



Strategic Policing Requirement

South Wales Police

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Introduction

The *Strategic Policing Requirement* (SPR) was issued in July 2012.¹ This document sets out the Home Secretary's view of the national threats that the police must prepare for and the appropriate national policing capabilities that are required to counter those threats. The SPR respects the operational independence of the police service, advising what, in strategic terms, it needs to achieve, but not how it should achieve it.

The particular threats specified in Part A of the SPR, and referred to as the national threats in this report, are:

- terrorism;
- civil emergencies;
- organised crime;
- public order threats; and
- large-scale cyber incidents.

Part B specifies the policing response that is required nationally, in conjunction with other national agencies, to counter these threats. This policing response is described in the SPR as follows:

*"the combined national **capacity** of all police forces to respond to these threats, expressed in terms of the outcomes sought – these are drawn, wherever possible, from publicly available national government strategies. Police and crime commissioners and chief constables must have regard to this aggregate capacity when considering the respective **contributions** they will make to it;*

*the **capabilities** that police forces, often working collaboratively, need to maintain in order to achieve these outcomes; the requirement for **consistency** among forces for certain key specialist capabilities where the resources from more than one police force need to be integrated with, or work effectively alongside, each other. In some instances this requirement for consistency may need to involve other key emergency services and agencies; and*

*the **connectivity** arrangements by which resources from several police forces may effectively be co-ordinated or mobilised, together and with those of other*

¹ In accordance with section 37A Police Act 1996. Available from www.gov.uk/government/publications/strategic-policing-requirement

agencies – such as the Security Service and, from 2013, the National Crime Agency. The combination of consistency and connectivity forms the basis for interoperability between police forces and with other partners.”

We report the findings from this inspection of South Wales Police which took place during September 2013 against each of these requirements.

The breadth of requirements that are set out in the strategic policing requirement are outside the scope of a single inspection. Therefore, it has been necessary to plan a series of inspections over three years so that the police response to all the national threats can be examined individually and in-depth over that period.

This year, HMIC has examined how well police forces have established arrangements to respond to strategic policing requirement threats and has conducted in-depth examinations of the police response to two of the national threats: the threat to public order; and the threat of a large-scale cyber incident.

We have produced the following three national reports, available at
<http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic>:

- The Strategic Policing Requirement: An inspection of the arrangements that police forces have in place to meet the requirement;
- The Strategic Policing Requirement: An inspection of how police forces in England and Wales deal with threats to public order; and
- The Strategic Policing Requirement: An inspection of how police forces in England and Wales deal with threats of a large-scale cyber incident (including criminal attack).

This report sets out what we found when we examined the arrangements that South Wales Police had in place to meet the strategic policing requirement and follows the format of the first of the national reports listed above.

Capacity and contribution

Terrorism

The chief constable understands his role in tackling the threat of terrorism. The force, together with the counter-terrorism network, has the capacity it needs to contribute to the national counter-terrorism effort.

The national counter-terrorism network is formed of dedicated counter-terrorism policing units providing functions such as the gathering of intelligence and evidence to help prevent, disrupt and prosecute terrorist activities. The Wales extremism and counter-terrorism unit is the counter-terrorism network's capability for the Wales region.² South Wales Police hosts the unit and one of the force's assistant chief constables provides leadership and direction.

Funding for counter-terrorism network functions is provided by a central grant. Local force counter-terrorism functions, for example, special branch officers who conduct local enquiries and provide links between local policing and the counter-terrorism network, are retained in their police forces but are accountable for the performance of their roles to the regional unit.

The Wales extremism and counter-terrorism unit considered threats and risks from international terrorism and domestic extremism in its strategic plan dated 2010.

Civil emergencies

The force, together with the South Wales local resilience forum, has the capacity to respond to local civil emergencies and to contribute to national emergencies.

An assistant chief constable chairs the South Wales local resilience forum. The force has considered likely threats that it may face from civil emergencies, but has not produced a strategic threat and risk assessment. Instead, the local resilience forum community risk register, which is published on the forum's website, describes risks that the partnership may have to deal with and was updated in 2013.

