nature of police work. Cadets typically assist the police in working in the community, through police-led crime reduction initiatives or occasionally at fetes, galas, and similar events.

7.67 Beyond this, and with the exception of special constables, the use of volunteers is a relatively new concept within the police service, and schemes are not in place in all forces. Their use varies from localised initiatives through to a force-wide link with the annual policing plan. A theme that did influence their use was positive attitudes, styles and personalities of individuals in a local setting, whether this was a local commander or an individual who devoted time and effort to them.

7.68 Most commonly, volunteers are used to staff police stations that would otherwise be closed. Other areas of use included tape summarising units and CCTV suites and in supporting crime reduction initiatives. Corporate clothing is issued in some forces and the management of volunteers varies, with much being made of the organisational skills of volunteers themselves.

7.69 Volunteer schemes can bring significant benefits. They allow forces to provide services that would not otherwise be available, as well as providing a vehicle to tap into a vast range of skills, experience and local knowledge. Perhaps most importantly, the interaction between the police and the local community can contribute in a positive way to the reassurance agenda.

7.70 Volunteer schemes do, however, need to be effectively managed if these benefits are to be realised. Forces need to ensure that schemes are provided sufficient support and resources where necessary and issues relating to security, health and safety and training need to be considered. In addition, forces need to be sensitive to the genuine concerns expressed by trade unions and staff associations that inappropriate use of volunteers may threaten jobs. Forces therefore need to develop clear guidelines on the use of volunteers to ensure that this does not happen and guidance currently being developed jointly by ACPO and the Home Office will assist forces in making the most appropriate use of volunteers.

7.71 Some 25 forces[3] currently operate some form of volunteer scheme. An example of an effective volunteer scheme was found in Thames Valley Police.

CASE STUDY

Volunteers in Thames Valley Police

Thames Valley has over 330 volunteers, a number that has more than doubled in the past two years. In the year 2002/03, volunteers delivered a total of 25,000 hours service. Volunteers receive $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours induction training, followed by role specific training conducted on an ad hoc basis. They are used in areas such as CCTV tape viewing, crime analysis, personnel, restorative justice, fraud squad, fingerprints, crime prevention, property, front counter and administration roles.

Where possible, the skills of volunteers are matched with the needs of the organisation. Innovative examples of this approach include using the skills of former senior business people to mentor senior managers within the organisation and to use accountants to support local managers.

Volunteers have been effectively used in operational initiatives, such as the 'empty car campaign', which focused on vehicle crime hotspots. Volunteers visited these areas and identified the owners of vehicles where property had been left in view. The owners were offered crime prevention advice and the initiative has seen a reduction in car crime in some areas of 65%.

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3 Ibid

> The Force employs a co-ordinator who has been involved in the development of road shows and other similar initiatives to promote volunteers. The lack of a Force-wide approach, however, means that the decision to use volunteers and employ a volunteer co-ordinator rests with BCU commanders, not all of whom have fully embraced the initiative.
>
> A policy is being drafted regarding 'managing volunteers' ensuring that policy exists to support welfare needs, personal development and how to manage grievance within a volunteer context.

Police staff investigators

Overview

7.72 It is important to note that a number of police forces employed police staff as investigators prior to the Reform Act. What the Act has done is to give chief officers the power to designate their investigators with powers under the Act. Some 21 forces stated that they now use police staff as investigators[3]. Twelve of these forces have given their police staff investigators designated powers under the Police Reform Act 2002, which include the power to apply for and execute search warrants, to arrest at a police station and to interview a suspect under caution. Where designated police staff investigators are used, the inspection team found them to be well integrated with their officer colleagues and valued for the role they perform. There was no evidence, however, of any evaluation of their impact on detecting crime.

7.73 Whilst not quantifiable, a significant proportion of police staff investigators are retired police officers. Retired police officers are also used in a variety of forms in the investigation field, being hired back to a police force on hourly or daily contracts to assist with major enquiries or specific pieces of work. Investigators were found, or were being considered, within BCU and force investigation teams, prisoner handling teams, specialist arenas such as financial investigation and surveillance, and professional standards departments. A broad approach to the recruitment of investigators opens up the significant potential for major career progression and developmental opportunities for police staff.

7.74 In some forces, terms like 'assistant investigator' were used, despite the role being virtually identical to those of sworn colleagues. This type of terminology had a negative impact on cultural integration.

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3 Ibid

Training and accreditation

7.75 As most investigators are former police officers and are assumed to be vocationally competent, little comparison is possible in the training of investigators. One force operated a one-week training course, and the inspection team found some examples of common induction courses. There is little evidence yet of accreditation of former police officers using the ICF, or any other recognisable method. There was little consistency in considering the currency of their investigation skills.

Professionalising the investigation process

7.76 This is an ACPO-led scheme designed to improve the process of investigating crime through the development of national benchmarked standards maintained and overseen by the NCPE. Initial debates are taking place around the position of police staff investigators and other investigators who work alongside the police service. Examples include investigators from the private sector, from agencies such as the Post Office and Benefits Agency and organisations such as the IPCC and the office of the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland. The position of specialist financial investigators, retired police officers and others who work within or as partners to police forces is also under consideration.

7.77 The police service currently has a single point of entry to its sworn ranks. This means that anyone wishing to be a police officer investigator in a police force had to join as a constable, pass a lengthy residential introductory course and then complete a two-year probationary period before being able to be considered for specialist investigative duties. In the rapidly changing world, there are now a number of alternative routes to a career as an investigator:

- Surrey Police is piloting entry as a constable with an identified career pathway. Those choosing the investigator route will specialise in investigation during their probationary period.
- NCIS has an aspiration to employ 90% of its staff as direct entrants, with fewer seconded police, customs and immigration officers in the organisation. NCIS accepts that it will have to develop investigative expertise from within its own, directly employed, workforce and use sworn officers only when their specific powers are needed.
- Individuals with an interest in investigation are now able to join the police service as police staff investigators. The use of these individuals in most forces tends to be restricted at present, unless they are former police officers, but this will change as they become more vocationally competent.
- Specialist investigators, particularly those with financial skills and qualifications, are being used increasingly by police forces and allied organisations (eg Serious Fraud Office, NCIS).

- Investigators in other investigative roles beyond the police service, such as military, Post Office and Benefits Agency investigators will be able to enter the extended policing family and cross secondment and employment opportunities will arise. Sworn police officers are at present virtually excluded from these opportunities because the terms and conditions under which they are employed make it unattractive to leave the service before qualifying for a full pension.

- Retired police officers can be utilised on part-time, full-time or occasional contracts. There is considerable variation in the ways that former police officers are identified with some forces signing up to a national specialist recruitment agency and others maintaining their own in-house registers of retired officers. The latter option precludes those forces choosing it of benefiting from the skills and expertise of retired officers from other forces who live in their area.

