



# Part 2: Our inspections



# Our PEEL inspections

An overview of the outcomes of our PEEL inspections is set out in part 1 of this annual assessment.

In the pages that follow, there is a more detailed summary of the individual aspects of PEEL: effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy. The methodology that HMIC uses in respect of its PEEL inspections is set out in annex D and is also available on HMIC's website.<sup>49</sup>

A force's effectiveness is assessed in relation to how it carries out its responsibilities, including cutting crime, protecting the vulnerable, tackling anti-social behaviour, and dealing with emergencies and other calls for service.

A force's efficiency is assessed in relation to how it provides value for money.

A force's legitimacy is assessed in relation to whether the force operates fairly, ethically and within the law.

In addition, under our PEEL inspection programme, we examined material aspects of leadership in the 43 forces. Our report is set out in full on page 56.

Thereafter, there are sections on force management statements; HMIC's specialist inspections; and the joint inspections which we have undertaken with other criminal justice inspectorates in which HMIC has taken the lead.

Each PEEL report and each specialist inspection report is on HMIC's website.<sup>50, 51</sup> There are easy-to-use links which lead to individual force reports. The reports of our joint inspections are on the criminal justice joint inspection website.<sup>52</sup>

A summary of a few pages cannot do justice to the full report of which it is a précis. The nuances and detail of a force's performance are to be found in the individual force, thematic and joint inspection reports.



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<sup>49</sup>: See pages 112–115. Available from: [www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/wp-content/uploads/2014-peel-methodology.pdf](http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/wp-content/uploads/2014-peel-methodology.pdf)

<sup>50</sup>: [www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/our-work/peel-assessments/](http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/our-work/peel-assessments/)

<sup>51</sup>: [www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/publications/](http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/publications/)

<sup>52</sup>: [www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/cjji/inspections/](http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/cjji/inspections/)

## PEEL assessments

The assessments that HMIC has given to each force in respect of the three pillars of PEEL – effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy – are themselves an overview; it would therefore be wrong to conclude that a force that is assessed as good or outstanding is good or outstanding in every aspect of its work and in every action that its officers and staff take. It would be wrong to assess a force's performance as lower than how it performs overall, simply because there are individual aspects that failed to attain that level.

Of course, that will be of little comfort to the victim who has not been treated properly by an individual officer in a force that is overall considered to be good or outstanding, and every force should strive to ensure that all the actions and decisions of all its officers and staff are of the

highest quality. But the public and HMIC have to be realistic.

Equally importantly, a force that is assessed as inadequate should not be taken as being so in every aspect of its work. HMIC has seen good decisions and work in every force, even in those where their overall performance requires the most improvement.

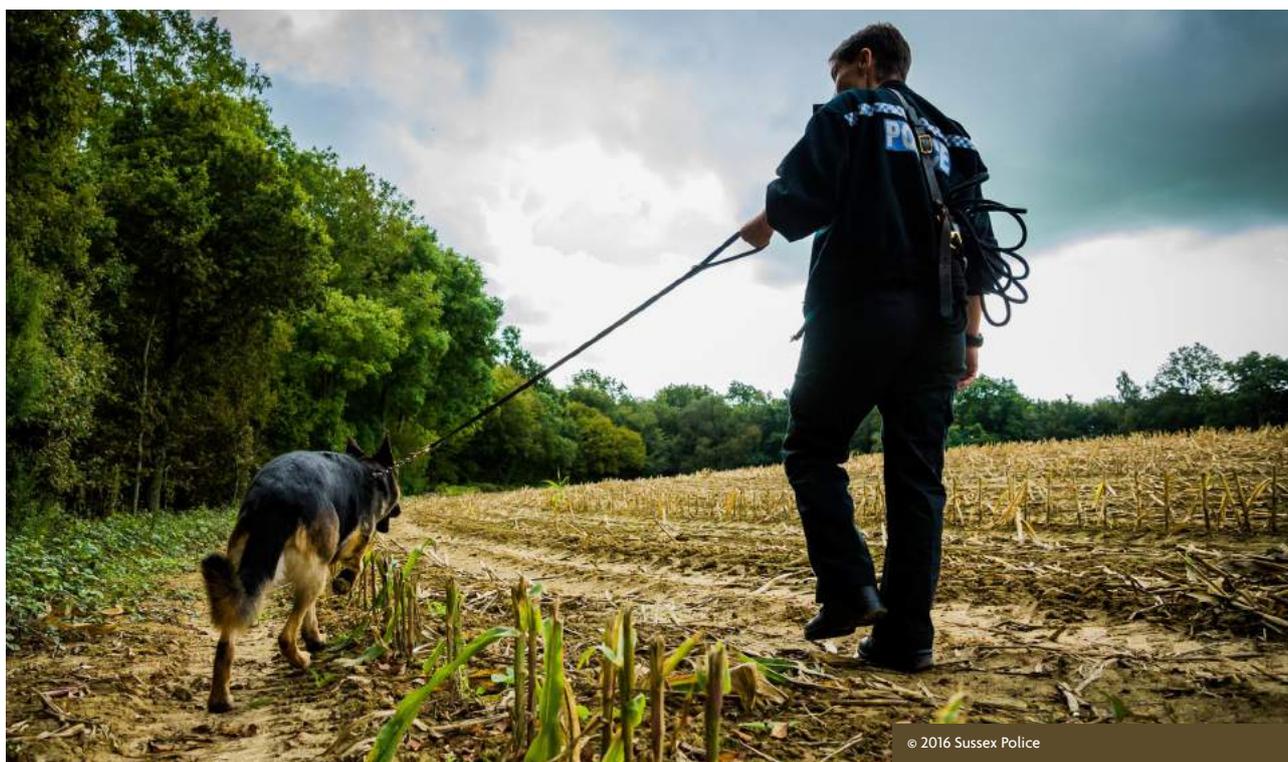
That said, the summaries of the pillars of PEEL which follow are a guide to the overall state of policing in the forces in question. They provide an overview of what is working well and where improvements are needed.

Inevitably, there will be those who want to re-order our findings into a league table. They will want to see the best and the worst performing forces as assessed against our PEEL criteria. A more sophisticated approach is required. What

matters are the reasons and factors why some forces have been assessed more highly than others. These are to be found in the individual force reports on our website, and a full consideration of the issues that are raised in each is the key to understanding an individual force's assessment and how matters might be improved.

I look forward to the results of the 2016 PEEL inspections to see the extent to which the leaders of police forces have responded to HMIC's findings and assessments and how they have focused on those areas of their work that need attention.

As in all things, HMIC's aim is to help forces to improve policing. PEEL is an important tool by which they can do so.



25

forces have reached at least the expected standard of good

## PEEL: effectiveness

In our PEEL inspections, our assessment of the effectiveness of forces centres on how well they carry out their responsibilities, including cutting crime, protecting the vulnerable, tackling anti-social behaviour, and conducting investigations and managing offences.

In my annual assessment last year, I wrote that: “[a]lthough performing well in many respects, the police are falling behind the curve of rapidly changing criminality, policing the crimes of today with the methods of yesterday and insufficiently prepared for the crimes of the future”.

HMIC’s most recent effectiveness inspection found a similar picture.

Our overall assessment of the 43 forces’ is based on its consideration of four questions. The figure below sets out how effective forces were in respect of each question.

The main findings of our PEEL effectiveness inspections are set out below.

- We are concerned that as many as 18 forces require improvement in their overall approach to how they keep people safe and reduce crime, with 16 graded as requiring improvement specifically with regard to investigating crime and managing offenders. These are basic policing areas, and swift action needs to be taken to rectify the position.
- A proactive, preventative and partnership approach to policing, symbolised by neighbourhood policing teams, offers the best chance of intervening early to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour, and to keep people safe – all the more so in the context of hidden crimes, such as child sexual

### Effectiveness

- Outstanding
- Good
- Requires improvement
- Inadequate

### Effectiveness

Overall judgments

1 24 18 0



How effective is the force at preventing crime and anti-social behaviour, and keeping people safe?

3 35 5 0



exploitation, honour-based violence, modern slavery and cyber-crime. Forces have generally maintained some form of neighbourhood policing capability, and they are working effectively with other agencies on prevention.

However, we found that the role of neighbourhood policing teams is being stretched. Neighbourhood officers were found to be responding to calls for service and investigating crime, in addition to their regular prevention and community engagement work. Inevitably, in some cases, the latter suffered as a result.

- Those in specialist roles have good skills, but the picture is more mixed elsewhere. We found examples of uniformed officers undertaking crime investigation without the required skills.
- And even with regard to specialist skills, forces do not have sufficient specialist support to undertake the detailed and time-consuming work associated with digital

evidence recovery and protecting vulnerable people. Forces are aware of the issue and have started to increase the level of specialist support, but swifter action needs to be taken if the police service is to deal effectively with demand.

- Specifically, 35 forces have been graded as good or outstanding in dealing with serious and organised crime.
- The forensic support services available to officers have not kept pace with the ways in which crimes are now committed.<sup>53</sup> This is an echo of what HMIC found in 2014 and still needs to be addressed.
- Specifically, 38 forces have been assessed as good or outstanding in terms of working with a broad range of organisations to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour, and to keep people safe.<sup>54</sup> We found strong examples of partner organisations sharing information to this end: for instance,

Devon and Cornwall Police has a children's information-sharing officer, based in the force's public protection unit, who exchanges information with partner agencies such as local authority children's services, housing providers and probation services.

- There is clear evidence that the police understand the benefits of close working arrangements in these areas. It is pleasing to note that the partner agencies which HMIC contacted as part of the inspection generally recognised and applauded the police's efforts in this regard.

How effective is the force at investigating crime and managing offenders?

1 26 16 0



How effective is the force at protecting those who are vulnerable from harm and supporting victims?

0 12 27 4



How effective is the force at tackling serious and organised crime, including its arrangements for fulfilling its national policing responsibilities?

3 32 8 0



<sup>53</sup>: *Real lives, real crimes: A study in digital crime and policing*, HMIC, London 2015. Available from: [www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmic/wp-content/uploads/real-lives-real-crimes-a-study-of-digital-crime-and-policing.pdf](http://www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmic/wp-content/uploads/real-lives-real-crimes-a-study-of-digital-crime-and-policing.pdf)

<sup>54</sup>: For example, Community Safety Partnerships which include representatives of the Probation Service, local authorities, and health, fire and rescue services, and also more widely with local business and voluntary sector organisations.

The high number of forces who are failing to protect those who are vulnerable from harm and support victims is of great concern

## Protecting vulnerable people

In the reporting period, HMIC examined the police response to a wide range of different vulnerabilities – from offenders and victims who are vulnerable because of their youth, to those who are the victims of disability hate crimes; and from offenders with mental health needs to victims of domestic abuse and their children. The main findings of our PEEL vulnerability inspections are set out below.

- The high number of forces who are failing adequately to protect those who are vulnerable from harm and support victims is of great concern. Specifically, four forces (Bedfordshire Police, Essex Police, Staffordshire Police and Surrey Police) were judged to be inadequate, and a further 27 forces to require improvement. That is inexcusable.
- We found no consistency in relation to how vulnerability is defined.<sup>55</sup> Most forces define vulnerability either by reference to the government's *Code of Practice for Victims of Crime*<sup>56</sup>

or the guidance produced by what was the Association of Chief Police Officers.<sup>57</sup> Nine forces use their own definition or a combination of these definitions. This means that it is possible that a victim who is identified as vulnerable in one force may not be so identified in a neighbouring force area, and so could receive an inferior level of service.

- The lack of a single definition of vulnerability contributes to inconsistencies in the proportion of crimes recorded as involving a vulnerable victim, with eight forces unable to provide these data at all. The figures vary significantly between those forces which do collect this information, with a vulnerable victim identified in between 0.03 percent and 34.3 percent of all police-recorded crime for the 12 months to 31 March 2015. The variation between forces, in both numbers of vulnerable victims and definitions of vulnerability, can be seen in figure 2.