The force has arrangements to request mutual aid – the provision of resources from other police forces – and any specialist skills required for dealing with civil emergencies. For the police forces in the region, mobilisation of specialist resources is co-ordinated by South Wales police which also supports the National Police Coordination Centre which mobilises resources across the country.

All of the forces in the region have sufficient numbers of trained staff to deliver basic chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear capabilities.

² South Wales Police, North Wales Police, Gwent Police and Dyfed-Powys Police.

Serious organised crime

South Wales Police has appropriate capacity to meet threats from serious organised crime, either with its own trained staff, or through its regional organised crime unit, known as Tarian.

An assistant chief constable provides clear leadership of the force's response to serious organised crime. Serious organised crime is considered a priority in the force's current control strategy document.

The force applies nationally approved methods to disrupt organised crime groups. There is a clear way to make sure that appropriate measures are taken against organised crime groups in accordance with the force's assessment of the potential threats, risks, harm and demands that these groups pose. The force can respond to these threats using its own resources, or it can request assistance from the region or other forces across the country.

The force is developing the regional organised crime unit in accordance with nationally issued guidance. There are arrangements to decide the allocation of resources to investigate, disrupt and prosecute organised crime groups.³ Organised crime groups that have been identified are discussed at local, task-allocation meetings and actions from these meetings are then allocated across the force.

Public order

The chief constable understands his role to provide police support units⁴ to deal with public order incidents across force boundaries and to make a contribution to the national requirement.

South Wales Police had completed a public order strategic threat and risk assessment, in accordance with nationally issued guidance. The document provided to HMIC was current for the period of our inspection and dated 2013.

³ The United Kingdom law enforcement approach to tackling serious organised crime is based upon the identification of organised crime groups, assessment of the harm posed by them and their management by disruption, investigation and prosecution.

⁴ Police Support Units are the basic formations used by the police service for the policing of major events. The composition of a police support unit is standardised across all of the 43 police forces in England and Wales and consists of one inspector, three sergeants and 18 police constables, plus three drivers trained and equipped to carry out public order tactics to national standards, with three suitably equipped personnel carriers. Formations of a sergeant and six constables are referred to as serials.

For each force, HMIC compared the number of police support units they declared they had, with the number of police support units that they told us they needed to respond to local outbreaks of disorder. The force assessed that it needed ten police support units to respond to local threats and has provided training to these units. The force can provide the ten police support units that it has assessed it requires to contribute towards national mobilisation.

The force has sufficient specialist public order staff⁵ and senior officers to command responses to major events and public disorder.

The use of mutual aid – the provision of support between police forces – is another indicator of the extent to which police forces either have or do not have sufficient trained public order resources. Data provided by forces on their provision and receipt of mutual aid for 2011/12 and 2012/13 show that South Wales was one of 31 forces that were net providers for public order policing mutual aid.

Large-scale cyber incident

The force's plans to respond to the threat of a large-scale cyber incident were still under development at the time of our inspection.

An assistant chief constable has been nominated as the force's lead for its capability to respond to cybercrime. At the time of our visit, South Wales Police was considering its response to cyber threats and was consulting with the force and the regional organised crime unit to develop an action plan.

Cybercrime and cyber investigation are developing areas of business and in order to understand the threats better, the force has appointed a detective superintendent to lead on both aspects.

Cybercrime was not highlighted in the force's strategic threat and risk assessment.

South Wales Police has assessed the threats and potential impact of a denial of service attack⁶ on its own systems. The force undergoes an annual accreditation that assesses the risks for all the systems in force that hold personal data. The force uses specialist hardware and software to minimise the risk of attack.

⁵ In addition to public order trained police officers, forces have specialists who are trained in a number of capabilities. These include liaison with protestors to facilitate peaceful protest and the removal of uncooperative protestors causing obstructions.

⁶ A denial of service attack is an attempt to make a computer or network of computers unavailable to its users.

Staff demonstrated an understanding of the implications of a cyber attack. The force had prepared business continuity plans⁷ to enable the force to continue functioning in the event of disruptions to services. These include a plan illustrating what should be done in the event of a cyber attack.