7.78 Inconsistency in the use of standard frameworks such as the ICF makes it difficult to have confidence in the skills and currency of investigators. Discussions between Skills for Justice and the NCPE, responsible for the 'Professionalising the Investigative Process' project are taking place to ensure that there is commonality between them but there is no mandatory process in place to ensure that investigators are vocationally competent.

Private sector involvement in policing

7.79 Private sector involvement in policing is not new. Police forces have outsourced support functions such as IT, payroll administration and facilities management for some years. There has also been a growing recognition of partnership working beyond the commonly understood definition, such as in the policing of sporting and entertainment events, public processions and security operations.

7.80 In sporting events, stewards have become more commonplace, particularly in football stadia, whilst in the field of entertainment, agreements between police and nightclubs, pubs and concert venues have become the norm. Public processions and demonstrations have been partially stewarded by organisers for many years and there is growing co-operation between private sector experts and law enforcement and security organisations at security events such as political party conferences.

7.81 Since the Police Reform Act, however, the pace and breadth of the discussion has quickened. The main area where the private sector has moved forwards is that of detention and custody services. There is also, however, a significant contribution within the wider PFI field, with private sector provision in local police stations (eg Lewisham and Sutton Boroughs in the Metropolitan Police), force headquarters (eg Norfolk) and training facilities including the support infrastructure (eg the Metropolitan Police firearms and public order training centre near Gravesend).

7.82 There are also growing examples of police and the security industry working together, one of which can be found at the Metro Centre in Gateshead where police and security officers patrol and develop intelligence together within an agreed working framework.

7.83 The BSIA estimates that approximately 500,000 people work as private security personnel although there are no centrally held statistics. Other estimates within the industry put the figure at a much higher level.

7.84 The use of common accreditation standards and integration of the ICF with those found in the private security industry may facilitate career development for staff across different security sector organisations.

Other public sector involvement

7.85 In 2002, as part of the implementation of the Strategic Roads 2010: Highways Agency 10 Year National Roads Strategy and the ACPO Modern Roads Policing Manifesto, a review was conducted of the roles and responsibilities of those organisations involved in managing the strategic road network. The objectives were to gain agreement on the range of services to be provided and who best to provide them.

7.86 The Roles and Responsibilities Review is a key piece of work aimed at delivering significant change within both the Highways Agency and police service. It tackles the increasing pressure on police traffic resources and the opportunity to free some of those resources for core police activities. It also aims at developing the role of the Highways Agency as a network operator. The project is expected to deliver the following benefits:

- Freeing up of police time and resources, the equivalent of 540 full-time officers.
- Safer road network.
- Reduction in secondary incidents.
- Reduced incident-related congestion.
- Improved journey times.

7.87 The recommendations from the Roles and Responsibilities Review are being implemented across the country over the next three years and started with the Midlands in April 2004.

7.88 The case study below is a Highways Agency news release that highlights the intended benefits of the scheme.

Highways Agency Traffic Officers

CASE STUDY
Highways Agency Traffic Officers

Traffic Officers hit the roads in the West Midlands – 26 April 2004

The first of hundreds of new traffic officers started work on roads in the West Midlands recently, marking the biggest change on England's motorways in decades.

As of 26 April, the new force of uniformed traffic officers will initially start patrolling motorways in highly visible vehicles around Birmingham. The service will be rolled out across the rest of the motorway network by the end of 2005.

The government is committed to improving the country's road network – tackling congestion and improving management of traffic. The traffic officers have new powers to deal with diversions, manage incidents and ensure the roads are running smoothly. They will help the police to manage the traffic after accidents to minimise hold-ups and delays.

Transport Secretary Alistair Darling, said:

"We are investing billions of pounds to improve this country's road network. Minimising the congestion caused by accidents and managing traffic flow efficiently is vital if we are to ensure that traffic runs smoothly for both travellers and businesses.

The new traffic officers will improve services to motorists – making journeys more reliable and ensuring that time spent in jams is kept to a minimum. By simplifying traffic management responsibilities, the new traffic officers will enable the police to focus their efforts on their core role of tackling crime."

More than 50 traffic officers – both on the road and in the control room – will start in the West Midlands from 26 April, increasing to 180 by the end of the year. Initially, four patrols – two traffic officers in each vehicle – will operate in two shifts from 6am to 8pm, increasing to 14 patrols round-the-clock by the end of the year.

The new service will eventually comprise 1,200 traffic officers, supported by 300 staff in seven Regional Control Centres. A phased roll-out will see traffic officers on motorways in the North West and South East next spring, and the East, South West, East Midlands and North East by the end of next year.

Chief Constable Stephen Green, Chair of the Association of Chief Police Officers Roads Policing Operational Forum, said:

"During the last two years the police service has worked in partnership with the Highways Agency to review our respective roles and responsibilities. This resulted in an agreed package of proposals acknowledging the increasing volume of traffic, associated congestion problems and the attaching drain on police resources. The recommendation of the review was for both organisations to align activities with key business areas and, in turn, improve service delivery to customers.

The release of police staff from network management tasks that do not require the skills, powers or training of a constable will enable chief police officers to refocus the efforts of their staff on patrolling, investigating incidents and reducing crime on the motorway network."

Public perception of the extended policing family

Marketing the concept

7.89 The ad hoc development of the extended policing family has led in some parts of the country to many different groups of individuals all wearing different uniforms and all performing some form of policing function. This might include regular officers,

special constables, CSOs, neighbourhood wardens, Highways Agency traffic officers and private security guards. There is evidence from recent research conducted by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation[8] that this complex mix is contributing to a degree of confusion amongst the public. This research identifies that street patrols in residential areas are now covered by a variety of providers from the police, local authority and other private and voluntary sector providers. It describes the combination as a *"well established mixed economy of residential patrols"* and goes on to say that the *"division of labour in this economy is neither well organised nor effectively co-ordinated"*. This has led to the public being unclear as to the boundaries, powers and responsibilities of the different service providers and unsure what to expect from them. Work is needed to help address this confusion.

Recommendation 27a

HMI recommends that the Home Office leads work to more effectively market the extended policing family to address the public confusion evident from recent research.

Recommendation 27b

HMI recommends that, at a local level, forces develop marketing strategies in relation to the extended policing family to address the public confusion evident from recent research.

Engaging with communities

7.90 The development of new models for the delivery of policing services will require effective engagement with local communities if public support is to be won, a message spelt out loud and clear in the government green paper *Policing: Building Safer Communities Together*. It is clear that the majority of the public voice their desire for increased reassurance in the form of 'more bobbies on the beat'. However, some examples were found during the inspection where the local community was effectively engaged in a model of policing that utilised beat managers working effectively alongside CSOs, neighbourhood wardens and other members of the extended policing family. In these areas, it was clear that the community was developing an understanding that reassurance was not delivered simply by increasing police officer numbers, but by the effective engagement of a range of 'policing' resources with the local community.