The police service will not be able properly to gauge its performance in this area until it adopts a consistent approach



55: PEEL: *Police effectiveness 2015 (Vulnerability): A national overview*, HMIC, 2015, page 10. Available from:

[www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/publications/police-effectiveness-vulnerability-2015/](http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/publications/police-effectiveness-vulnerability-2015/)

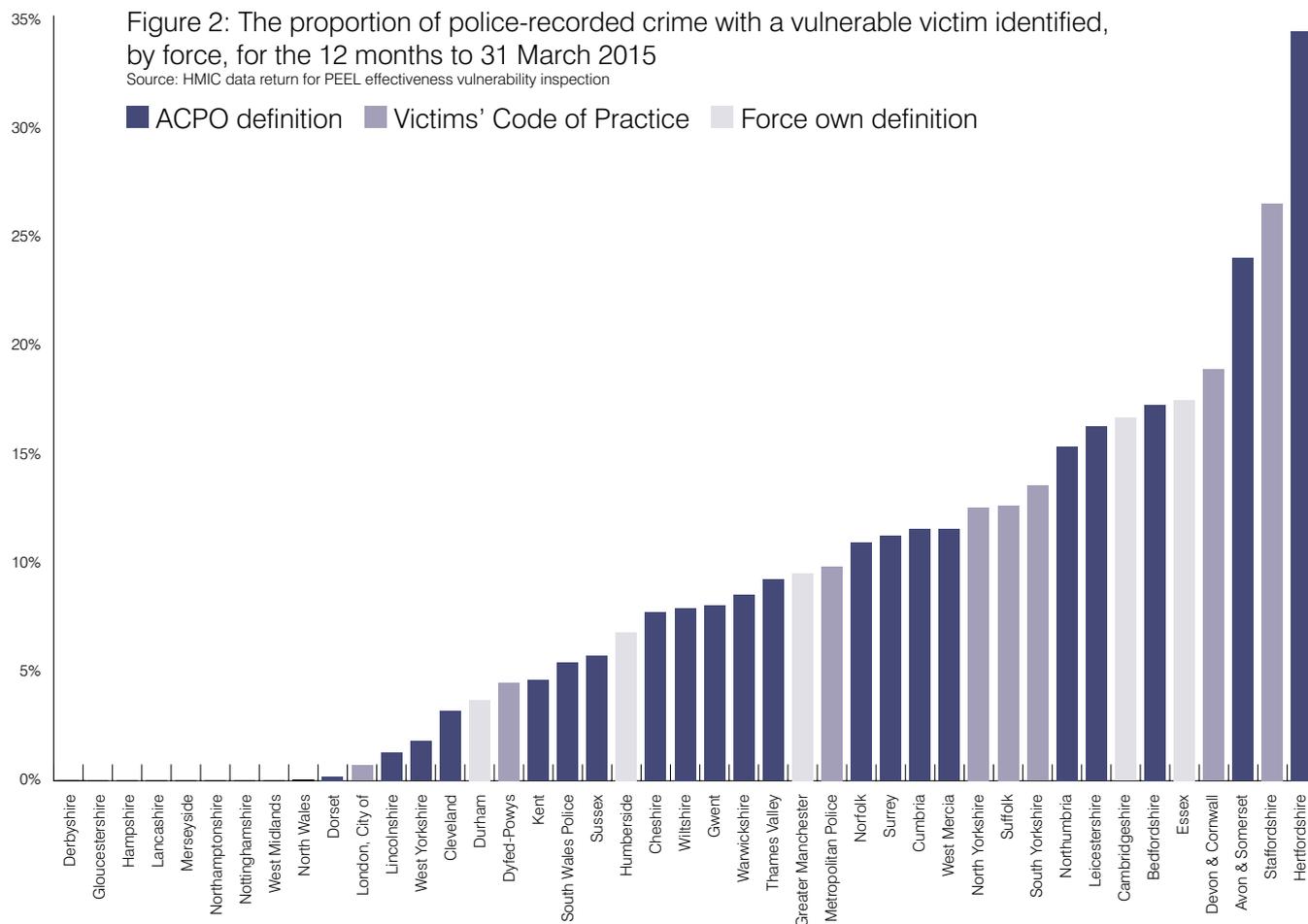
56: *Code of Practice for Victims of Crime*, Ministry of Justice, October 2013. Available from:

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-code-of-practice-for-victims-of-crime](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-code-of-practice-for-victims-of-crime)

57: *ACPO Guidance on Safeguarding and Investigating the Abuse of Vulnerable Adults*, NPIA, 2012. Available from:

[www.app.college.police.uk/app-content/major-investigation-and-public-protection/vulnerable-adults/](http://www.app.college.police.uk/app-content/major-investigation-and-public-protection/vulnerable-adults/)

The National Police Chiefs' Council replaced the Association of Chief Police Officers on 1 April 2015.



to the identification and recording of crimes involving vulnerable people. Further, the police service will not be able properly to assess future demand unless its current baseline is accurate.

Action needs to be taken swiftly to rectify the situation.

There are many capable and skilled officers and staff working to help vulnerable people, using creative ways to ensure that they are protected and informed. However, the lack of an overall picture of the demands on police time relating to vulnerability

is a matter of especial concern, given that the workload in many specialist investigation units is close to overwhelming.

- The 2013/14 Crime Survey for England and Wales estimated that 2.1m people in England and Wales suffered some form of domestic abuse<sup>58</sup> that year.<sup>59</sup> In HMIC's 2014/15 inspection, we found that the police receive over 100 calls an hour regarding domestic abuse-related incidents. Ten percent of all recorded crime relates to domestic abuse, and 33 percent of all recorded

assaults with injury are domestic abuse-related.

- There has been a 30 percent increase in high-risk cases referred to multi-agency risk assessment conferences.<sup>60</sup> Some of these groups are struggling to keep pace with the volume of cases. For forces to play their parts effectively in such groups, there must be sufficient properly trained officers who are able to investigate cases promptly. I recognise that partner agencies also have to play their parts effectively if the overall response

<sup>58</sup>: This includes partner/ex-partner abuse (non-sexual), family abuse (non-sexual) and sexual assault or stalking carried out by a current or former partner or other family member.

<sup>59</sup>: Chapter 4: *Violent Crime and Sexual Offences – Intimate Personal Violence and Serious Sexual Assault*, ONS, 2015, page 1. Available from: [www.ons.gov.uk/ons/dcp171776\\_394500.pdf](http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/dcp171776_394500.pdf)

<sup>60</sup>: Multi-agency risk assessment conferences provide the opportunity for statutory and voluntary agency representatives to share information about high risk victims of domestic abuse and carry out effective partnership working in order to produce a coordinated action plan to increase the safety of victims and their children.

Only  
**19**  
forces have  
call-handling  
systems that  
automatically  
identify repeat  
callers

in such instances is to be comprehensive, but the police should not be the ones who lag behind making effective contributions. Sufficient action needs to be taken now.

- In some forces, there are not enough specialist staff to cope with the current demands. This hinders and slows down investigations.
- Again, we found that today's technology could be better used. Many staff who answer emergency calls are well-trained. They understand the risks involved, listen to and reassure the victim and advise him or her how to keep safe until an officer arrives. However, in cases of domestic abuse, where there are significant numbers of victims who suffer more than once at the hands

of their abusers, the police staff would be greatly aided by knowing if the caller has telephoned previously.

Only 19 forces have call-handling systems that automatically identify repeat callers.

This is but one example where HMIC found that forces are not harnessing the capabilities of today's technology to improve the effectiveness of the police service. This is becoming urgent. I have written of my concerns before: I hope that I will not have to do so again in future annual assessments.



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We found that forces are basing their assessment of tomorrow's demand on the policing requirements of today. This is not defensible

# PEEL: efficiency

In our PEEL inspections, our assessment of the efficiency of forces centres on how well they provide value for money to the communities they serve.<sup>61</sup>

Our overall assessment of the efficiency of the 43 forces is as follows.

HMIC's overall assessment of the 43 forces' efficiency is based on its consideration of three questions. The table below sets out how efficient forces were in respect of each question.

The main findings of our PEEL efficiency inspections are set out below.

- The police service's overall efficiency is assessed as being weaker than it was in 2014.<sup>62</sup> This is the first time that a force, Humberside Police, has been graded as inadequate.
- Whilst most forces have a good understanding of the current demand for their service, they have a weak understanding of their future demand.
- Most forces (37) have been specifically assessed as having a sustainable financial position in both the short term and the long term. The best forces, graded as outstanding (10), have moved beyond short-term spending reductions to longer-term programmes to change and improve the ways in which they serve the public. These,

## Efficiency

- Outstanding
- Good
- Requires improvement
- Inadequate

### Efficiency

Overall judgments

5 29 8 1



How well does the force use its resources to meet its demand?

4 33 5 1



<sup>61</sup>: The individual PEEL assessments for each police force are available on our website at: [www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/our-work/peel-assessments/](http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/our-work/peel-assessments/)

<sup>62</sup>: PEEL: Police efficiency 2015, HMIC, 2015, page 6. Available from: [www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/wp-content/uploads/peel-police-efficiency-2015.pdf](http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/wp-content/uploads/peel-police-efficiency-2015.pdf)

**Figure 3: Planned changes in workforce full time equivalents from 31 March 2015 to 31 March 2018 for England and Wales<sup>63</sup>**

	March 2015 adjusted	Difference between 2015 and 2018		March 2018
		Number	Percentage	
Police officers	122,900	-7,400	-6%	115,400
Staff	62,400	-3,500	-6%	58,900
PCSOs	11,900	-1,300	-11%	10,600
<b>Workforce total</b>	<b>197,100</b>	<b>-12,200</b>	<b>-6%</b>	<b>185,000</b>

Source: HMIC Efficiency inspection data collection and Home Office police workforce statistics <sup>64</sup>

nevertheless, are based on the forces' understanding of current demand. We found that forces are basing their assessment of tomorrow's demand on the policing requirements of today. This is not defensible.

- Most forces have a good understanding of, and plan on the basis of, their current capacity – that is, the number, cost and rank of officers and staff – but they have a much weaker understanding of their current capability – that is, what skills their workforces possess – and their future capability requirements.
- Planned reductions in staffing levels reinforce the point that financial savings are being achieved by across-the-board cuts in capacity without adequate consideration of how the capability of forces needs to be changed to meet future demand.
- Collectively, there is no common understanding across the police service of the numbers of officers required to maintain operational viability or to provide a safe level of policing.
- Forces' information and communications technology is generally weak and ageing. New systems and mobile data equipment are being introduced, but their systems continue to lag behind those used by the public, and some systems, especially in some control rooms, remain outdated.
- Forces are not making the most of opportunities to work with each other, and combining resources to save money plays only a small part in forces' financial planning.

How sustainable and affordable is the workforce model?

5 22 15 1



How sustainable is the force's financial position for the short and long term?

10 27 6 0



<sup>63</sup>: Figures may appear not to reconcile due to rounding. The adjusted March 2015 column refers to full time equivalent officers, staff and police and community support officers for forces which are able to provide an estimate of numbers for 2018. This column is comparable to the March 2018 column.

<sup>64</sup>: Police workforce statistics. Home Office, 2015. Available from: [www.gov.uk/government/statistics/police-workforce-england-and-wales-31-march-2015](http://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/police-workforce-england-and-wales-31-march-2015)

## Forces are not making the most of opportunities to work with each other

- There is scope for forces to collaborate far more with the College of Policing and the private sector to understand their future requirements and to manage the significant amount of change that is likely to be required in the years ahead.
- In relation to financial planning, the police service is using its experience of the last five years prudently. The best forces have moved beyond short-term spending reductions to longer-term improvement and change to reduce costs and improve services; more forces need to follow suit.
- The police service needs to improve its understanding of demand for its services (particularly future demand), its understanding of the capability of its workforce, and its information and communications technology infrastructure. In a number of important respects, the service has a sound understanding of its current demand but this is incomplete (for example, failing to assess hidden or newer crime types), and its understanding of likely future demand needs improvement.
- Although police budgets have been protected until 2020, the budgetary constraints placed on the police's partner agencies<sup>65</sup> are likely to have significant knock-on effects on the police.

I have set out earlier my view of the way in which chief officers should approach their financial positions in the years to come. They must establish a better understanding of where the pressure points are likely to be and use this knowledge to underpin decisions

about where police resources should be focused. A better evidence-based approach should enable forces to meet future difficulties and problematic circumstances with greater confidence that they have the right numbers of officers and staff working in the right areas with the right levels of skills, experience and expertise.

In 2020, the problems and circumstances which the police will face, and the ways in which they will have to tackle them, will in many respects be quite different to today. The police service will differ too; it will probably be smaller, cost less, and be less visible as the nature of crime changes and the power of technology accelerates. These things will require chief officers to ensure that public confidence is at least maintained in such a new environment.

I emphasise again that in the field of information and communications technology, the police must catch up and then get ahead of developments. If the present rate of improvement in police technology continues, the police in 2020 will be even further behind offenders and the needs of the public. The responsibility which rests on the police service – police and crime commissioners, chief officers, the Police ICT Company and others in policing – is immense. The raw power of the world wide web as an agency of fear as well as freedom is immense and will only increase significantly. The public can neither tolerate nor afford law enforcement lagging ever farther behind.

The police service's work to devise and use much more sophisticated means of

measuring future demand must proceed collectively, using the best ideas and the best tools available, wherever they have been devised. The same is true of its techniques for preventing crime and bringing offenders to justice. That requires action now, with police and policing institutions working with one another, not in isolation and certainly not as competitors.