⁷ Business continuity plans set out how the force will operate following an incident and how it expects to return to normal business in the quickest possible time afterwards.

Capability

Terrorism

South Wales Police has, or has access to, the necessary capability to conduct complex investigations into terrorism. It has the systems in place to manage the training of special branch officers to maintain the necessary skills to provide specific counter-terrorism capability.

Staff in the force and the counter-terrorism intelligence unit work together to make sure that all available information is gathered and analysed. This provides intelligence that informs regional and national understanding of terrorist and domestic extremism threats.

The Wales extremism and counter-terrorism unit provides the capability needed to undertake complex investigations, respond to critical incidents (including command and control) and provide specialist equipment and training to national standards.

South Wales Police uses a secure video conferencing system to facilitate daily management meetings with the other forces in the region. Details about terrorism intelligence and the forces' responses are discussed and shared securely.

The force has sufficient trained staff locally to support all four strands of the counter-terrorism CONTEST⁸ strategy.

Civil emergencies

The force is meeting the SPR requirement to provide capability to meet civil emergencies which span the borders between South Wales and surrounding forces.

Events that could threaten human welfare are recorded in the South Wales local resilience forum community risk register.

The head of emergency planning has prepared 89 resilience plans for the local resilience forum and the force assesses its capacity and capability against the roles identified within these plans. The forum has a training and exercise programme that validates the force's capability to co-ordinate responses regularly, with members, to events threatening human welfare (such as nuclear incidents or industrial accidents). South Wales Police maintains records of training provided to staff.

⁸ CONTEST – the government's counter-terrorism strategy. The four strands are: pursue, prevent, protect and prepare.

Serious organised crime

South Wales Police has the capabilities required, either internally or through officers provided by the regional organised crime unit, to meet threats from serious organised crime.

HMIC found that, in the region, the four chief constables have agreed their detailed plans for the further development of the regional organised crime unit. The force holds task-allocation meetings every two weeks to agree on what is dealt with by the different levels of response (local, regional or national). Matters that require immediate attention are dealt with in similar daily meetings.

The force has reviewed its capability to deal with serious organised crime. Staff are trained to national standards and have appropriate equipment to fulfil their roles. Training requirements are reviewed annually. Records of staff skills are kept and there is a way to make sure that the force can maintain its capability as staff move on.

Public order

South Wales Police has the capabilities required to respond to public order threats.

The force did not provide HMIC with a self-assessment of its public order capability using the College of Policing capability framework at the time of the inspection, although the force had completed the exercise. South Wales Police trains its staff in accordance with national standards, including the use of tactics to end incidents of disorder before they become worse.

The force has reviewed the number of officers with skills that it needs to perform specific roles and assessed that there are no gaps. Information provided by the force included an assessment that it was able to provide 10 police support units with the requisite equipment.

South Wales Police has established procedures, to use during planned operations, to understand how those involved in disorder are using social media. This means that its use (such as that which occurred during the 2011 disorders to communicate where disorder was taking place) can be monitored. It can also use its constant intelligence management capability to perform this role in the event of spontaneous outbreaks of disorder. This contributes to national intelligence gathering and enables incident commanders to deploy their resources using the best available information.

South Wales Police train their public order staff in force and provide four days training per year. Two of these days are designed as bespoke in-force training, linked to current public order threats and risks, and takes place at Cardiff airport and football stadiums in the region. The force has also trained with Dyfed-Powys Police, Gwent Police, Avon and Somerset Constabulary and the British Transport Police.

To ensure that the force is using the most effective tactics and equipment, staff who have been deployed for public order events and on training exercises are debriefed. Officers are confident that their views are considered in developing the force's public order capability.

HMIC tested, without notice, the force's capability to mobilise and conduct mutual support across boundaries to outbreaks of public disorder. Control room staff in South Wales demonstrated effective ways of responding to the scenario given in the test.

We found that there were plans to establish command, control and communications support to respond to incidents. An inspector trained in commanding police responses to public order incidents was available immediately. A senior officer was also available who would co-ordinate longer-term responses. One fully equipped serial would be available within 30 minutes and there were plans to secure further serials from elsewhere in the force area within a further 30 minutes. Control room staff were aware of the standard operating procedures and the plan for cross-border mobilisation⁹ which set out how the force should obtain assistance from other forces in the region.