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8   The extended policing family: Visible patrols in residential areas, Joseph Rowntree Foundation 2004

> **CASE STUDY**
> ## National Reassurance Policing Programme
>
> This is a national two-year Home Office funded project administratively based in Surrey Police HQ with 16 pilot sites, two of them in Surrey. It focuses on using citizen-focused policing to target visible crime and disorder, in order to make neighbourhoods more secure and is based on the principle that local people are best placed to identify local concerns. The pilot sites are working with communities and other public services to tackle local signal crimes and disorders. Genuine community engagement is essential with local people taking ownership of their neighbourhoods in partnership with the police and other agencies.
>
> The inspection team visited the Surrey project where their neighbourhood specialist officers (elsewhere described as community beat managers or constables) are seen as the key enabler for the project together with CSOs who work with the neighbourhood specialist officers at each pilot site. Surrey is also trialling specialist 'youth' CSOs who will have a role to play in community reassurance.
>
> The model in the Surrey pilot is police led but relies heavily on partnership activity with the local authority, in particular local warden schemes. The project is still in its pilot phase but interim evaluations are positive. A similar approach was found in the West Berkshire Reassurance Programme (Thames Valley Police). In both of these cases, the local community has a say in defining local priorities and the associated resourcing decisions. It was evident to the inspection team that there was a clear understanding in these communities that effective reassurance could be delivered in other ways than purely high visibility patrolling by uniformed police officers.

Possible future police staff roles

7.91 A major part of the inspection has involved consideration of the enablers and barriers that impact upon civilianisation and workforce modernisation, including potential legislative barriers. We have also been keen to look forward to new ways of working and in particular the further application of non-sworn police staff to 'front-line' policing activity. Forces were asked the way in which they felt a range of policing tasks

could be delivered[3]. The detailed responses to this question are included as Appendix H to this report. The responses suggest that there is a willingness to challenge many of the traditional means of service delivery and this opens up a debate on how future changes to legislation and police powers could support workforce modernisation.

7.92   There is evidence of a significant gap in the support provided to front-line officers, particularly in terms of responding to and dealing with incidents of low level crime, anti-social behaviour and supporting officers in road policing and other areas of core activity. The introduction of CSOs has also led to something of an anomaly in deployment practice. CSOs, wardens and others are increasingly being used to assist with the response to low level incidents and anti-social behaviour, yet many forces are using telephone resolution to deal with what would be regarded by the public as quite serious crimes. The 'eyes and ears' function of CSOs may also increase demand on police officers in terms of the requirement to respond to low level incidents.

7.93   The inspection has also considered concerns that have been raised by ministers regarding apparent wasteful double crewing of officers. We need to consider why it always requires two fully trained, equipped and skilled officers to respond to a task that may require two members of staff, but not necessarily two police officers. The reason for this is that, quite simply, there are few alternative resource deployment options available to most forces. This is an issue that has been addressed within the Ministry of Defence Police (MDP).

CASE STUDY

Joint Crewing between the MDP and the Ministry of Defence Guard Service

In recent years the Ministry of Defence Guard Service has assumed responsibility for an increasing range of tasks from the MDP that do not require a fully trained, warranted officer. Typically, this involves static guarding and security duties.

At Portsmouth Harbour, the MDP patrols the small boat channel in a launch, under the control of the Base Commander. The launch had been crewed by MDP officers, but the pilot of the launch is solely committed to that task and therefore unable to exercise any police powers, even if the need should arise. In recognition of this, a joint arrangement is planned whereby the launch will be piloted by a member of the Ministry of Defence Guard Service, with MDP officers providing armed crewing.

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3   Ibid

7.94   There are a number of areas of policing where the innovative use of police assistants in support of officers could assist in reducing the bureaucratic burden placed on front-line officers and so help provide an improved service to the public. The suggestions set out below have been fed into the Home Office (PLPU) for consideration in its review of police powers.

Patrol, escort, detention, investigation and response to incidents

7.95   Creative use of existing powers, combined with some minor amendments to legislation, could enable a police assistant to exercise a mix of detention, escort and investigative powers to attend a range of minor criminal incidents. This could allow them to detain a suspect and to undertake a focused investigation, leading to the incident being dealt with by way of fixed penalty ticket procedure, or some form of restorative justice.

7.96   A straightforward shop theft provides a good example of the potential benefits of such an approach. Currently, in most forces, if a store detective or member of staff arrests and detains a shoplifter, a fully trained and empowered officer(s) will be deployed. Clearly, if the suspect is non-compliant or is a serial, serious or target offender then this is quite appropriate. However, many such incidents are relatively low level crimes not requiring the full expertise and experience of a fully trained and empowered officer. An appropriately trained and empowered police assistant with a mix of detention, escort and investigative powers could attend the incident, detain the suspect, escort them to a police station and undertake a very basic investigative process and dispose of the offender in an appropriate manner. A more radical approach still might be to accredit store detectives or private security staff to deal with such offences 'in house'.

Road policing

7.97   Direct operational support for officers engaged in this area of policing is weak and a number of incidents and tasks are routinely dealt with by traffic officers that could be undertaken by appropriately trained and empowered assistants. This would also provide more flexibility around double crewing – there is a range of road policing tasks that require two staff to perform them, but not necessarily two fully trained and empowered police officers. A road policing assistant could be deployed to deal with or assist at serious road traffic accidents. They could operate speed detection and similar devices, stop vehicles, identify and deal with minor traffic offences, and potentially administer roadside breath test procedures and detain and escort to a nearby police station or await the arrival of an officer.

Custody roles

7.98 A good deal of work has taken place as part of the inspection regarding the potential to involve police staff further in the handling and care of those in police custody. A number of forces are already experimenting with the mix of staff in custody suites, but there is the potential to develop this approach further. In particular, few forces appeared to be looking holistically at the interface between patrol, custody, investigation and the criminal justice processes. Indeed, custody offers significant opportunities for workforce modernisation as the processes are well defined and established and the range of roles offers the potential to develop meaningful career structures for police staff.

7.99 There are a number of areas where the exposure of police staff could be developed, with relatively minor legislative impact:

- Amendment of the PACE codes of practice to enable police staff to perform the custody officer role. Currently, there are literally hundreds of experienced police sergeants acting as custody officers at a time when front-line supervisory experience is at a premium. This is an area of high risk for forces and it would be crucial to ensure this transition was appropriately resourced and co-ordinated at a national level in respect of the provision of training etc. This move would enable the release of experienced supervisors to front-line duties from what is essentially a complex but largely administrative and process driven role. Consideration could also be given to strengthening the independence of the custody officer role, a central tenet of PACE, by utilising staff not employed by the police.
- The identification officer role is currently performed by police inspectors in most forces, although they adopt a range of models and approaches to the operation of this function. The increasing use of video and other identification techniques lends itself to the civilianisation and professionalisation of this role. A non-sworn identification officer could build up a range of expertise around the identification of suspects and witnesses.
- Administering evidential breath test procedures at a police station could also be performed by non-sworn police staff. Once again, this is a largely process driven role which lends itself to civilianisation.