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The picture is a positive one and these results are a credit generally to the police service as a whole

# PEEL: legitimacy

In our PEEL inspections, our assessment of the legitimacy of forces centres on whether they operate fairly, ethically and within the law, and in particular how they treat people. These things are essential to the maintenance of public support and co-operation; they are the cornerstone of the British model of policing by consent. This year, we have included a consideration of the extent to which forces are representative of the communities which they serve.

Our overall assessment of the 43 forces' legitimacy is based on its consideration of three questions. The table below sets out how legitimate forces were in respect of each question.

The main findings of our PEEL legitimacy inspections are set out below.

- The picture is a positive one and these results are a credit generally to the police service as a whole.
- The majority of forces (36) have been specifically graded as good and one as outstanding

in how their behaviours reinforce the wellbeing of staff and an ethical culture. All chief officer teams take seriously the need to create and maintain an ethical culture. While approaches vary from force to force, we saw many examples of chief officer road shows; external challenge and ethics boards; training on expected standards of behaviour; dissemination of lessons learned; confidential reporting lines; and regular communication on force values.

## Legitimacy

- Outstanding
- Good
- Requires improvement
- Inadequate

## Legitimacy

Overall judgments

1 37 5 0



To what extent does practice and behaviour reinforce the wellbeing of staff and an ethical culture?

1 36 6 0



- All forces had in place arrangements to support and assist the wellbeing and welfare of officers and staff. However, we found that the range of services available, and the degree to which line managers provided support to their staff, were variable both within and between forces.



How well does the force understand, engage with and treat fairly the people it serves to maintain and improve its legitimacy?

7 33 3 0



To what extent are decisions taken on the use of stop and search and tasers fair and appropriate?

0 24 19 0



## 2

## out of 201 chief officers are black, Asian and minority ethnic people

- The response to the College of Policing's Code of Ethics<sup>66</sup> was less satisfactory, however. Section 1.2.2 of the code specifically states that it applies to all the 43 forces in England and Wales and that it relates "specifically to chief officers in the discharge of their functions".<sup>67</sup>

The use of the code of Ethics is variable across forces. Most forces have their own sets of values and have used these instead. Some forces have amended their values better to reflect the code; others have not. Where both the code and the forces' values are used, there is often confusion about which takes priority.

This variation in approach to a code which is issued under statute is unacceptable.

- Between 2010 and 2015, the total proportion of women in the police service increased by 0.7 percent, taking the overall proportion of women working in all aspects of policing to 39.4 percent. For black, Asian and minority ethnic people, the proportion working in all aspects of policing increased by 0.5 percent, taking the overall proportion to 6.4 percent.<sup>68</sup> There remains under-representation of women and black, Asian and minority ethnic people at chief officer level: 21.4 percent (43 out of 201) of all chief officers are women, and 1 percent (2 out of 201) are black, Asian or minority ethnic people, where ethnicity is known. The changes among women and black, Asian and minority ethnic people in the police workforce are set out in figure 4.

**Figure 4: Change in police workforce across England and Wales (overall volume and the percentage of female and black, Asian and minority ethnic people), between 31 March 2010 and 31 March 2015<sup>69</sup>**

	Total change		Percentage point change	
			% female	% BAME
<b>Total workforce</b>	<b>-37,035</b>	<b>(-15%)</b>	<b>+0.7</b>	<b>+0.5</b>
<b>Officers</b>	<b>-16,916</b>	<b>(-12%)</b>	<b>+2.4</b>	<b>+0.9</b>
Constables	-10,715	(-10%)	+1.7	+1.0
Sergeants	-3,961	(-17%)	+3.7	+0.4
Inspectors	-1,557	(-21%)	+4.6	+0.5
Chief inspectors	-317	(-16%)	+7.1	+0.1
Superintendents	-209	(-20%)	+5.8	+0.6
Chief superintendents	-135	(-29%)	+10.3	+1.7
Chief officers	-23	(-10%)	+6.2	-3.1
<b>Staff</b>	<b>-15,521</b>	<b>(-19%)</b>	<b>-0.7</b>	<b>+0.5</b>
<b>PCSOs</b>	<b>-4,598</b>	<b>(-27%)</b>	<b>+1.2</b>	<b>-1.8</b>

Source: Home Office Police Workforce statistics

<sup>66</sup>: Code of Ethics: A Code of Practice for the Principles and Standards of Professional Behaviour for the Policing Profession of England and Wales, College of Policing, 2014. Available from: [www.college.policing.uk/What-we-do/Ethics/Documents/Code\\_of\\_Ethics.pdf](http://www.college.policing.uk/What-we-do/Ethics/Documents/Code_of_Ethics.pdf) There are nine policing principles outlined in the Code giving rise to ten standards. The Code is issued as a code of practice under section 39A, Police Act 1996.

<sup>67</sup>: *Ibid*, paragraph 1.2.2.

<sup>68</sup>: Details of the specific percentages in each force area are available in the PEEL reports for each force on HMIC's website. See: [www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/peel-assessments/peel-2015/](http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/peel-assessments/peel-2015/)

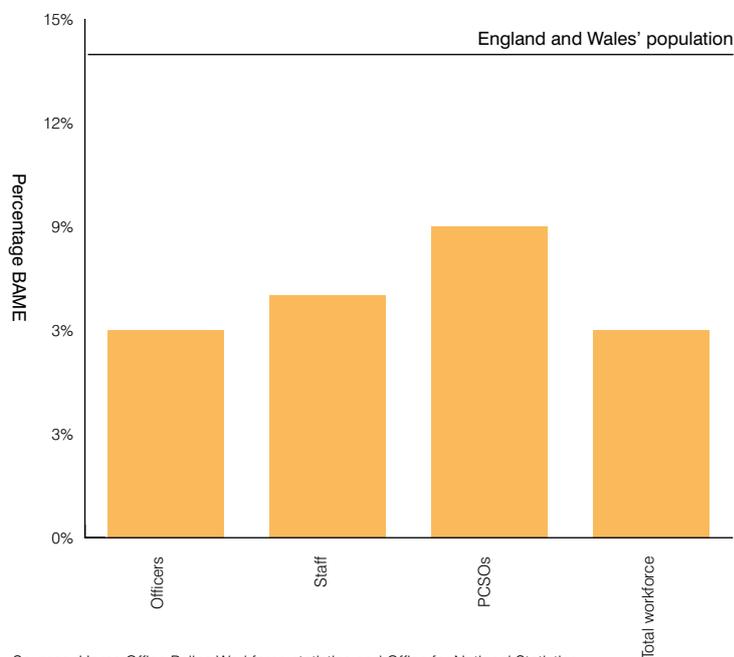
<sup>69</sup>: Figures may appear not to reconcile due to rounding.

While I am pleased that, during a time when jobs were lost or people left the service without being replaced, policing saw a small increase in the proportion of women and black, Asian and ethnic minority people, more work is needed to ensure that those who work in policing – at all levels – better reflect the communities they serve.

Figure 5 sets out how much more forces need to do in order to reflect their communities accurately in their workforces.

- More positively, 40 forces have been graded as good or outstanding when specifically assessed in relation to their work in engaging their communities. They understand the links between effective public engagement and increased police legitimacy, and have put in place a wide variety of mechanisms to engage the public. We found good examples in some forces where members of the community had volunteered to help the force, for example, by providing administrative support. This helps to build strong community links.
- Fairness, and the perception of fairness, is crucial to police legitimacy. It is important that fairness is demonstrated in all aspects of policing, including the use of police powers. Some of the most intrusive powers available to the police are those involving stop and search and the use of tasers,<sup>70</sup> and the way

**Figure 5: Percentage of black, Asian and minority ethnic people within England and Wales police workforce (as at 31 March 2015) compared with total population**



Sources: Home Office Police Workforce statistics and Office for National Statistics 2011 Census

forces use these powers was examined in this year's inspections. Considering both together, only 24 forces were graded as good and 19 required improvement.

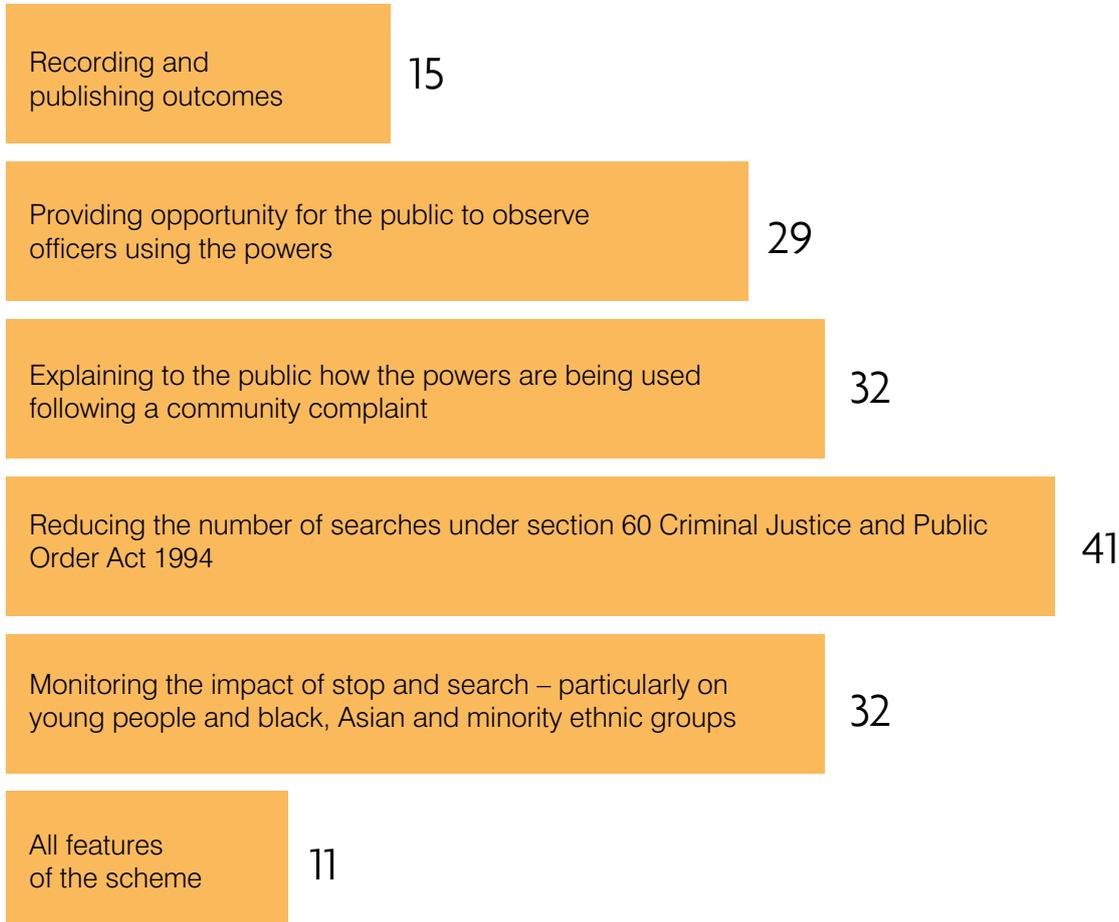
- I have set out in my overview my concerns about the police's collective failure properly to comply fully with the 'Best Use of Stop and Search scheme' published by the Home Office in response to HMIC's 2013 report.<sup>71</sup> Only one quarter of forces were fully compliant, despite all chief constables having signed up to the scheme.

<sup>70</sup>: A taser is an electrical device which is used in appropriate circumstances by the police to immobilise an individual who is either a danger to him or herself or who is considered to be a danger to others.

<sup>71</sup>: See page 27.

## Figure 6: Number of forces compliant with the 'Best Use of Stop and Search scheme' by component part

Source: HMIC data return for PEEL Legitimacy inspection



- The picture in respect of tasers was much more positive. We found that tasers were used fairly and appropriately in almost all the cases which we considered. There were robust oversight mechanisms in place, and forces had a good understanding of how many taser officers were needed and how they should be deployed.

Overall, the picture under the PEEL pillar of legitimacy is a positive one, but there are clear areas where improvements must be made. Failure to comply with a statutory code of practice and failure to implement best practice in a highly sensitive area of policing call into question the extent to which the police service will be able to continue to count on the support of the communities they serve.

During the inspection year, the police and crime commissioner for Avon and Somerset initiated the procedure under section 38 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 to require the chief constable of that force to resign or retire. The basis of that requirement was that the chief constable, having had eight final written warnings as a result of findings of misconduct against him, had lost the confidence of material elements of his force.



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The police and crime commissioner concluded that the efficiency and effectiveness of the force should not be imperilled by allowing the chief constable to return to work and try to regain that confidence.