Staff had access to contingency plans through the force's command and control systems and they were available in hard copy in the force control room.

We inspected one of the force's police support unit carriers and found it to be fully functioning and equipped to national standards.

Large-scale cyber incident

South Wales Police, like most forces, is not yet able to identify or understand fully the threats, risks and harm posed by cybercrime. The force is not yet taking full advantage of opportunities being made available to train its staff to deal with cybercrime.

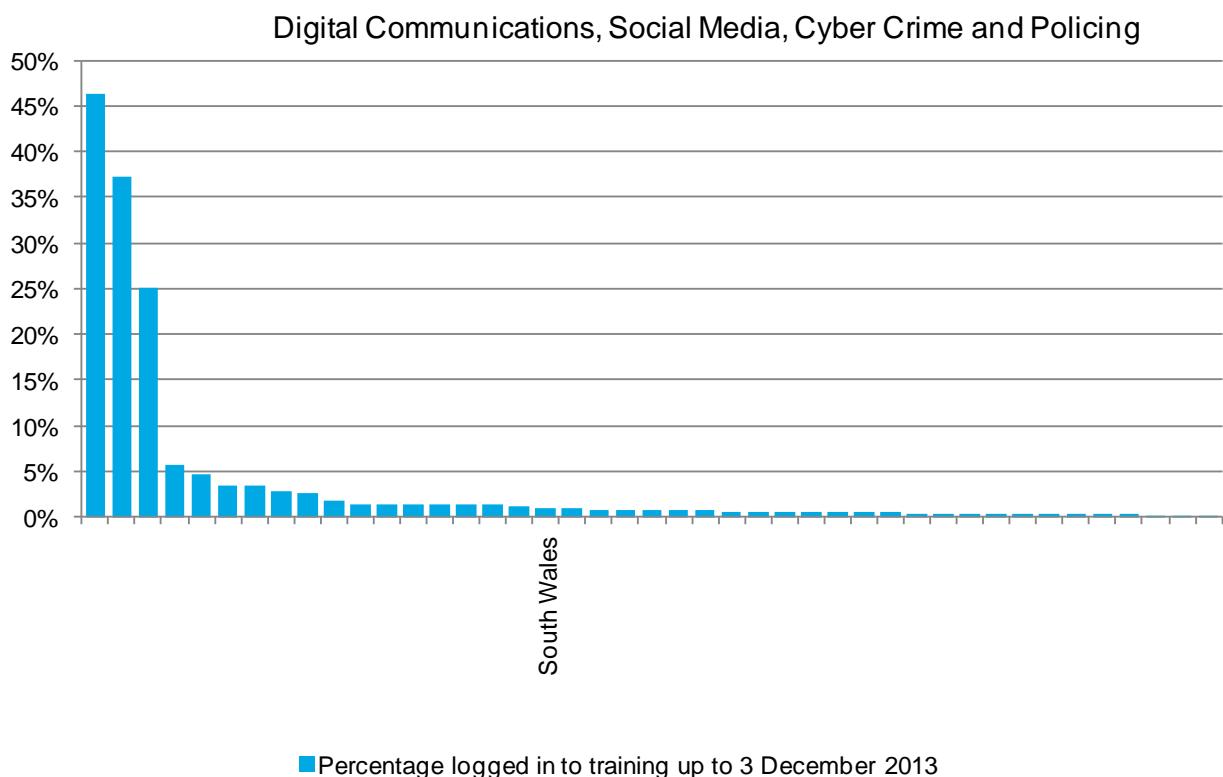
At the time of the inspection visit, the force was working to improve its understanding of cyber issues and its response to a cyber attack. The force had reviewed strategies from a number of other police forces in preparation for developing its own strategy.

South Wales Police hi-tech crime unit staff are forensic digital examiners who have been trained to nationally agreed standards and some have relevant higher education qualifications. The force is developing a partnership with Bournemouth University to focus on the recruitment of people with information, communication and technology skills to increase the number of suitably trained staff to tackle cybercrime. At the time of our visit, an exercise was being planned with Bournemouth University to examine capability and identify investigative opportunities.