Police use of firearms – static protection duties

7.100 There are numerous opportunities to more effectively streamline officer training and to direct trainees at an early stage into appropriate specialisms. Currently, across the MPS, for example, there are several hundred experienced officers performing static guard type duties outside embassies, the Houses of Parliament and other sensitive locations. The nature of these duties necessarily means these officers are required to

carry firearms and whilst in no way demeaning the complex and highly responsible role they perform, one has to question why they are required to undertake the full generalist officer training.

CASE STUDY

Static Armed Protection in the Berlin Police

The Berlin police specifically recruit and train a subset of their sworn police officers to perform static armed protection duties. This model offers a number of advantages in terms of more effective recruitment, training and deployment of appropriately skilled and experienced staff to a sensitive area of policing where the full range of police experience and training is not required.

Extension of Special Constabulary powers

7.101 Currently, special constables are fully empowered, but only within their own force and surrounding force areas. In an age when people are increasingly more mobile and the service is actively promoting more flexible working arrangements, it is surely right to question this position, which limits the opportunities to use this valuable resource more flexibly and prevents experience, skills and powers from being transferable between force areas. Allied to this is a need to ensure a more consistent, national approach to Special Constabulary recruitment, induction, training and deployment practice to help professionalise the role and to further enhance their mobility and flexibility as a resource.

Cross-cutting roles

7.102 In recent years, the government has placed increasing emphasis on the need for a more joined-up approach across the various criminal justice organisations. A number of potential new roles could help break down barriers across the criminal justice system and between the various emergency services. Whilst there are immediate opportunities in terms of the more effective deployment of personnel across the emergency services, a more fundamental change would require a detailed review of processes and some considerable process re-engineering. It would be wholly appropriate, for example, for police staff to receive training to administer not only crime prevention but also fire prevention advice at the same time, or to be empowered to serve noise abatement notices and to deal with similar nuisance and environmental issues.

7.103 Some warden schemes are attempting to look at these issues from a local authority perspective and a joint emergency service CSO scheme is currently being piloted in Lancashire. However, there are real dangers with simply tinkering with existing processes and addressing issues around the periphery, which are unlikely to deliver substantial improvements in service delivery.

7.104 There are also issues in terms of increased training costs and the management of health and safety matters to consider – the more cross-cutting and complex the role becomes the more intense the training is likely to be and the more health and safety risks may arise.

7.105 Within the criminal justice system, one obvious area for integrated working is the interface between the police custody process and the prosecution, punishment and rehabilitation of offenders. There is potential, for instance, to look at building on the experience of drug rehabilitation schemes and introduce a role for tracking offenders at an early stage of the criminal justice system and to link into probation services. However, once again a detailed review and re-engineering of processes across organisations would be required to maximise the potential for more integrated and joined-up working.

> **Vision Statement**
>
> A high performing, unified police service with a better mix of skills at all levels, which is effectively engaged with local communities.

> **Key Message**
>
> Given the significant drivers for change, a number of key concepts need to be challenged – omnicompetence, use of powers, police officer employment practice and the single point of entry to the service are some examples. In addition, a more consistent national approach is needed if modernisation is to be effectively progressed, something that will be difficult to achieve within the existing structure of the service.

Chapter Summary

This chapter will outline:

- The need for the service to embrace a radical change programme
- How concepts such as the omnicompetent constable, the flexible use of powers, the single point of entry and the concept of a 30-year police career all need to be challenged if the service is to meet the needs of the 21st century and be an employer of choice in today's employment market
- How a national consensus, so difficult to achieve within the existing force structure, is vital to effectively progress workforce modernisation
- The potential role that could be played by the private sector in delivering policing services
- How the mixed economy approach to staffing might work in practice; and
- The need for substantial and sustained funding to support experimentation with a range of staffing mixes

"The future is called 'perhaps', which is the only possible thing to call the future. And the important thing is not to allow that to scare you."

(Tennessee Williams, Orpheus Descending, 1957)

Introduction

8.1   Whether the police service accepts Tennessee Williams' advice or not, it stands at a point in its history where being scared to advance is not an option. Those in positions of influence must turn the 'perhaps' of radical step-change reform into a reality that delivers. But what will the much-changed police service of the future look like? In the government green paper *Policing: Building Safer Communities Together,* the vision was expressed thus:

"A more unified police service – with a better mix of skills at all levels, to ensure the best quality service to communities."

8.2   This is a helpful contribution because, in the enthusiasm and momentum of the current change programme, it is important for the government and the service to remember that workforce modernisation is not an end in itself. It is a vital element in achieving significant and sustainable improvements in the delivery of high quality policing services.

8.3   The need to create a more efficient and effective service delivery regime is hardly a new concept. There have been a stream of initiatives over the years, including 'the 3 Es' (efficiency, effectiveness and economy), compulsory competitive tendering, efficiency plans and Best Value. Broadly speaking, these were designed to encourage the very best use of often limited resources to deliver the optimum service achievable.

8.4   Workforce modernisation seeks to be a far more radical, holistic examination of, and challenge to, the very foundations of the police service as we currently know them. Radical change has been mooted before but the service has usually stopped short of making true step change, preferring the relative safety and comfort of incremental or piecemeal evolution. Undoubtedly, the major difference now is that the economic and cultural drivers for change are so strong that wholesale modernisation is no longer an option to be debated and declined or deferred. It has become a fundamental requirement for the delivery of effective public services generally, and policing cannot be immune to this trend.

8.5   This inspection has been carried out in parallel with a number of other important strands of work in progress within the Home Office, ACPO and wider government. Much of this work has been generated by government consultation on its green paper *Policing: Building Safer Communities Together*. The inspection team has liaised closely with those involved in this related work and there is a wide degree of consistency of opinion as to what the future of policing might be. Many of these shared ideas and views are reflected throughout this chapter.

Some unresolved questions

8.6   Is the police service capable of assimilating such radical change? Most would point to the major change programme already adopted within phase one of police reform. The service has arguably never before experienced such a pace and breadth of change, and much genuine progress has been made. To achieve true step-change modernisation, however, further even more radical and far-reaching change will be required and a number of principles that have hitherto been regarded as sacrosanct will need to be challenged. Some previously avoided questions will need to be addressed and debated to resolution, for example:

- Is the traditional role and status of constable still relevant?
- Can the service remain isolated from modern employment trends?
- Is it time for more national standards?
- Are force structures and hierarchies now counter-productive?
- Can policing learn more from other public services?
- Should the private sector play an even greater role in policing?
- What is the optimum balance of police officers and other staff?