The section 38 procedure places the decision on the forced resignation of a chief constable solely with the police and crime commissioner. However, before making a final decision on the matter,

the legislation contains several important checks and balances, to ensure conspicuous fairness to all concerned. One of those checks is a requirement that the police and crime commissioner obtain and take into consideration the written views of the chief inspector of constabulary on the matter. On 25 September 2015, I provided my views to the police and crime commissioner, stating that I agreed that

the forced resignation of the chief constable was, in the circumstances, necessary. The chief constable resigned on 16 October 2015.

# PEEL inspection judgments

## Effectiveness

- Outstanding
- Good
- Requires improvement
- Inadequate

### Effectiveness

Overall judgments

1 24 18 0



How effective is the force at preventing crime and anti-social behaviour, and keeping people safe?

3 35 5 0



## Efficiency

- Outstanding
- Good
- Requires improvement
- Inadequate

### Efficiency

Overall judgments

5 29 8 1



How well does the force use its resources to meet its demand?

4 33 5 1



## Legitimacy

- Outstanding
- Good
- Requires improvement
- Inadequate

### Legitimacy

Overall judgments

1 37 5 0



To what extent does practice and behaviour reinforce the wellbeing of staff and an ethical culture?

1 36 6 0



How effective is the force at investigating crime and managing offenders?

1 26 16 0



How effective is the force at protecting those who are vulnerable from harm, and supporting victims?

0 12 27 4



How effective is the force at tackling serious and organised crime, including its arrangements for fulfilling its national policing responsibilities?

3 32 8 0



How sustainable and affordable is the workforce model?

5 22 15 1



How sustainable is the force's financial position for the short and long term?

10 27 6 0



23

are assessed as good or outstanding in all three pillars

How well does the force understand, engage with and treat fairly the people it serves to maintain and improve its legitimacy?

7 33 3 0



To what extent are decisions taken on the use of stop and search and tasers fair and appropriate?

0 24 19 0



Few forces were able to demonstrate that they had considered diversity of background, skills and style in developing leadership teams

# Leadership inspection

This is the first year that HMIC has inspected police leadership and this report provides an overview of the findings in all 43 forces. The inspection examined the extent to which forces understood how good leadership was at different levels in the force. It explored how forces developed leadership, encouraged new ideas, and demonstrated leadership in improving their effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy.

Overall, the findings were positive, with police leaders demonstrating high levels of commitment to public service and an increasingly open approach with their own workforces and other public sector organisations. However, it is a cause for concern for HMIC both that many forces do not carry out a staff survey and also that the assessment of individual performance appears inconsistent. It is encouraging that some forces had focused on the behaviours required of leaders. However, few forces were able to demonstrate that they had considered diversity of background, skills and style in developing leadership teams.

## Main findings

- Police leaders displayed impressive levels of dedication and commitment to public service. This provides a strong base on which improvements can be built.
- Police leaders have taken steps to be more open and approachable to their workforces. Almost all forces had also improved the openness with which they work with other local public sector organisations. Higher-performing forces

encouraged and rewarded leaders who work effectively across different organisations.

- Engagement with the workforce was often focused on messages personally given by those in senior positions. Engagement was less focused on feedback provided by those at lower levels in the organisation. It is a cause for concern that many forces do not carry out a staff survey to understand better the views of their staff.
- Some forces had started to assess performance and promotion on the basis of behaviours as well as operational skills. However, the lack of consistent and effective assessment of individual performance is a cause for concern. The management and performance information used by forces is relatively weak and under-valued.
- Most forces had placed an increased focus on how they appoint individuals to senior positions. However, few forces have a clear understanding of leadership teams in terms of their diversity of background, skills and leadership styles.

- The understanding of technology by police leaders is not as strong as it should be. Given the pace of change in technology, this should be a high priority for leaders.

### Background to the inspection

This is the first year that HMIC has specifically inspected leadership in policing. Unlike the other strands of the PEEL inspections, we are not reporting the national overview of the findings separately from what is included in this report. That is why this section is longer than the sections on efficiency, effectiveness and legitimacy which summarise published reports. We have not graded forces on how well led they are, but have provided a narrative for every force. These are published on the HMIC website.

The public expects the police to be able to carry out its responsibilities in an effective, efficient and legitimate way while being seen to operate fairly, ethically and within the law. Leadership plays a crucial role in helping organisations

change to become more efficient and effective, and in shaping their cultures. Police leaders face complex factors such as rapid technological advances, changes in the types of crime that are committed, and shifting demographics. These factors mean it has never been more important for the police service to have leaders who possess the ability and adaptability required to meet and exceed public needs and expectations.

Leadership is a broad topic for an inspection and there are many different definitions of what represents good and bad leadership. Different situations require different styles of leadership and it is not the role of the inspectorate to promote one style over another. In particular, HMIC will not comment on or judge the performance of individuals, particularly the chief constable of a force. It is the role of the police and crime commissioner to evaluate the performance of chief constables and to

hold them to account. It is not surprising that much of the evidence gathered during the inspection referred to those in the most senior positions. These individuals are more visible and have greater influence in the force. However, HMIC's focus throughout the inspection has remained on understanding leadership at all levels in a force.

The inspection examined the extent to which individual forces understand how good leadership is in different areas and at different levels within the force. It explored the extent to which forces develop leadership skills and encourage positive behaviours in leaders. This considered not just schemes aimed at developing those identified as the most talented, but the extent to which the force was making sure all of those working for it are supported in developing strong leadership skills and behaviours. In doing so, the inspection considered the extent to which forces had a clearly expressed direction



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## Much more could be done by forces to encourage leaders in policing to develop other approaches to solving problems

in which the organisation was headed, and how well that direction was understood by the workforce. It considered whether there was a clear understanding of what was expected of leaders at all levels in the force. Finally, it considered whether there was a culture that encouraged the adoption of new ideas and improved ways of working, as well as accepting constructive challenge.

The inspection therefore broke down the overall question 'How well led is the force?' into the following additional questions:

- How well does the force have a clear understanding of the current state of its leadership at every level?
- Has the force provided a clear and compelling sense of the future direction of the organisation?
- How is the force developing leadership, motivating the workforce and encouraging staff engagement?
- To what extent is leadership improving the effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy of the force through clear, reasoned and swift responses to challenges?

### Inspection findings

Policing in England and Wales is built on the strength of the very high levels of commitment and dedication of those who work in it. Throughout the inspection, HMIC has spoken to many hard-working and talented individuals striving to improve the safety and security of the communities that they serve, whether they are police staff, police community support officers, police officers or volunteers that make up the

workforce. The commitment demonstrated by police leaders is a significant asset that should not be under-rated. It provides a strong base on which improvements can be built.

However, there is evidence that indicates that the recent cuts in policing have had a disproportionate adverse effect on those parts of police forces, for example training, development and human resources departments, that help individuals to develop and improve a range of leadership skills that would benefit policing.

Forces were generally good at formally recognising and accrediting skills that are frequently used in directing police operations, often referred to as command and control skills. These skills are, of course, extremely important in making sure that public safety is maintained. However, this inspection found that much more could be done by forces to encourage leaders in policing to develop other approaches to solving problems. For example, police leaders increasingly face problems where persuasion and engagement might be the best approach. This includes when they are managing organisational change, encouraging new ideas, seeking feedback or developing those that work for them. Few forces, with some commendable exceptions such as Thames Valley Police, have continued to invest in leadership development schemes that enable individuals to adopt this range of leadership styles. Where such schemes do exist, they are often focused on developing police officers rather than police staff or PCSOs. Every force should recognise that a broad range

of strong leadership skills are required throughout policing.

### Performance

HMIC is concerned by the lack of consistent and effective assessment of individual performance within forces. The inspection found that in many forces individuals, particularly at lower levels, did not know enough about how they were being assessed. Many of these individuals linked their personal development to gaining operational skills such as advanced driving, rather than leadership behaviours. Not only does this make it harder consistently and fairly to identify talented individuals, it also reduces the ability of the organisation to understand and develop leadership skills at all levels.

We were pleased to see that most police officers and staff spoken to during this inspection welcomed the removal of the previous target-driven performance regime, on the basis that pursuing targets actively encouraged poor behaviours in some leaders. However, for many forces, and for officers in particular, there was a disturbing lack of clarity and consistency in measuring and assessing individual performance now that targets have been removed.

The inspection found that the importance of changing their performance cultures was appreciated by most forces, and some are beginning to explore new approaches to leadership development. For example, it is encouraging that forces such as Greater Manchester Police have promotion processes that

consider the behaviours of candidates – in particular evaluating how individuals have worked, rather than only measuring what they have produced. While a positive step, forces may not find it easy to make sure such behaviours are consistently monitored. If they fail, there is a risk that individuals seeking promotion will learn how to behave to get through promotion boards rather than truly change their behaviours.

The inspection found that the ability of forces to understand leadership at more junior levels was extremely limited. In many forces, leadership training is offered only to those seeking promotion, which means that many forces are focused on training future leaders but not at developing good leadership across the whole organisation. The reduction in recruitment in recent years has increased the importance of individuals gaining useful experience by doing a range of different jobs at their current ranks or

grades rather than only through promotion. Many junior staff expressed frustration with the lack of such opportunities. There was evidence that the majority of the workforce at this level thought about professional development in terms of acquiring technical skills rather than developing leadership skills.

HMIC recognises and welcomes the work that the College of Policing is doing in relation to improving performance and development reviews, as well as the independent review of the use of targets in policing led by Chief Superintendent Irene Curtis.<sup>72</sup>

But we have misgivings in relation to the extent to which forces are prepared to be able rapidly to make improvements in the ways in which individual performance is assessed. The inspection found that personal appraisals were almost universally disliked. They were often perceived as bureaucratic to complete, and of limited



<sup>72</sup> *The use of targets in policing*, Home Office, London December 2015  
[www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-use-of-targets-in-policing](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-use-of-targets-in-policing)

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## Only a small number of forces were able to demonstrate how they had taken into account different leadership styles and behaviours in shaping even their senior teams

personal benefit. This perception was particularly prevalent amongst frontline officers. Forces will need to invest considerable time and effort if they are to change this perception.

### **Diversity of experience and style**

It is encouraging that many forces had started to improve how they develop senior leadership teams, in particular how they manage the allocation of police officer roles at relatively senior levels. In some forces, chief officers considered every individual at chief inspector and superintendent rank in the force and allocated all the roles at those levels at the same time. This appeared to improve the ability for the force to have a succession plan for the most important roles and allow individuals to develop their understanding of different areas in the force. However, very few forces were able to demonstrate a clear understanding of their leadership teams at all levels in terms of their diversity of experience, background, skills and style.

The best forces understand diversity as being about encouraging difference, rather than being solely about the protected characteristics set out in equalities legislation, including gender, ethnicity and sexual orientation. Only a small number of forces were able to demonstrate how they had taken into account different leadership styles and behaviours in shaping even their senior teams, and there were worrying signs in a small number of forces of a particular style or approach being encouraged at the expense of diversity.

The inspection found a number of examples where individuals seeking to gain different experiences were not encouraged to do so, and only a small number of forces that were actively trying to encourage this type of diversity. There were also a number of examples where those interviewed felt conformity was rewarded and individuals who did not conform, if they were not actively penalised, felt they were often subject to greater scrutiny from their immediate managers.

### **Engagement**

The inspection found that leaders in the majority of forces have recognised the need to be more open and approachable. This is a notable and commendable shift in culture, even if not yet universal. Most senior leaders have demonstrated their commitment to speaking with staff at all levels in their organisations, with numerous roadshows and other engagement events, almost all of which appear focused on engaging with the chief constable. There still remains a clear focus on delivering a message from those in senior positions, rather than encouraging those from the lower-levels of the organisation to engage with more senior levels. It is a poor reflection on policing that there are many forces who do not undertake a staff survey to understand the views of their staff.

There are promising initiatives within forces to increase engagement. For example, in Hampshire, individuals at all levels were involved in helping to describe the behaviours expected of leaders and make sure those in the force

understood, accepted and reflected these behaviours. Members of the workforce were able to raise concerns with the force's culture through focus groups and a staff survey, and the force used this information to create a new leadership development programme. In Kent, ethics committees were playing an important role in allowing more junior staff to question the way in which things are done in the force and suggest alternative approaches. The establishment of the committees appeared to have resulted in a greater openness to different views within the force.

Most forces recognised the need to engage with the workforce to ensure positive and sustainable change is achieved, though their success in doing so was highly variable. It is notable that the best forces are adept at communicating a positive sense of the future, which reached beyond reducing costs to improving the quality of service to the public.

In these forces, the positive vision appeared to act as a highly motivating factor for the workforce.

In a few forces, the sense of the future was centred mostly on what was perceived as a central imposition of budget reductions. While this seemed to increase the sense of solidarity within the force, it appeared to promote a defensive approach that did little to encourage innovation or improve services to the public. The best forces had leaders who were able to understand and adapt to significant challenges, such as budget reductions, while simultaneously motivating others towards a more positive future.