⁹ South Wales Police mobilisation plan.

The College of Policing has developed eight computer-based training courses to improve the police service's knowledge and skills to deal with cybercrime. Data has been provided and analysed to understand the proportion of the workforce who have sought the training up to the beginning of December 2013.¹⁰ Tables that show the proportion of staff, for each force, who have enrolled for the training are included in our national report on the police service's response to cyber threats. The following charts demonstrate how many of South Wales Police's workforce took three of the eight e-learning courses designed to improve awareness. The courses were selected to be representative of the force's commitment to this aim for both general front-line policing (Digital Communications, Social Media, Cybercrime and Policing introduced in April 2013 and Cybercrime and Digital Policing – Introduction, introduced in August 2013) and for investigators (Introduction to Communications Data and Cybercrime introduced in July 2011).

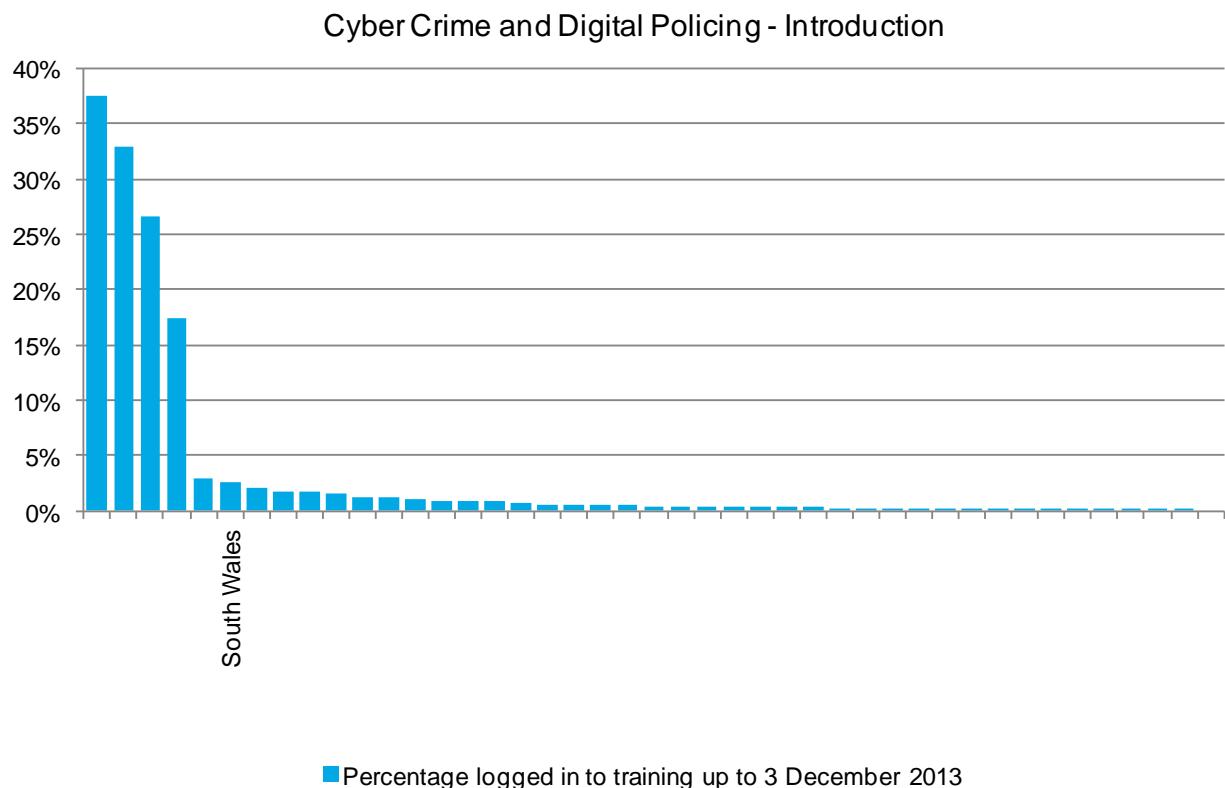
Figure 1: Digital Communications, Social Media, Cybercrime and Policing¹¹



¹⁰ Information provided by the College of Policing dated 10 February 2014 – completion figures for communication data and cybercrime modules (period ending 31 January 2014).