Is the traditional role and status of a constable still relevant?

8.7   There is no drive to abandon the time-honoured function of the police constable but there are certainly opportunities to challenge elements of that role and status that may be outdated or in need of revision, in particular:

- Police officer omnicompetence.
- Status of constable.
- Operational requirement for full powers.

Beyond omnicompetence

8.7.1 Policing is now highly complex and spans a massive spectrum of activities requiring a similarly extensive range of skills and competencies in those taking up the challenge. The omnicompetent officer has been a traditional icon and supposed mainstay of the service. It is debatable whether effective omnicompetence has ever actually been achieved but it is now abundantly clear that such an aim is no longer viable, or indeed appropriate, for 21st century policing needs.

8.7.2 Long after the adverse reaction to elitism of the 1970s and 1980s, specialisation has regained a currency across the core areas of policing. The technical skills required to tackle complex fraud or internet crime, the need to deploy increasingly sophisticated counter-terrorist strategies and the particular

skills required to deal with child protection issues are ample evidence of the futility of trying to train each officer in every discipline.

8.7.3 However, this phenomenon is perhaps evidenced most clearly in the increasing specialisation within community policing, previously the core domain of generalist staff but now requiring significant specialised skills in negotiation, mediation, resource management and multi-agency working.

8.7.4 The emergence of 'streaming' of the key roles of community policing, crime investigation and response looks set to establish particular skills sets that will allow greater focus and more realistic spans of expectation.

Status of constable

8.7.5 A police constable is not an employee of the police authority or government but an independent holder of public office, with terms and conditions of employment set out in regulations and legislation. The special employment status stems from particular responsibilities, including 24-hour on-call, being forbidden to strike, having certain restrictions on private lives and having an extensive power of arrest.

8.7.6 Although often raised as a barrier to achieving the modernisation of the wider workforce, there is an increasing view that most of the likely reform options can be achieved without actually changing the legal employment status of constables. There will need to be some assessment, however, of the on-going barrier to integration of the extended family that such continued differentiation may present.

Requirement for full powers

8.7.7 The main difference between the police officer and other citizens has been the power to apply reasonable force and to make arrests. Increasingly, the occasions on which warranted officers are required to exercise these powers have diminished, as their roles have become more complex and wide-ranging.

8.7.8 Introduction of CSOs has established the precedent that staff can function effectively in many operational scenarios without the need for the full powers of a constable. The way is now clear to push the boundaries yet further in deployment of staff without full powers. Specialisation and professionalisation will open up many more roles that were traditionally the domain of warranted police officers to other categories within the extended policing family.

8.7.9 Perhaps the way forward is to further enable chief officers to delegate powers (as already present under section 38 of the Police Reform Act 2002 in respect of CSOs) to cover other roles and even to be time limited, to provide temporary police powers in appropriate circumstances.

Can the service remain isolated from modern employment trends?

8.8   The gulf between the police service and other employers has been widening significantly in recent years. Mainstream employees increasingly seek to establish a portfolio of skills and qualifications that provides mobility and greater control over their own career development. There are a number of elements to police employment practice that actively militate against attracting many high quality candidates from other employments. These elements include:

- Single entry point to the service.
- An expectation of a 30-year commitment to policing.
- Inflexible and non-portable pensions.
- Non-transferability of training and qualifications.
- Lack of widespread ethos of professionalism.

Multilateral entry points

8.8.1 The concepts of increasing specialism and accreditation inevitably raise questions about whether the single entry route to the service is still appropriate. As concepts such as 'streaming' and specialisation take root, there should be significantly greater opportunity to identify individuals with the requisite combinations of skills elsewhere than solely from within the service. Despite various fast-tracking initiatives aimed at moving talented staff into specialist or managerial roles at the earliest opportunity, there has remained just one entry point for all police officers, namely at the bottom, as a probationary constable.

8.8.2 Direct recruitment into areas such as IT, financial and personnel functions has long been commonplace. In virtually all police staff roles, recruitment is tailored to the particular post to be filled, allowing and indeed encouraging importation of people with the appropriate and up-to-date skills into the organisation. The future will demand that such direct recruitment is considered beyond the police staff roles to encompass many of the operational specialisms and managerial roles, including BCU commander and chief constable.

8.8.3 There have been strong views expressed both for and against such direct recruitment. What is unchallenged is that unless someone takes a leap of faith, the service will not be able to tap into a wealth of experience and talent currently lodged outside policing. A 40-year-old expert in drugs is unlikely to apply to be a probationary constable but could be invaluable in shaping the police response to such issues. The time is right either to embark on controlled pilots of such deployments or move on from the debate.

Healthy turnover of talent

8.8.4 The advantages of multiple entry points and more aggressive targeting of high quality graduates will only attract the breadth and depth of talent if there is also a more flexible approach to expected duration of career and accrual of pension rights. The traditional commitment to a single employer for 30 years is no longer attractive to many in the target employment sector. It will be necessary to offer multiple exit points and greater portability of pensions and it is encouraging that the current review of the police pension scheme proposes offering such increased flexibility.

Professionalism and transferable skills

8.8.5 The police service has long struggled to be recognised as a 'profession' and perhaps this is unsurprising, given the absence of any formal commitment to continuous professional development, accreditation or professional registers.

8.8.6 The service is already moving towards greater emphasis on professional qualifications and accredited training. This will need to become ingrained with every individual taking responsibility for their own professional development, to position themselves within specialisations or, indeed, to prepare for exit to another career.

8.8.7 The test of success in this regard will be the ability of every member of staff to have the capability to achieve accredited qualifications, professional registration or equivalent within their relevant field of expertise, and the organisation's unreserved support in so doing.

Is it time for more national standards?

8.9 Work conducted by Skills for Justice to produce a set of National Occupational Standards for the police service has been a positive development, as has the development of national recruitment standards. Likewise, the NCPE has made a good start in identifying some key areas for national professional standards, such as the National Intelligence Model, but the approach is somewhat piecemeal and is unlikely to provide an integrated suite of professional standards for the service. Barriers include:

- Dislike of national direction and control.
- 'Not invented here' syndrome.
- Lack of consensus over priority areas.
- Limited nature of codes of practice.
- Failure to achieve national IT solutions.
- Resistance to a code of ethics.

8.10 The recent Bichard Inquiry that followed the tragic murders in Soham highlighted the need for greater use of national standards, which will in turn provide the basis for a more consistent approach to inspection and review.