#### **New ways of working**

Leadership within policing increasingly involves adapting to changing environments such as making best use of technology and responding to new types of crime. Good leaders are likely to be actively engaged in seeking out, understanding and developing

new ways of working. This includes areas of work where they will have little personal experience, particularly in technological advances, where the understanding of leaders within policing was not universally strong. As the pace of technological and other changes in society is increasingly rapidly, police leaders need to be more aware of the implications of these changes for the ways in which policing will need to respond. The inspection found only isolated examples of individuals within forces who were trying to develop a clear leadership focus on understanding such technological developments and the potential of such developments to improve policing.

The higher-performing forces were increasingly focused on leadership which influences activities across a number of different organisations such as local councils, schools and health trusts which operate in the same local area. This



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## Forces that consistently applied a fair set of values and recognised the importance of individual wellbeing, tended to support good leadership

was sometimes referred to as leadership of place rather than organisation, when considered at a local level – enabling individuals from a number of organisations to come together to improve things in a town, city or wider geographic area. These forces tended to recognise and reward strong partnership skills, for example an ability to persuade and influence others, as an extremely important part of leadership. Even within some high-performing forces, senior leaders recognised that there were groups within the force who continued to resist working in this way and who sought to work rigidly within their own organisational structures. HMIC was encouraged by those forces that were able to demonstrate that they were confronting and changing such behaviours.

In many of the poorer performing forces, less constructive behaviours persist, in particular a sense that the force or policing has always to benefit directly from joint working or an insular approach that criticised other organisations without effectively engaging with them. In these forces, there tended to be a stronger sense, particularly from those in more junior roles, that individuals were constrained by the structures and systems within which they work. Few of these individuals felt confident in going beyond these boundaries to improve the way they worked with other organisations.

Many of the other organisations with which the police work, such as local councils, continue to face substantial budget reductions. It is therefore likely that policing will come under ever-greater pressure to work effectively with these

organisations. If they do not, they risk being overwhelmed by an increased level of demand passed on to them by these organisations.

### **The wider impact of leadership**

While the inspection primarily focused on how forces have developed ways to understand, encourage and develop leadership skills, it also sought evidence from the other PEEL inspections that was relevant to the ways forces display leadership. There are some forces that have performed well in most areas within PEEL, while others consistently require improvement. Isolating whether or not this is due to the quality of leadership is difficult, not least as each force faces different problems. However, there are some common themes relating to leadership which stand out when looking across the inspection findings.

First, while there is a focus by some on senior leadership, the best performing forces tend to be able to show strong leadership at every rank and grade. While senior leaders may have more influence on the force, there are indications that by establishing strong leadership at every level, higher standards of service can be provided to the public.

Second, forces that consistently applied a fair set of values and recognised the importance of individual wellbeing, tended to support good leadership. These factors all heavily influenced the workforce's perception of senior leaders, and appeared to have a direct beneficial effect on motivation and performance.

Finally, the ability of individuals to look beyond the immediate and develop a wider perspective

beyond policing, in particular being open to different approaches and ways of operating, also appears to support good leadership. The ability of leaders to influence others at all levels and across organisations, sometimes beyond individual authority, appears to be an important part of improving the organisation. Linked to this is the force's ability to support and encourage its leaders to work collaboratively. This appears to have the additional benefit of helping leaders to develop an understanding of the styles, approach and background of others, allowing trust to be built and organisational barriers to be removed.

### Conclusions and next steps

There are many positive aspects of leadership within policing, not least in the commitment, dedication and 'can-do' attitude that many leaders at all levels within policing display. The inspection found that in many forces there was a desire to change towards a new, more open and approachable style of leadership. The representatives of local public sector organisations to whom we spoke during the inspection almost always commented on the significant positive change in the openness with which the police approached working jointly with them. Across all forces, there were numerous examples of leaders trying to engage with those working for them and enable staff to make changes to improve the ways they work.

There are areas where policing still needs to improve. The ability of police leaders

rapidly to identify and adopt new technology appears a significant weakness. Not enough focus has been placed on the diversity of style or background within leadership teams, and the identification and development of leadership skills is inconsistent. The support mechanisms, and particularly management and performance information used by forces, remains relatively weak, under-valued and in many cases heavily depleted following budget reductions. This does not imply that police leadership is particularly poor, or indeed in any sort of crisis. It simply highlights that the speed of change, in both technology and wider society, means that leaders in policing have to deal with more complex problems and circumstances than has previously been the case.

Forces will need to focus on how they are developing their leadership capabilities at all levels if they are going to demonstrate that they have

an ability to pursue significant and beneficial change in the service they provide to the public. If implemented, the recommendations from the recent review of leadership by the College of Policing should support the development of good leadership within policing, and it is encouraging that nearly half of the forces in England and Wales are piloting elements of that review. A set of guiding principles for leadership in policing is currently being developed by the College of Policing, the National Police Chiefs' Council and HMIC. These principles should, when finalised, help forces to identify gaps in their own organisational structures to understand, develop and display leadership at all levels. HMIC will continue to focus on these areas in our 2016 PEEL inspection programme.



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# 20 17

Force management statements will be introduced

## Force management statements

In policing, as in so many other things, relevant information in the hands of those who need it, when they need it, and to the standard they need it, is essential to the highest practicable levels of efficiency and effectiveness.

In this report, and in our reports this year, we have emphasised how important it is that the systems which the police use to record, disseminate and use information and intelligence must be radically improved.

It is equally true that the leaders and senior management of

all enterprises need reliable and timely information to ensure they can make sound decisions on the deployment of assets and planning for the future. Every well-managed organisation needs to know the demand which it is likely to face, the resources – financial and otherwise – which it will



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have, and the state of the assets it will be able to use to meet that demand.

As explained in this report, my last two state of policing reports and many of HMIC's inspection reports, in these respects too much of the stewardship of policing is being carried out in low light, and sometimes in darkness. This must change.

During the inspection year, HMIC has been developing force management statements, modeled on network management statements used in other safety-critical monopoly essential public services.

When introduced in 2017, they will require chief constables to publish (with redactions of information which should

not be released) annual assessments of:

- the **financial resources** which the force expects to have in each of the succeeding three to five years;
- the **demand** – latent and patent, crime and non-crime – which the force expects to face in each of those years; and
- the **assets** (predominantly people) which the force has to meet that demand:
- the **capacity** of the workforce and other assets – how much work can they do;
- their **capability** – what is it they can do: their skills, for example: response, investigation, roads policing, public order, firearms, child protection, neighbourhood, crime scene investigation, intelligence and analysis, leadership, management and supervision, business planning and financial and commercial acuity, and the extent to which those skills are likely to meet the demands which the force faces and will in future face;
- their **condition** – matters such as physical fitness and impairments, professional attainments, and seniority;
- the **serviceability and wellbeing** of the workforce and other assets – what does it take – in money, time and effort – to look after the workforce and other assets, to ensure they are in their best practicable condition and operate at their best, for example: training and



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professional development, improvements in skills and resilience, and improvements in supervision, efficiency and effectiveness;

- workforce **performance** – how well do they perform; what measure of productivity can reasonably be expected from them, and how should and will that productivity change over time; and
- **security of supply** – how resilient is the overall capacity of the force in terms of meeting surges in demand.

Each force management statement will also contain and explain the chief's plans for improving the **efficiency**

**and effectiveness** of the force in the period covered by the statement.

It should also contain a report, with reasons, on the force's performance in the last year against projections made for that year in the last force management statement.

It is of course fully understood and acknowledged that:

- in policing, a high proportion of day-to-day and longer-term decisions have to be made on the basis of incomplete and often wrong information;
- demand analysis and projection are hard to do; and
- the most complex assets are people.



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However, public safety is so important that the needs for the best practicable standards in how it is to be assured and protected are commensurately great. Efficiency and effectiveness in policing is essential, and that requires sound information used to the best advantage.

Force management statements will not increase the data demand on forces which are already well-managed. When they have been designed and properly tried out, they will reduce those demands, in some cases considerably. This is because they will require the production of information – in a common, standard

format – which should already be possessed by every well-managed force. They will require nothing which a chief constable should not already know, and which he or she undoubtedly needs to know.

When force management statements have been established and have become part of the routine of the management of police forces, it should be the case that in almost every instance of a chief constable being asked for information – by anyone with a legitimate interest – in relation to the force's resources, demand and assets, he or she should be able to refer to the last force

management statement, and his or her current information which will already be in existence or preparation for the next one. In this way, the data burden on forces should be reduced very considerably.

In following a common and standard template, force management statements will greatly assist forces and their police and crime commissioners in making valid and valuable comparisons over time, both in respect of his or her force, and between one force and one or more others. They should also very considerably assist with, reduce and streamline the



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information requirements made of forces by HMIC and others.

It is important to emphasise that in the design of force management statements, full account must and is being taken of the existence and purposes of police and crime plans, the strategic policing requirement, chief constables' annual reports, force strategic assessments, governance statements, the Home Office's annual data requirement and other instruments which are used to provide information about the police. With the obvious exception of those which are required by statute and which have other purposes, force management statements may considerably reduce the need for some or all of these instruments.

In relation to police and crime plans, force management

statements should make a very material contribution to them, and enable police and crime commissioners to assure themselves – as they are required to do by the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 – of the respects in which their forces are and are not being efficient and effective.

As far as the strategic policing requirement is concerned, it may be that force management statements will fulfil all or substantially all of its requirements.

Of course force management statements must respect and be fully sensitive to local conditions. They are about local forces.

It is necessary that, in the design of force management statements, we now have



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the benefit of the fullest possible contributions of chief constables, police and crime commissioners and others. I wish to place on record my appreciation of the very positive and constructive contributions made by several forces, police and crime commissioners, the Police Service of Northern Ireland, the National Crime Agency, the College of Policing and the Home Office in our work to design force management statements. Several forces have also volunteered to act as pilots of force management statements; that too is greatly welcome. I expect to report next year on the successful design and introduction of the first force management statements.



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The police response to children who have been victims of online sexual exploitation requires improvement

# Our specialist inspections

In addition to our PEEL inspections, we have carried out a number of thematic inspections. These have covered a number of aspects of policing from child protection to the firearms licensing regime. A comprehensive list of these inspections is provided in part 3 and Annex F of this annual assessment,<sup>73</sup> and all the reports are available on our website.<sup>74</sup> The principal findings from these inspections are set out below.

## Online child sexual exploitation

Between October and December 2014, we inspected how six forces sought to prevent online child sexual exploitation which is facilitated and enabled by the internet. HMIC's findings, which were published in July 2015,<sup>75</sup> demonstrate a need for

the police service significantly to refresh and improve its capability to keep pace with this serious type of crime.

We found that, despite the commitment and dedication of senior police leaders and many officers and staff to the protection of children, the police response to children who have been victims of online sexual exploitation requires improvement. When dealing with an identified child or specific offender, opportunities to identify other victims were not always pursued.

High-tech crime units undertaking forensic work experienced backlogs and it was not uncommon to see delays of up to 12 months in processing items that were seized during such investigations. Offenders who are potentially a risk to children are released on bail from police stations for prolonged periods of time pending the results of analysis, increasing the risks to children. A delay of even a few months can have a significant adverse effect on a child, particularly if the child is



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73: See page 84

74: [www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/publications/](http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/publications/)

75: *Online and on the edge: real risks in a virtual world*, HMIC, 2015. Available from: [www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/wp-content/uploads/online-and-on-the-edge.pdf](http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/wp-content/uploads/online-and-on-the-edge.pdf)

very young. The requirement to obtain evidence from a range of media devices is not new, and the demand is likely to increase further. It is, therefore, extremely important that forces significantly reduce delays and clear existing backlogs.

The forces which HMIC inspected made a considerable effort to provide advice and guidance on internet safety, primarily aimed at parents and carers through community engagement activity. However, more could be done to warn children about the consequences of risky online behaviour, by communicating these messages on the same websites and social media channels that are used by children.

Dealing with child sexual exploitation in a virtual world requires a style of policing different from the conventional methods of the past. Forces

need urgently to understand the nature and potential scale of the online exploitation of children to ensure that very much more is done to protect them from harm and bring offenders to justice. New approaches must now be considered to reflect this contemporary demand on policing services if there is to be a step-change in practice on the frontline.