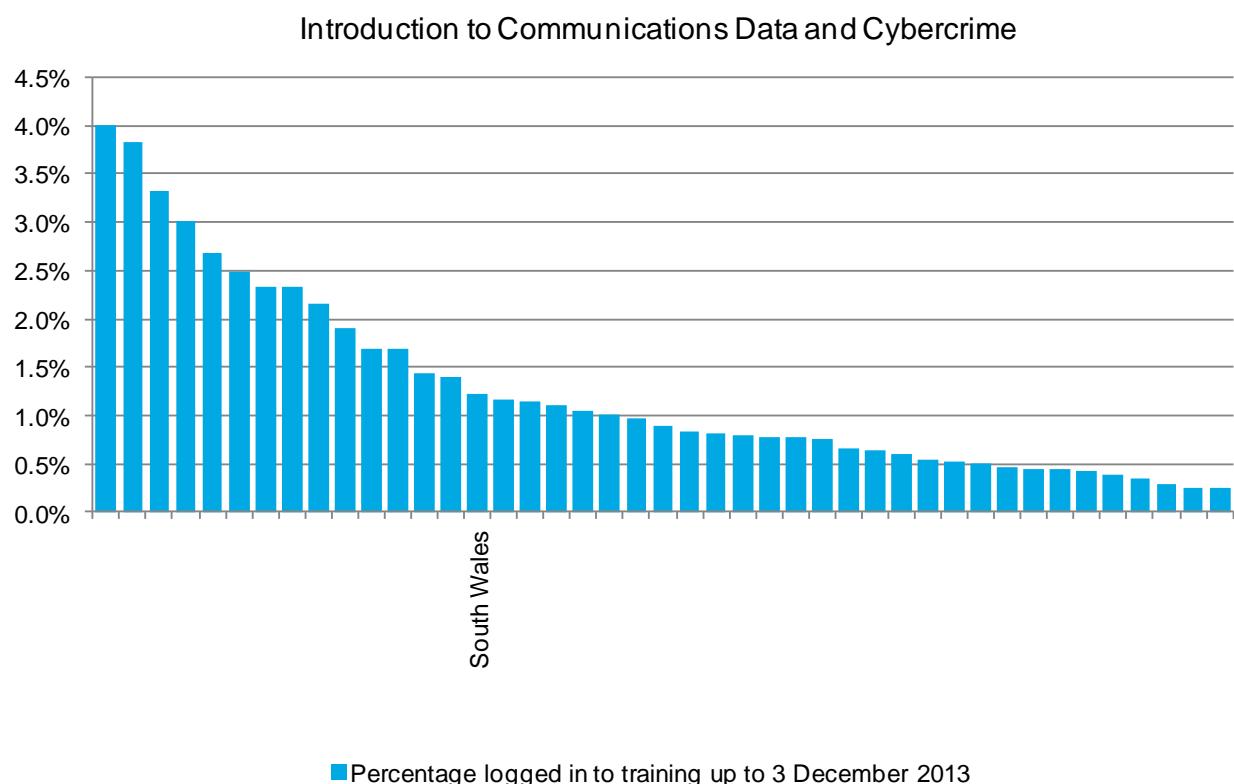
¹¹ This course, designed for all staff, aims to develop awareness of digital communications technology and how it affects different areas of cybercrime, social media, law enforcement and policing.

Figure 2: Cybercrime and Digital Policing – Introduction¹²



¹² This course is designed for all police officers, special constables and other individuals in a law enforcement community. It is aimed at helping them develop a general awareness of the types of emerging threats and risks from criminals exploiting technology. The training is linked to relevant legislation and also covers cybercrime prevention.

Figure 3: Introduction to Communications Data and Cybercrime¹³



¹³ This course is aimed at investigators and demonstrates the skills needed for a basic level of understanding of the uses of communications data in law enforcement, including guidance on cybercrime prevention.