National consensus

8.10.1 The tri-partite structure has been a key factor in maintaining a balanced approach to policing but has produced a system within which all three parties need to agree before any standardisation is possible. Chief officers have immense autonomy operationally over whether nationally recommended initiatives, equipment or procedures are adopted. Despite ACPO guidance in many of the relevant areas, there has been no mandating power and hence widespread inconsistency.

8.10.2 Police authorities have also exercised their influence on localised spending that has added to variable take-up of nationally relevant ideas. The government has attempted to use ring-fenced and directed funding to mandate some areas of activity, performance or procurement but this has proved to be a blunt instrument.

8.10.3 The result has been a patchwork quilt of differing approaches, which have had two very significant effects. First, it has encouraged individual, local solutions. On the positive side, such localised focus encourages innovation and can produce results of clear benefit more widely to the service. On the negative side, it can also create barriers to importation of such good ideas, because they were 'not invented here'. HMIC has made huge efforts to disseminate good practice and encourage the service more widely to adopt such initiatives but there are limitations to what can be achieved through voluntary sign-up.

8.10.4 The second effect has been to virtually preclude meaningful standardisation in many fields that have clear business cases for such standards. National IT systems such as the Police National Computer have suffered from localised variable approaches and adherence to data protection principles has differed dramatically between forces. This situation cannot be allowed to continue and national standards must prevail in many more areas.

National systems

8.10.5 The service has suffered from a dearth of successful national solutions, in particular in the field of information management and technology. Even where 'national' systems have emerged, they are often simply standard solutions applied as stand-alone local systems, without the advantages of linking between forces. A further concern has been that IT solutions are often not specifically designed to complement or deliver the relevant business process, leading to

inefficiencies, nor integrated with other systems within the same force area, making data transparency very difficult.

8.10.6 It is becoming increasingly important that key service processes should be subject to standardisation and be engineered to provide the optimum delivery. This is a vital element in both freeing up resources and allowing greater opportunity for a variety of career pathways within the 'mixed economy' of workforce employment.

Standards of integrity and ethics

8.10.7 The service has historically shied away from adopting a national code of ethics and only relatively recently have most forces accepted that corruption and issues of integrity require significant and concerted attention.

8.10.8 The emergence of professional standards departments within forces and the establishment of the IPCC have gone a long way to providing a structure within which to address integrity failings. There is now an acknowledged need to complement these advances by introducing a code of ethics, against which the professional standards of all staff can be judged. Work on this is currently being developed within the Home Office (Crime Reduction and Community Safety Group). A national code of conduct for police staff exists within the PSC handbook and many forces have developed their own local codes of conduct.

Are force structures and hierarchies now counterproductive?

8.11 Since the early 1960s, the police service in England and Wales has experienced a high degree of stability of structure at force level. However, the last 10 years has seen a major realignment from highly centralised organisations to a two-tier structure, based on force and BCU levels.

8.12 Within forces, the current hierarchical structure poses impediments to modernisation requirements, such as multiple entry points, flexible career pathways or streaming. The key barriers are:

- Fear of force amalgamations.
- Limited examples of collaboration.
- Restrictions from ring-fenced national funding streams.
- Incompatibility of police and police staff rank structures.

Inter-force working

8.12.1 The green paper *Policing: Building Safer Communities Together* has reawakened the debates over the relative benefits of amalgamations, regionalisation and restructuring of police forces. Workforce modernisation provides an opportunity to look at the 'building blocks' of policing delivery,

from force level to local policing teams and provide the optimum combination of staffing options. Several forces are experimenting with dedicated local mixed teams, with regular officers, CSOs and special constables working together within local communities. The likelihood is that these teams can form the bridge between force and communities, providing the 'visibility, accessibility and familiarity' envisaged in HMIC's *Open All Hours* report and encouraging further co-operation with local wardens, volunteers and private sector contractors.

Ranks and hierarchies

8.12.2 Within forces, the rank structures of police officers and police staff have traditionally been worlds apart and not easily compared. This has made any crossover in roles very difficult and has perpetuated the 'them and us' status gap. The extension of options and the move towards equalisation of conditions under the modernisation programme should help to break down the barriers once and for all.

Can policing learn more from other public services?

8.13 There has been a long-held position that the police service is so different from all other organisations that, in most cases, attempting to import ideas is not helpful or valid. This has been eroded somewhat but barriers still remain, including:

- Resistance to change or new ideas.
- View that policing is different to other public sector organisations.
- Professional pride.
- 'We tried it before and it didn't work'.

Modernisation

8.13.1 The police is not the only public service to undergo modernisation; in fact policing has come relatively late to the party. Education and Health have undergone significant change, perhaps best typified by the establishment of 'NHS Direct' and foundation trusts in the Health Service.

8.13.2 Perhaps policing should engage more in the 'purchaser-provider' ethos and outsourcing services and functions. A mirroring of NHS foundation trusts could see the introduction of accountability through a locally elected external body. A 'Policing Direct' call handling service could be to the significant benefit of non-emergency cases or those seeking advice rather than police attendance. Indeed, such an approach has been introduced at a local level by some forces, through a 'Service Centre' or similar structure.

8.13.3 Certainly, there appear to be increased opportunities for police forces to form strategic alliances with neighbours, to jointly deliver particular services,

share a range of support services or even sub-contract altogether. There are already suggestions of 'lead' forces for particular specialist services, for example investigation of complex fraud cases. A natural extension might also be to sub-contract to other emergency services or organisations, for example have all health and safety work carried out by the fire and rescue service. With imagination, the options are significant.

Should the private sector play an even greater role in policing?

8.14 One area where practice in other sectors has entered policing has been the introduction of private sector service providers. Until very recently, however, this was mainly in the support areas such as administration, catering and vehicle fleet management. It has now been extended to operational support activities such as prisoner transportation and custody assistants. The boundaries could still be extended but will encounter concerns, for example in respect of:

- Loss of control of service delivery.
- Capability of private sector staff.
- Security and quality of service.
- Loss of skills or resilience.
- Contractual omissions.

Supporting operational delivery

8.14.1 Perhaps the most obvious and potentially impactive area for extension of private sector involvement must be in the custody arena. As private staff increasingly take roles in transportation and detention and the Crown Prosecution Service takes responsibility for charging decisions, the elements remaining that require police control are diminished. Interview and investigation remain a police role but housing, feeding and tending to prisoners are more akin to a hotel or hospital and would surely sit better with companies having expertise in those services.

8.14.2 Custody suites are invariably located within major police stations but why not have such secure facilities elsewhere and wholly run by the private sector? The police arresting officers and investigators would simply become customers of their facility. The problems associated with acquiring legal or medical assistance, provision of rightful facilities and many others that currently take up significant amounts of police officer time would be contracted to the relevant company.