### Child protection inspections

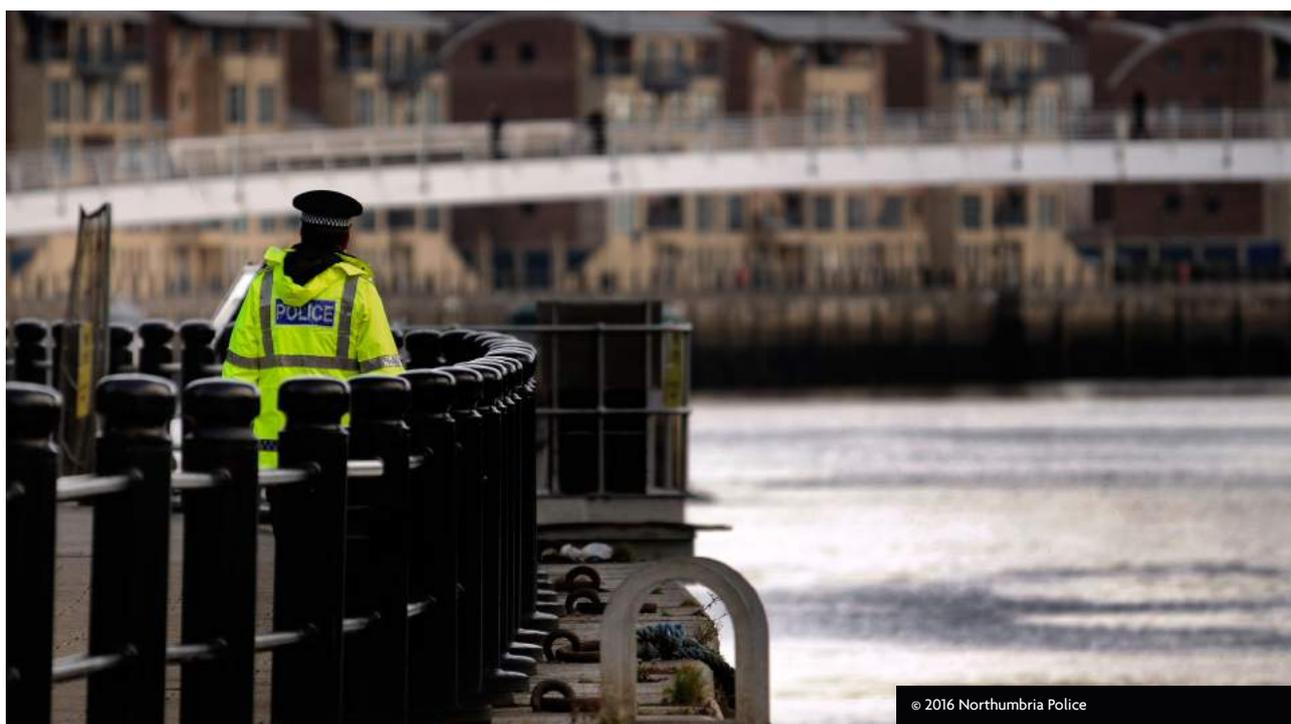
The National Child Protection Inspection programme was started in April 2014. By December 2015, 14 forces had been inspected.<sup>76</sup>

Overall, the findings from HMIC's child protection inspections demonstrate an under-recognition and under-estimation of risk. The police service must focus immediately on how it ensures that it has the necessary capabilities. The number

of reported cases of child abuse is increasing, and the opportunities which the internet provides for abuse are now widely known. Dealing effectively with the wide range of circumstances where children may need help – from online abuse to neglect, and physical beatings to sexual exploitation – requires a correspondingly comprehensive set of skills. The police will have to adapt, with new ways of working.

HMIC found that straightforward cases of child abuse and neglect are almost always dealt with promptly and efficiently.

However, on too many occasions, HMIC found that more complex investigations into child abuse or neglect were poor and beset by delay, and the response to reports of offences against children – ranging from online grooming to domestic abuse – was inadequate.



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76: *In harm's way: The role of the police in keeping children safe*, HMIC, 2015. Available from: [www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/wp-content/uploads/in-harms-way.pdf](http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/wp-content/uploads/in-harms-way.pdf)

Our findings show that honour-based violence, forced marriage and female genital mutilation are not yet being given the priority by the police service that victims deserve

HMIC concluded that pockets of excellent practice seen across all inspections were the result of dedicated and professional individuals and teams, rather than because of a united, understood and applied focus on protecting children at force level.

Additionally, there is not enough done in forces to establish the effects on children of police intervention, nor to understand their experiences when they come into contact with the police. This means that in too many respects forces do not know what works in protecting children or how successful or positive their work is on them.

New joint targeted area inspections of services for vulnerable children and young people are to be started in 2016. Together, Ofsted, the Care Quality Commission, HMIC and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation will assess how local authorities, the police, health, probation and youth offending services are working together in an area to identify, support and protect vulnerable children and young people. The new short inspections will allow inspectorates to be more responsive, targeting specific areas of interest and concern. They will also identify areas for improvement and highlight good practice from which others can learn.

### Management of police information

Information is the lifeblood of the police service. It leads to effective investigations, timely arrests and appropriate criminal justice results. It also helps to prevent further crimes being committed. In July 2014, HMIC

examined how successfully police share and cross-check information in order to build a picture of criminality.<sup>77</sup> Seemingly one-off instances of suspicious or criminal behaviour assume a greater importance if it can be shown, by linking information, that they are not isolated, but form a pattern of behaviour that gives rise to concern.

The whole picture may well be greater than the sum of its parts. This is why linking information and building the picture of the



crime are so important – and why the consequences of failing to make the right links can have a significant adverse effect on the public; for example, the mistakes that were made during the police handling of allegations against Jimmy Savile allowed him to continue his offending.

HMIC found that the police service as a whole is mindful of the need to improve how it deals with the mass of information which it acquires every day. The task, however, is a substantial

<sup>77</sup>: *Building the picture: An inspection of police information management*, HMIC, 2015. Available from: [www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/publications/building-picture-an-inspection-of-police-information-management/](http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/publications/building-picture-an-inspection-of-police-information-management/)

one. It would be unrealistic for the police service to provide assurances that the risk posed by predatory offenders could be eradicated on the sole basis of improvements in the management of police information. Nevertheless, there is a real and pressing need for more attention to be paid to the management of police information, so that greater consistency is achieved across all forces. It is not enough that some forces manage information better than others.

While honour-based violence has features in common with domestic abuse and gender-based violence more broadly, it is the aggravating element of perceived (and mis-placed) honour which shapes the context of the abuse, compounding risks to the victim and potentially involving multiple perpetrators.

The police service has some way to go before the public can be fully confident that honour-based violence is

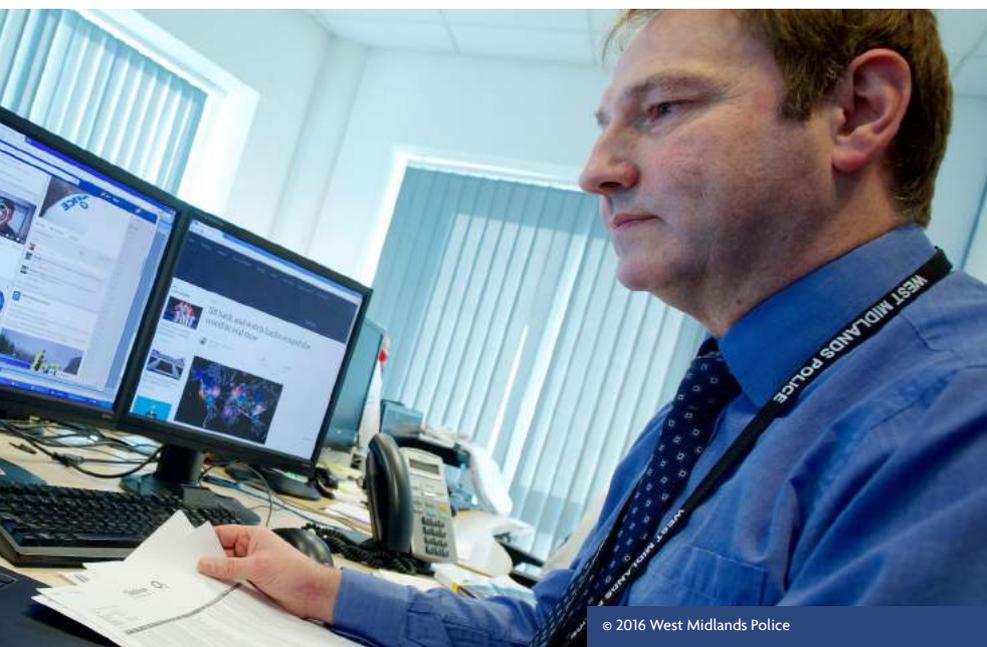
Our findings show that honour-based violence, forced marriage and female genital mutilation are not yet being given the priority by the police service that victims deserve. Whilst the inspection found examples of good practice, the police and other organisations do not yet have a sound and complete understanding of the volume and seriousness of these crimes, nor do they appreciate how best to respond to them.

It was evident from this inspection that the cultural shift that is required to respond effectively to honour-based violence is not necessarily well understood at all levels of the police service.

Further, the police service is reliant on the availability of other public and specialist voluntary sector services to discharge its safeguarding responsibilities. Honour-based violence raises difficult questions about the nature and scope of the police role, alongside the responsibilities of other public services, in safeguarding and protecting victims, particularly when an investigation has ended. These questions require active leadership and determination at both national and local levels if victims are not to fall through the gaps between services.

During this inspection, the most powerful messages and insights came from victims, and we consider that the policing of honour-based violence is most effective when it is informed by their experiences.

HMIC has made a number of recommendations that will improve the consistency



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HMIC concluded that greater rigour in the implementation of management information policies is required so that all forces are brought up to the standards of the best.

## Honour-based violence

In 2015, HMIC inspected and reported on the police service's response to crimes of honour-based violence, forced marriage and female genital mutilation.<sup>78</sup>

properly understood by the police and that potential and actual victims are adequately and effectively protected.

We found that some forces did not on their computer systems identify those cases which involve honour-based violence. Without accurate data, the scale of the problem and the effectiveness of the police response to it cannot be properly assessed. This compounds the hidden nature of honour-based violence.

<sup>78</sup> *The depths of dishonour: Hidden voices and shameful crimes – An inspection of the police response to honour-based violence, forced marriage and female genital mutilation*, HMIC, 2015. Available from: [www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/wp-content/uploads/the-depths-of-dishonour.pdf](http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/wp-content/uploads/the-depths-of-dishonour.pdf)

## We found that the National Crime Agency has made a strong start

and quality of the protection and support given to victims of honour-based violence, forced marriage and female genital mutilation.

### Counter-terrorism

During 2015, we undertook an inspection, commissioned by the Home Secretary, to examine the police use of the counter-terrorism grant which is given to police forces throughout England and Wales.<sup>79</sup> In 2015/16, the Counter-Terrorism Police Grant amounted to £579.2m. We know from this work that money from the counter-terrorism grant is being used appropriately to provide general and specialist responses to the terrorism threat. We found an established and effective police change programme that will examine all aspects of counter-terrorism policing in 2016. It will identify how the efficiency and effectiveness of each counter-terrorism service can be improved to deal with current and emerging threats

Looking to the future, there is a clear need to ensure our programme of inspections reflects the changing threat posed by terrorism and international terror groups in particular. HMIC has taken the opportunity in 2015 to conduct an insight study. This study gathered views from the police, security services and other organisations, and concluded in December 2015 with a seminar that brought together senior officials from a broad range of interested parties. The findings from this work will shape HMIC's counter-terrorism inspection programme in 2016 and in the years that follow.

### Organised crime

During 2015, we examined the policing response to organised crime at the national, regional and local levels. This included: an inspection of the National Crime Agency;<sup>80</sup> inspections of ten police-led multi-agency regional organised crime units;<sup>81</sup> and, as part of our PEEL inspection programme, an examination of the effectiveness of each police force in dealing with serious and organised crime.<sup>82</sup>

We found that the National Crime Agency has made a strong start.<sup>83</sup> It has built productive relationships with police forces and other agencies. The sharing of intelligence is clearly underway, but there are considerable difficulties and other challenges in making the necessary investments in technology and analytical capability. The majority of the 19 areas that we identify for improvement relate to the way the National Crime Agency obtains and works with criminal intelligence. In particular, investment is needed to improve the technology and analytical capability that an effective criminal intelligence system requires. There is already evidence of some progress, but more needs to be done to secure the required improvements.

We found that the regional organised crime units provide a strong foundation in tackling some of the most serious and organised criminals, but there is more work to do to provide a more consistent, concerted and coordinated service to the public.

<sup>79</sup>: *A review of the Counter Terrorism grant 2015*, HMIC, unpublished because of its sensitive content.