Consistency

Public order

The arrangements to train public order officers and procure public order equipment are consistent across all forces in the South Wales region.

Public order equipment is purchased through regional procurement arrangements and is compatible, and so is able to be shared, with the other forces in the South Wales region. The force uses nationally agreed procurement standards for its public order protective shields and its procurement staff take part in national discussions at the national police procurement executive about standards of public order equipment.

Staff trained in public order expressed confidence that their equipment was up to date and compatible with that used by other forces. They are able to operate effectively with other forces' public order staff.

Although some joint regional training takes place, the force is working to increase the frequency of these exercises.

Responding to chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear incidents

South Wales Police is able to operate effectively with other emergency services to respond to chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear incidents.

South Wales Police conducts regular, formal chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear training exercises. The force also works with the fire and ambulance services locally in preparing to deal with these types of incidents. At the time of our inspection, the most recent exercise had taken place in March 2013, with the intention to repeat on an annual basis. Chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear equipment complies with national specifications.

Connectivity

Terrorism

South Wales Police and its neighbouring forces in the region have effective ways to co-ordinate and mobilise resources to deal with incidents of terrorism. These are supported by secure information technology and radio communications.

The force participates in daily national counter-terrorism network meetings at which threats are discussed and the police service's response is determined. The counter-terrorism intelligence unit also co-ordinates regional daily meetings where representatives from forces in the region discuss threats that are developing and agree actions to respond to them. The force has clear arrangements to ask for assistance from the Wales extremism and counter-terrorism unit and wider counter-terrorism network.

The force is able to co-ordinate covert activity in support of operations linked to counter-terrorism and serious organised crime.

The force uses the Airwave radio system to communicate effectively with other police forces in the South Wales region and with the regional organised crime unit.

Civil emergencies

South Wales Police is able to communicate with other local resilience forum members in the planning of responding to civil emergencies.

Emergency services in the South Wales area work with the national joint emergency services interoperability programme and the force works well with the other emergency services.

The force uses information about the way it deploys its personnel to real incidents and to exercises for the purpose of learning and development.

Serious and organised crime

The force communicates effectively with other forces in the region and with the regional organised crime unit about the mobilisation of resources, sharing of equipment and tactics, and communication with others. It is participating actively, through the regional organised crime unit, in the national tasking arrangements.

The region has an effective way of prioritising organised crime issues that require operational activity, allocating tasks to officers at either a force or regional level, and co-ordinating activity across the South Wales region. There was evidence that resources are prioritised to deal with the most serious organised crime groups.

The force's procurement unit purchases the equipment used in operations to tackle organised crime groups. Through the South Wales collaboration board, the force collaborates with the other forces in the South Wales region and the regional organised crime unit to ensure they can share equipment.

Through its reviews of the operations it carries out with other forces, the force was able to demonstrate good levels of interoperability.

The force is able to share intelligence securely with the regional organised crime unit.

Public order

We found that the chief constable of South Wales Police is co-operating with the arrangements for cross-boundary mobilisation of officers to deal with public order incidents.

South Wales Police co-ordinates the regional mobilisation of public order resources. Forces have agreed a regional mobilisation protocol which has proven to be effective in a number of instances, including recent support that the force provided to the Police Service of Northern Ireland and for the policing of disorder in Avon and Somerset.

In the past two years, the force has received assistance from other forces in the form of three¹⁴ police support units. The force, in turn, has provided five police support units to others.

Cyber connectivity

South Wales Police has not been faced with a large-scale cyber incident that would require a joint response. Staff in the force were aware, however, of where they could get help if it was needed.

The force has not had to investigate or deal with the consequences of a serious cyber attack and currently has no plans to test its response to such an attack.

Senior leaders in the force recognise that, if they were faced with such a challenge, they would ask for national expertise from the National Cyber Crime Unit of the National Crime Agency.

¹⁴ This analysis excluded three major policing operations – the 2011 widespread disorder experienced in England in August 2011, the London Olympics 2012 and the removal of the residents at Dale Farm, Essex in 2012 (Operation Cabinet) – as they were exceptional incidents that skewed the results.