Operational roles

8.14.3 The move towards accreditation of private organisations, although slow, will undoubtedly see their staff dealing with a number of 'front-line' duties, albeit concentrated on those at the lower end of the seriousness scale. However, with

the Highways Agency taking some traffic duties and the introduction of non-warranted staff as investigators, there is no reason why the private sector should not bid for an even wider range of operational service delivery.

What is the optimum balance of police officers and other staff?

8.15 The mix of police, police staff and other categories of the 'extended policing family' has largely evolved force by force, based on local history and circumstances. Barriers to such evolution have varied but include:

- Restriction of core service delivery to warranted staff.
- Fears over operational resilience.
- Traditional 'cut and paste' approach to civilianisation.
- Initiative driven approaches.

'Mixed economy' of staffing

8.15.1 Undoubtedly, the availability of additional resources to expand the 'police family' has greatly eased the most significant limitation on employment of additional non-warranted staff, namely the traditional loss of police officers to fund police staff. The current explosion in choice of staff categories has provided a genuine opportunity to test the qualities of each individually and in varying combinations. This provides the ingredients for creation of a balanced workforce, tailored to local need, subject to relevant budget holders having devolved power to decide the appropriate mix.

Opportunities to expand

8.15.2 With finance remaining a key driver, there will need to be greater innovation in how forces or BCUs might use the extended workforce to generate additional income. An example might see the hiring out of empowered staff (police officers or staff with powers) to local authorities or commercial concerns. The important issue will be that all such activity is fully integrated into the overall strategic workforce planning, rather than isolated and unconnected initiatives.

Perfect balance?

8.15.3 So is there a perfect or optimum balance of police officers to police staff and other family categories? For any individual local team, BCU or force the answer is probably yes, albeit there will always need to be flexibility to adapt the mix to cater for specific challenges and needs.

8.15.4 For the service as a whole, as with so many other things, the message is that 'one size does not fit all'. It is not possible to propose a standard proportion of each workforce category that would suit every force but it may be possible to

lay down a few basic principles to help decide the best mix within the anticipated context of the modernised police service.

The model police force for the future?

8.16   So, returning to the question posed at the start of this chapter, what will the modernised police service look like in the future? It is proposed to consider this under the following headings:

- Police service role.
- National context.
- Force structures.
- Service delivery options.
- Employment conditions.
- Police powers.
- Career paths.
- Staffing options.

Police service role

8.17   The police service has accumulated a very broad role in 'community safety', far beyond the roles that require specific police powers. The public, private and voluntary sectors all have roles to play in community safety and the likelihood is that the police will increasingly focus on the core, exclusive roles, contracting or commissioning other organisations to deliver the remainder.

8.18   The role of partnerships will be increasingly important and the main question will be how much of the 'outer ring' of what is currently the domain of the police service remains within police control, whether or not it is actually directly delivered by the police service.

National context

8.19   The National Policing Plan will continue to set out the broad national objectives and to establish the key areas within policing overall that the government regards as the highest priorities. The addition of a suite of national professional and performance standards will underpin the policing plan and will provide a greater degree of standardisation in systems and technology employed and of expected service delivery standards.

8.20   With more transparent and consistent standards, forces will be better able to achieve earned autonomy, which will lead to a reduction in regulation and greater flexibility in resource management for those forces meeting or exceeding the national standards.

8.21 In addition to standards encapsulating systems, technology, performance and delivery, the service will have a comprehensive Code of Ethics, incorporating expectations in respect of professional standards and integrity and applicable to every member of the service.

Figure 18 – Policing in the 21st Century
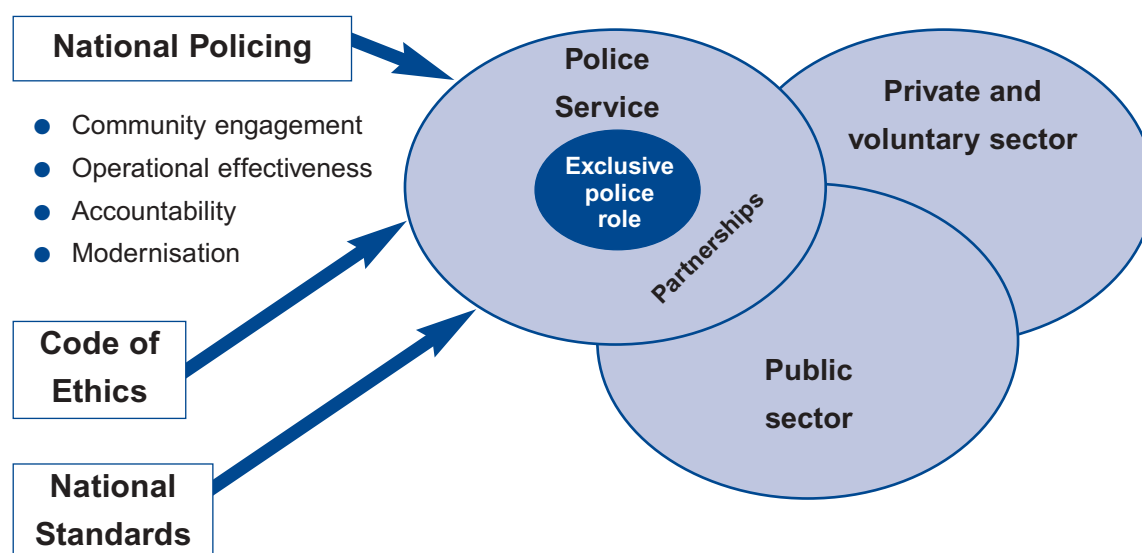
Force structures

8.22 The emphasis on local delivery of core, volume policing services will continue to strengthen whilst the response to Level 2 criminality, terrorism and major events will increasingly demand the establishment of 'strategic forces'. The balance between the two ends of this spectrum has yet to be worked to its conclusion but there is little chance that the current structure of 43 police forces in England and Wales will survive.

Service delivery options

8.23 At the very least, forces will take opportunities to form collaborative partnerships and consortia, perhaps with some specialist services either being contracted between forces or with 'lead' organisations taking full responsibility on behalf of a region or nationally. Amalgamations or substantial restructuring may prove a more sustainable long-term option. When visiting Tayside Police as part of the inspection, it was evident that the Scottish model of 'common policing services' was having a positive impact. Although still being developed, there was evidence that the collaborative service was reaping benefits. Common policing services include the Scottish Police College, the Scottish Crime Squad, the Scottish Criminal Records Office, the Scottish Drugs Enforcement Agency and the Scottish Police Information Strategy. A review of these services is currently being undertaken by the Association of Chief Police Officers in Scotland (ACPOS), who are keen to strengthen and expand common services.