<sup>80</sup>: *An inspection of the National Crime Agency*, HMIC, 2015. Available from: [www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/our-work/specialist-inspections/the-national-crime-agency/](http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/our-work/specialist-inspections/the-national-crime-agency/)

<sup>81</sup>: *Regional Organised Crime Units: A review of capability and effectiveness*, HMIC, 2015. Available from: [www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/wp-content/uploads/regional-organised-crime-units.pdf](http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/wp-content/uploads/regional-organised-crime-units.pdf)

<sup>82</sup>: Under the PEEL pillar of effectiveness, forces were assessed in respect of the following question: how effective is the force at tackling serious and organised crime, including its arrangements for fulfilling its national responsibilities. For more information about the PEEL questions, see: [www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/peel-assessments/national-peel-reports/](http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/peel-assessments/national-peel-reports/)

<sup>83</sup>: The National Crime Agency was established in October 2013.

The units have evolved in a piecemeal way and continue to develop inconsistently. This unnecessarily compromises their effectiveness and duplicates what they do. As a result, opportunities to build and strengthen a consistent national approach to tackling serious and organised crime are being missed.

Three forces have been graded as outstanding and a further 32 as good at tackling serious and organised crime. They have effective processes in place to understand the threat posed by serious and organised crime, and are beginning to assess newer threats, such as child sexual exploitation, in more detail. They manage and prioritise activity aimed at tackling organised crime groups effectively. Clear objectives are set for investigations, which are undertaken well and which, in many cases, lead to successful results. There is a good level of scrutiny applied to those investigations which target the most harmful organised crime groups, but oversight and supervision are often sporadic for those groups which are less harmful. The effectiveness of the remaining eight forces in tackling serious and organised crime requires improvement.

The overall consequence of our findings, such as the technological and analytical difficulties faced by the National Crime Agency, the inconsistent development of regional organised crime units and the need for improvement in ten forces is that important aspects of the Government's *Serious and Organised Crime Strategy*<sup>84</sup> are not yet being implemented effectively.

In our next round of inspections, we will look for: progress by the National Crime Agency in dealing with the 19 areas for improvement that we identified; improvements in consistency in the regional organised crime units; the eradication of duplicated capabilities in police forces; and the more effective allocation of people and resources at a national level.

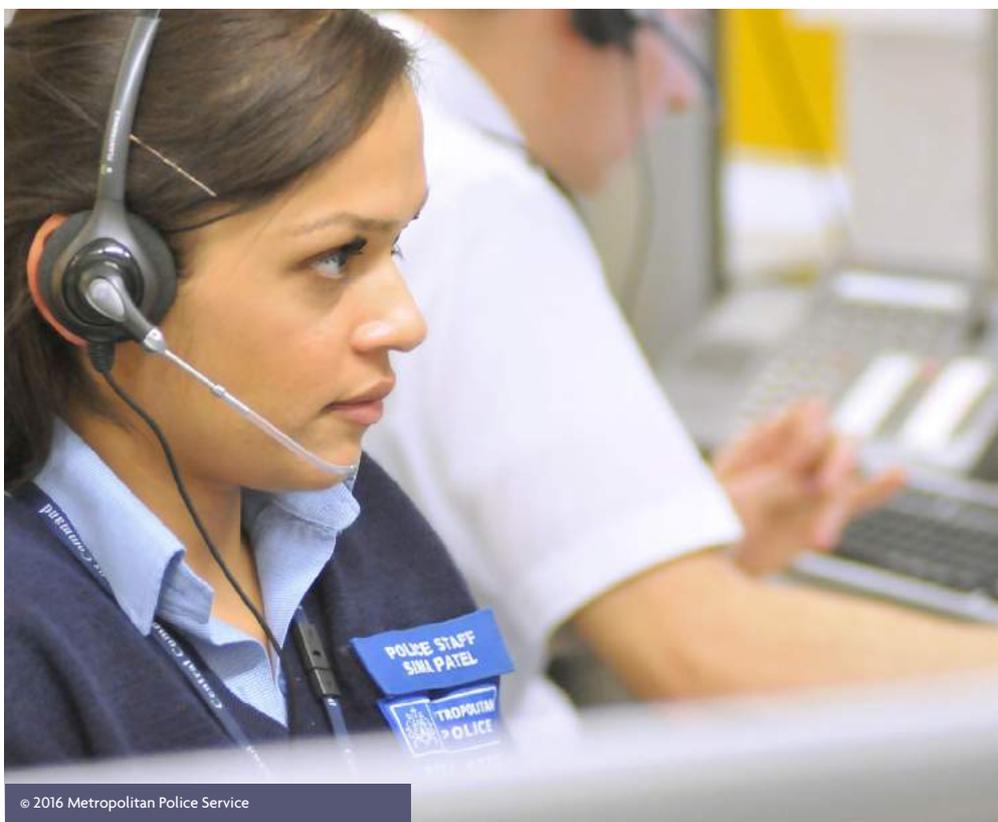
### Digital policing

Digital technology is an integral part of people's lives. Almost any crime is now capable of involving digital technology, be it in organising its commission through e-mail or social media messages between conspirators, using technology itself to commit the offence, or taking a picture of the aftermath of the crime, such as photographing an assault victim as he or she lies injured

in the street with a view to disseminating it online.

During the reporting period, HMIC worked with the Home Office, the College of Policing, academics and police forces to carry out a study to help us better understand the effect which digital technology is having on crime and policing.<sup>85</sup>

Our study specifically considered the victim's experience and how the police deal with individual cases. In doing so, HMIC identified a number of common themes which included: how well the scale of digital crime is understood by police forces; how well police officers and staff are trained; and national and local leadership arrangements.



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<sup>84</sup>: *Serious and Organised Crime Strategy*, HM Government. Available from:

[www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/248645/Serious\\_and\\_Organised\\_Crime\\_Strategy.pdf](http://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/248645/Serious_and_Organised_Crime_Strategy.pdf)

<sup>85</sup>: *Real lives, real crimes: A study of digital crime and policing*, HMIC, 2015. Available from: [www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/our-work/digital-crime-and-policing/real-lives-real-crimes-a-study-of-digital-crime-and-policing/](http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/our-work/digital-crime-and-policing/real-lives-real-crimes-a-study-of-digital-crime-and-policing/)

There needs to be greater awareness of the scale and effects of digital crime at national and local levels

### Figure 7: How well do forces manage digital crime?

How do forces deal with referrals from the National Fraud Intelligence Bureau?



Do the police understand the impact of digital crime?



Are investigators able to access digital evidence quickly?



What are the national governance and leadership arrangements?



Source: Real lives, real crimes: A study of digital crime and policing, HMIC, 2015.

Digital crime's prevalence is no longer the exclusive domain of a specialist squad at a regional or national level. We recognise, however, that bringing the handling of digital crimes within the general skill-set of frontline officers and staff presents difficulties to chief officers whose police forces are already financially constrained.

There needs to be greater awareness of the scale and effects of digital crime at national and local levels and there need to be more effective leadership and governance arrangements to manage the threat which digital crime poses.

Heightened awareness of the significance of online anti-social behaviour is required and, generally, appropriate and

continuing training is needed so that all those in forces who are likely to deal with digital crime and its victims are better equipped to do so.

As part of our all-force inspection programme, we will continue to assess the local response to digital crime and how well each force is progressing.

## Firearms licensing

We undertook an inspection into the firearms licensing arrangements in England and Wales during the year.<sup>86</sup> We found that lessons from past tragedies involving licensed firearms have not always been learnt; not to do so fails future victims and their families.

We also found that the guidance and practice in many respects is inadequate, allowing room for interpretation and inconsistency in the way firearms licensing is undertaken within and between forces. The present situation creates an environment in which members of the public are let down and their safety compromised.

The time taken by forces to complete the process of firearms licensing also tells its own story of inconsistency and inefficiency. Delays that are evident in a number of forces are inexplicable and unacceptable. And we found that, on too many occasions, the police are not following either the relevant Home Office guidance or that produced by the College of Policing.

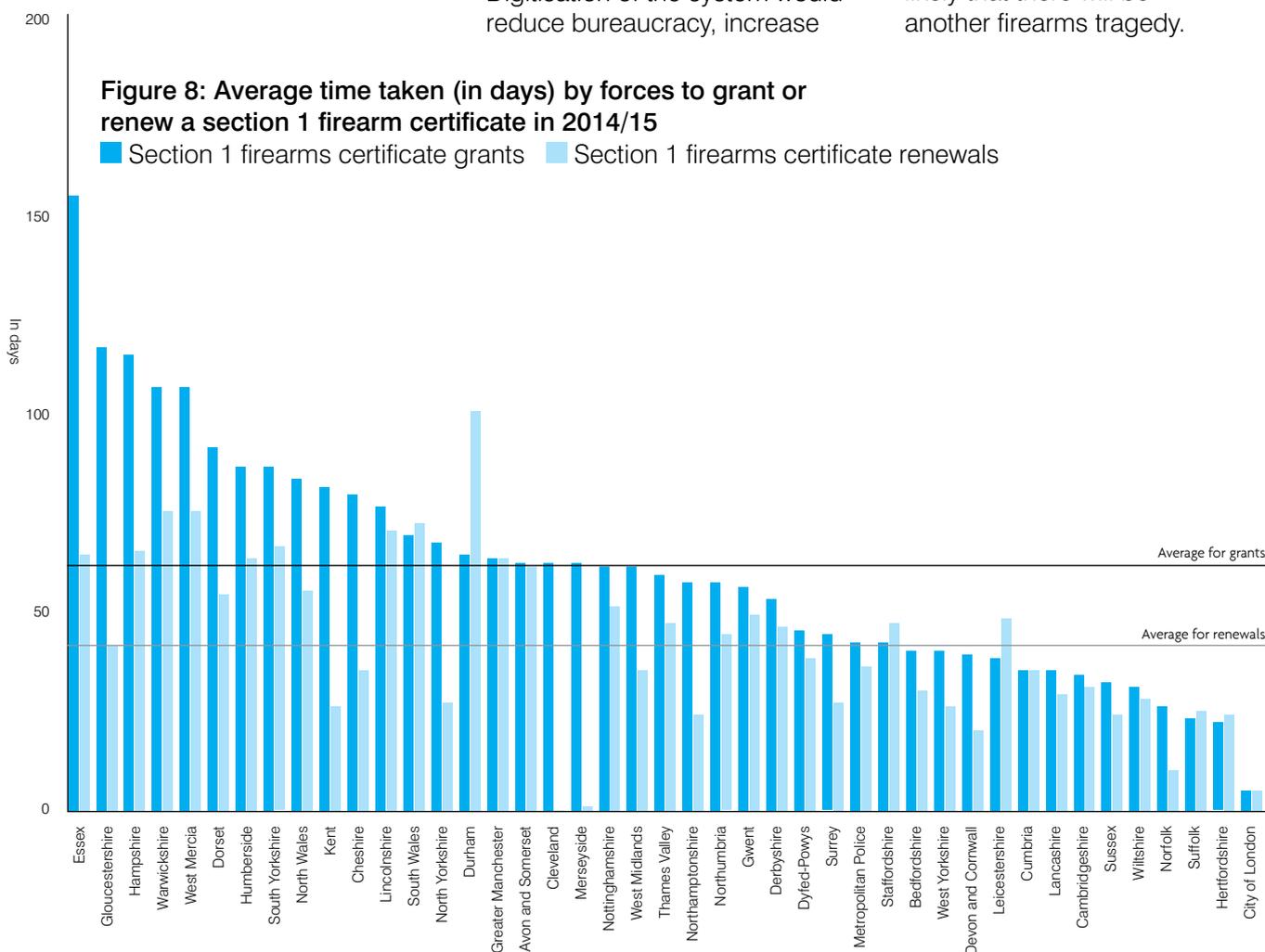
In many forces, basic scrutiny of the efficiency and effectiveness of their licensing arrangements is not in place.

Despite enhancements in technology, the licensing system still relies on a paper-based application process. Digitisation of the system would reduce bureaucracy, increase

openness, allow applicants to track progress, reduce the variability in the ways forces manage the application process, and make it much more efficient and effective.

Central to the improvement of the licensing process is the need for a set of clear rules, with legislative underpinning, that chief constables should be obliged to follow. Those rules should require applicants to provide a report from their doctors about their medical suitability – including their mental health – to hold firearms licences.

We concluded this report with some force: if change is not effected, it is highly likely that there will be another firearms tragedy.



Source: HMIC data collection

86: Targeting the risk: An inspection of the efficiency and effectiveness of firearms licensing in police forces in England and Wales, HMIC, 2015. Available from: [www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/wp-content/uploads/firearms-licensing-targeting-the-risk.pdf](http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/wp-content/uploads/firearms-licensing-targeting-the-risk.pdf)

We found that some were in custody not because they had committed a crime but because they were risks to themselves

# Our joint inspections

The criminal justice joint inspection group is a product of long-standing co-operation between Her Majesty's criminal justice inspectorates – namely, of Constabulary, the Crown Prosecution Service, Prisons and Probation. Our joint working arrangements have been reinforced by statute.<sup>87</sup>

We work together to address issues which involve more than one criminal justice agency and which have a direct effect on the public who use or are affected by the criminal justice system. Working together produces a more rounded examination of common problems in the criminal justice system and enables us to achieve more than if one inspectorate acts alone.<sup>88</sup> Where the subject matter of the inspection warrants it, we also work with other inspectorates such as Ofsted and the Care and Social Service Inspectorate Wales, and other agencies such as the Care Quality Commission.

As chairman of the joint inspection group, I thank my fellow heads of the other criminal justice inspectorates for their support and for their continuing commitment to our joint inspection programme.<sup>89</sup> I consider our work is essential if we are to ensure that the criminal justice system is not compartmentalised into the individual agencies that comprise

it. An effective criminal justice system can only be achieved if those individual agencies recognise that they are each part of a larger whole, the success of which can only be secured by working well together. The inclusion of other inspectorates and agencies emphasises the point that criminal justice matters cannot be seen in isolation.

The following four joint inspections for which HMIC was responsible during this reporting period deserve particular mention.

## Police custody inspections

We have continued our inspections of police custody arrangements with Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons. In our inspection of seven forces, we found that there had been good progress in reducing the number of people detained in police custody as a place of safety under section 136 of the Mental Health Act 1983.<sup>90</sup>

<sup>87</sup>: In the case of HMIC, by paragraphs 3–5, Schedule 4A, Police Act 1996.

<sup>88</sup>: Full details about our joint work and our business plan are available at the criminal justice joint inspection website: [www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/cjji/about-cjji/](http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/cjji/about-cjji/)

<sup>89</sup>: The criminal justice joint inspections group's joint business plan for 2015/16 is available from: [www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/cjji/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2015/03/CJJI\\_Business\\_Plan\\_2015-16.pdf](http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/cjji/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2015/03/CJJI_Business_Plan_2015-16.pdf)

<sup>90</sup>: *Report on an unannounced inspection visit to police custody suites in Cleveland*, HMI Prisons and HMIC, 2015. Available from:

[www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprison/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2015/05/Cleveland-police-custody-web-2014.pdf](http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprison/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2015/05/Cleveland-police-custody-web-2014.pdf)

*Report on an unannounced inspection visit to police custody suites in Surrey*, HMI Prisons and HMIC, 2015. Available from:

[www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprison/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2015/06/Surrey-Custody-Suite-web-2015.pdf](http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprison/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2015/06/Surrey-Custody-Suite-web-2015.pdf)

*Report on an unannounced inspection of Border Force customs custody suites in England and Scotland*, HMI Prisons and HMIC, 2015. Available from:

[www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/wp-content/uploads/border-force-police-custody-inspection.pdf](http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/wp-content/uploads/border-force-police-custody-inspection.pdf)

*Report on an unannounced inspection visit to police custody suites in Gloucestershire*, HMI Prisons and HMIC, 2015. Available from:

[www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprison/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2015/09/Gloucestershire-2015-web.pdf](http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprison/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2015/09/Gloucestershire-2015-web.pdf)

*Report on an inspection visit to police custody suites in Cumbria Constabulary*, HMI Prisons and HMIC, 2015. Available from:

[www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/wp-content/uploads/cumbria-police-custody-2015.pdf](http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/wp-content/uploads/cumbria-police-custody-2015.pdf)

*Report on an unannounced inspection visit to police custody suites in Hertfordshire*, HMI Prisons and HMIC, 2015. Available from:

[www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprison/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2015/11/Hertfordshire-police-custody-Web-2015.pdf](http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprison/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2015/11/Hertfordshire-police-custody-Web-2015.pdf)

*Report on an unannounced inspection visit to police custody suites in Lincolnshire*, HMI Prisons and HMIC, 2016. Available from:

[www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/wp-content/uploads/lincolnshire-joint-inspection-of-police-custody-2015.pdf](http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/wp-content/uploads/lincolnshire-joint-inspection-of-police-custody-2015.pdf)

**Figure 9: Trends in use of places of safety under section 136, Mental Health Act 1983**

Section 136 detentions to a place of safety	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
Police custody	8,667	7,881	6,028
Hospital	14,902	14,053	17,008
<b>Total</b>	<b>23,569</b>	<b>21,934</b>	<b>23,036</b>

Source: Inpatients Formally Detained in Hospitals under the Mental Health Act 1983, and Patients Subject to Supervised Community Treatment: Annual report, England 2013/14, Health and Social Care Information Centre, 2014.

Figure 9 shows the decreasing use of police custody as a place of safety.

However, the picture is inconsistent. Our recurring concerns include: the support offered for children and vulnerable adults detained by the police; the risks relating to the use of force; the variable quality of risk assessments, custody records and the transfer of information about detainees. We also found that improvements were needed in the collection and monitoring of information about police detention practices, particularly concerning the use of force and strip searches.

### The welfare of vulnerable people in police custody

We undertook this inspection under a commission from the Home Secretary. We found that, in many instances, custody could have been avoided for

vulnerable people if alternative arrangements had been made available by the relevant agencies at the time that they were required. The lack of alternative accommodation or health care arrangements has resulted in people with mental health problems and children spending long periods in custody. And we found that some were in custody not because they had committed a crime but because they were risks to themselves. As we say

in the report, this is the wrong approach: police custody is not an alternative to appropriate accommodation in a health care facility where proper medical attention is more forthcoming.

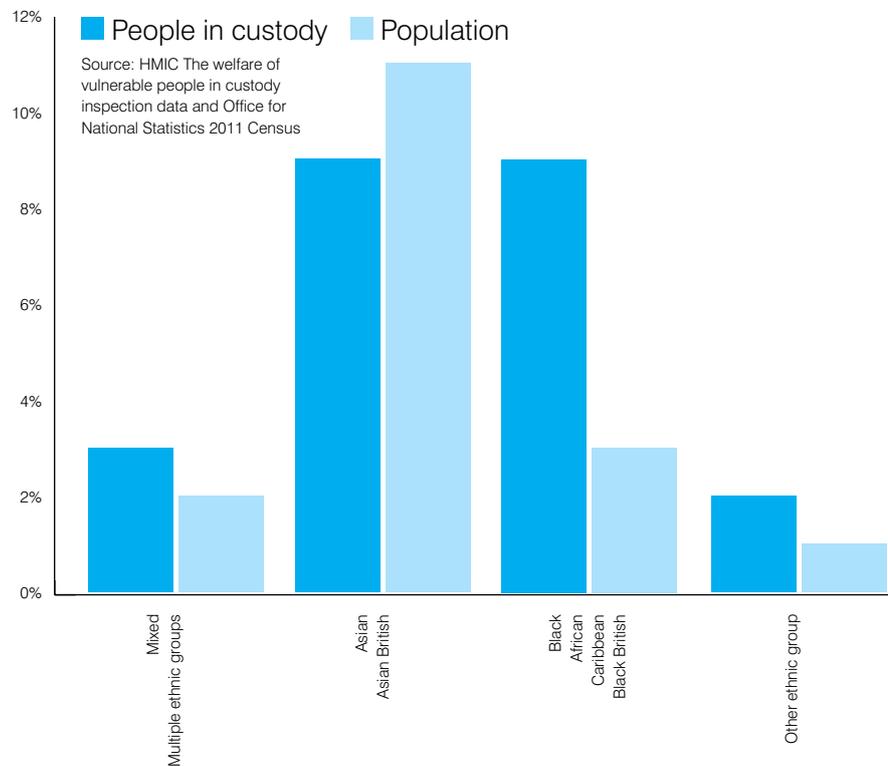
From data collected from the forces which we inspected, we found that people from African-Caribbean ethnic groups were over-represented in the number of people detained, as shown in figure 10.



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In 66 of 195 case files involving vulnerable victims or witnesses, risks to them were not properly dealt with either by the police or prosecutors

**Figure 10: Black, Asian and minority ethnic breakdown of total custody throughput compared with total forces' population in the 12 months prior to the welfare of vulnerable people in police custody inspection<sup>91</sup>**



The recommendations in our report are now being overseen by a national group under the auspices of the Home Office.

### Victim and witness vulnerability in criminal case files<sup>92</sup>

The police and the Crown Prosecution Service have complementary roles in the criminal justice system: the police investigate crime and the Crown Prosecution Service prepares the cases and presents them in court.

In an adversarial criminal justice system, the prosecution relies, for the most part, on victims and witnesses attending court and giving their evidence in front of magistrates or a jury. Much hinges on the way in which victims and witnesses give their evidence and how they cope with

being cross-examined.

In 2015, HMIC and Her Majesty's Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate conducted an inspection of all 43 forces to consider how well the vulnerable are identified in the criminal justice process. In total, 459 case files were selected for examination. Of these, vulnerable or intimidated witnesses were identified in 195 cases.

Figure 11 shows how many cases files contained: an adequate summary of evidence; an adequate summary of interview; adequate additional information; and due certification to that effect by a supervisor.

We were concerned to find that the quality of case files involving vulnerable or intimidated witnesses prepared for the

<sup>91</sup>: Data from five forces which were inspected between September 2014 and January 2015.

<sup>92</sup>: *Witness for the prosecution: Identifying victim and witness vulnerability in criminal case files*, Criminal Justice Joint Inspection, 2015. Available from: [www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/wp-content/uploads/vulnerability-in-criminal-case-files.pdf](http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/wp-content/uploads/vulnerability-in-criminal-case-files.pdf)

**Figure 11: Comparison between all cases examined (459 case files) and cases involving vulnerable and intimidated witnesses (195 case files)<sup>93</sup> in summaries of evidence and summaries of interviews**

Source: HMIC 'Witness for the prosecution' data

	All cases examined	Cases involving vulnerable and intimidated witnesses
Summary of evidence: percentage assessed as adequate	72% (332 of 458 files)	72% (141 of 195 files)
Summary of interview: percentage assessed as adequate	75% (328 of 436 files)	68% (133 of 193 files)
Additional information sections: percentage assessed as adequate	71% (324 of 454 files)	68% (132 of 194 files)
Percentage certified by a supervisor as adequate	67% (308 of 457 files)	70% (134 of 192 files)

prosecution by the police was no better than for all cases. The presence of a vulnerable victim or witness did not appear to make any difference.

In 66 of 195 case files involving vulnerable victims or witnesses, risks to them were not properly dealt with either by the police or prosecutors.

There are procedures available, known as special measures, to help vulnerable witnesses to give their best evidence in court. The key to their successful use is the identification and assessment of a witness in a case who might be entitled to use special measures. We were therefore concerned to find that, in 88 of 168 cases where there were vulnerable witnesses, such an assessment had not been completed. We were equally concerned to find that, where an assessment had been undertaken, the information provided was often inadequate or incomplete.

Both the police and the Crown Prosecution Service must improve their understanding of vulnerability and, in particular, how the vulnerability of a victim or witness can change as cases progress through the criminal justice system. Further, both must achieve a better understanding of each of their respective contributions to the criminal justice process and eliminate the 'tick-box' culture highlighted again by this inspection. This result will improve both the efficiency of the criminal justice system and the quality of service provided to vulnerable victims and witnesses.

### Local criminal justice partnerships

Local criminal justice partnerships are non-statutory bodies the purpose of which is to contribute to improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the criminal justice system at a local level, by bringing together

the right agencies – such as the police, the Crown Prosecution Service and the courts – at the right time, by agreeing shared priorities and by working together. We inspected the effectiveness of these partnerships.<sup>94</sup>

The results of our joint inspection concerned us. We found little evidence of the partnerships having a set of agreed priorities towards which all the relevant agencies are working. Few partnerships have considered collectively what matters most in their local areas. Even in those areas where there are agreed priorities, there was little evidence that they are clearly understood by all the agencies in question.

Overall, the joint inspection found only limited evidence that the local criminal justice partnerships were making a positive difference. Structural barriers to greater success were identified with the police operating at a local level, whereas the other partnership agencies are parts of national organisations with national operating practices. We also found that success criteria for individual agencies are not always reinforced by other partnership agencies and that different partnership agencies measure and record success differently, thereby making it difficult to track progress.

It is clear that further work needs to be done to improve the effectiveness and value of local criminal justice partnerships.

<sup>93</sup>: The areas examined were not applicable in all case files. The number of applicable cases files is provided in brackets. Available from: [www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/wp-content/uploads/vulnerability-in-criminal-case-files.pdf](http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/wp-content/uploads/vulnerability-in-criminal-case-files.pdf)

<sup>94</sup>: *Working in step? A joint inspection of local criminal justice partnerships* by HMIC, HMCPSP and HMI Probation, Criminal Justice Joint Inspection, 2015. Available from: [www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/cjji/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2015/10/local-criminal-justice-partnerships.pdf](http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/cjji/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2015/10/local-criminal-justice-partnerships.pdf)