Employment conditions

8.24 Undoubtedly, one of the most liberating and fundamental change areas will be in conditions of employment. This is not just an issue of individual regulations, duty hours and pay scales. The most exciting and potentially impactive areas relate to the underlying principles and in particular to opening the police service to modern employment trends from the world at large. The key issues will be:

- Multiple entry points.
- Common conditions of service.
- Standard pension rights.
- Professional registration and development.
- Specialisation and 'streaming'.
- Clear career paths for all staff.
- Ability to move between warranted and non-warranted posts.

Police powers

8.25 As employment practice and ethos change, so too will the 'ring fencing' and blanket approach to investment of current police powers. These powers currently fall into four main categories:

- Street powers.
- Custodial powers.
- Evidence powers.
- Prosecution powers.

8.26 If staff are to move between warranted and non-warranted posts and/or to pursue career paths that permit flexibility, it will be necessary to tailor the powers required to the particular specialisation, or indeed the specific position held. This will see a much greater vestment of powers that are limited either in scope or in time.

8.27 The complexity of modern day policing also raises fundamental questions in relation to police powers. The fundamental distinction between a police officer and a citizen is the power to use coercive force. Yet, in the multiplicity of roles currently performed by police officers, it is comparatively rare for that power to be used. Work currently being undertaken jointly by the Home Office and the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit on police reform is seeking to quantify the extent to which police powers are actually needed in a variety of policing roles. Only recently, there would have been few in the service who would have believed that patrolling was a function to be performed by anyone other than police officers. It is already becoming clear, however, that the public welcomes the introduction of CSOs and that these members of the extended policing family can deliver effective patrol without the full range of powers vested in constables.

Core capabilities (career paths)

8.28 A vital building block for the service as a whole, and certainly for individual forces, will be the continued professionalisation and specialisation that acknowledge key streams of policing activity. These streams will accommodate and encourage greater recognition of standards, skills and competencies and will form the basis of 'career paths'. The streams are likely to be:

- Emergency response.
- Patrol and community policing.
- Investigative response.
- Specialist crime and Level 2 policing.
- Specialist support.
- Strategic development.

8.29 Within each stream, there will be flexibility to encourage both lateral and vertical development, as well as allowing for transfer between streams where appropriate.

Mixed economy of staffing

8.30 Options for staffing have already expanded significantly and the flexibility provided through modernisation, in particular the greater equalisation of conditions and career paths, will allow a truly 'mixed economy' of workforce deployment. Managers will select from a menu of options including:

- Fully warranted officers.
- Non-warranted police staff.
- Police staff with powers (eg CSOs).
- Special Constabulary.
- Contracted staff.
- Re-employed retired staff.
- Neighbourhood and street wardens.
- Accredited private sector organisations.
- Volunteers.

8.31 There are also likely to be ever-increasing options for use of wholly private sector employees or organisations, perhaps even extending, through accreditation or otherwise, to some of the hitherto untouched areas of operational policing. Figure 19 gives an idea of the flexibility that might exist.

Figure 19 – Options for staffing in core activity streams

Capability	Strategic Development	Specialist Support	Specialist Operational Support and Level 2	Investigative Response	Patrol and Community Policing	Emergency Response
Police Officer	✔		✔	✔	✔	✔
Police Staff	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	
Police Staff with Powers				✔	✔	
Special Constable					✔	✔
Contracted		✔	✔	✔	✔	
Retired Staff		✔	✔	✔		
Warden					✔	
Accredited					✔	
Volunteers					✔	
Private Sector		?	✔	?	?	

8.32   The changes in employment practices and negotiating machinery advocated in this report would assist the service in properly defining and identifying a workforce structure better suited to meet the complex challenges of the 21st century. In addition to fully warranted officers (in sufficient numbers to meet public order commitments), this might include patrol specialists, specialist investigators, detention and intelligence professionals and skilled administrators.

Funding experimentation

8.33   To progress this radical deregulation of the employment and re-engineering around flexibilities will require the service to be encouraged and funded to undertake specific, radical experiments. HMI is encouraged, therefore, by the establishment of the workforce modernisation implementation fund and its use to support clearly defined experiments that test the mix and freedoms in real time operational BCU conditions, over a significant period of time. Some of these schemes will undoubtedly be more successful than others and those successful schemes need to be expanded and developed into the national arena. Likewise, the service's knowledge base is weak, and continued experimentation and evaluation is required if this situation is to be adequately addressed.

Recommendation 28

HMI recommends that the Home Office ensures appropriate funding for existing initiatives is maintained and that a long term strategy is put into place to ensure adequate funding is available to support continued experimentation and evaluation well into the 2006 spending review cycle of spending.

Conclusions

8.34 It is clear that the police service of the future will change from that which we know today and that policing may be delivered in a very different way. Step change is the only option and the service needs a sound knowledge base upon which to build a change programme. Given such a foundation, workforce modernisation opens up significant opportunities to professionalise the service, to better integrate the workforce, to raise the status of the constable and, most importantly of all, to provide a service that is focused on and reflects the composition and needs of local communities. That is the challenge – what is now needed is the drive, courage and leadership to deliver.

ACC	Assistant Chief Constable
ACPO	Association of Chief Police Officers
ADR	Annual Data Requirement
APA	Association of Police Authorities
BCU	Basic Command Unit
BSIA	British Security Industry Association
CFF	Crime Fighting Fund
CLDP	Core Leadership Development Programme
CSAS	Community Safety Accreditation Scheme
CSO	Community Support Officer
DDA	Disability Discrimination Act
HMCIC	Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Constabulary
HMI	Her Majesty's Inspector
HMIC	Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary
HPDS	High Potential Development Scheme
HR	Human Resources
ICF	Integrated Competency Framework
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IPCC	Independent Police Complaints Commission
MDP	Ministry of Defence Police
MPS	Metropolitan Police Service
NCIS	National Criminal Intelligence Service
NCPE	National Centre for Policing Excellence
NHS	National Health Service
NOMS	National Offender Management Service
ODPM	Office of the Deputy Prime Minister
PACE	Police and Criminal Evidence
PCS	Public and Commercial Services Union

PCSO	Police Community Support Officer
PDR	Personal Development Review
PFI	Private Finance Initiative
PLPU	Police Leadership and Powers Unit, Home Office
PNB	Police Negotiating Board
PPAF	Policing Performance Assessment Framework
PPU	Police Personnel Unit, Home Office
PRU	Police Resources Unit, Home Office
PSC	Police Staff Council
PSI	Policy Studies Institute
PSSO	Police Skills and Standards Organisation
PSU	Police Standards Unit, Home Office
RDS	Research, Development and Statistics Unit, Home Office
SAP	Senior Appointments Panel
SLDP	Senior Leadership Development Programme
STEP	Specials Through Employers Partnership (Norfolk Constabulary)
UKIS	United Kingdom Immigration Service