

Best Value Review of Police Training

Force: Cleveland Police

Date of Inspection: 16–18 February 2004



A Report by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary

ISBN 1-84473-404-8
© Crown Copyright 2004
Published 2004

Context and Force performance

Context

Population served by the Force	541,300	
Number of police officers	1678	
Number of police staff	937	
Number of special constables	85	
Budget for training for the financial year:	Financial Value	Percentage of Overall Force budget
2003/04	not asked	2.5%
2004/05	£2,478,900	2.4%

Performance

A baseline assessment of the Force was undertaken between September and December 2003.

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

www.homeoffice.gov.uk/hmic/clevbaseline0604.pdf

Further details of the Force performance can be found at: www.cleveland.police.uk

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

Findings

Area Examined	Findings
TRAINING STRATEGY	<p>This follows the guidance given in HOC 18/2002, however it does not reflect the further advice contained in HOC 53/2003. This was acknowledged by the Senior Management Team (SMT).</p> <p>The Force has stated their intention to develop a new training strategy once the Chief Officer Group has published their overall development plan for the Force. HM Inspector is sympathetic to this approach, but urges the Force to complete the work as soon as possible.</p>
QUALITY OF COSTED TRAINING PLAN	<p>HM Inspector has concerns about the approach of the Force in relation to the NCM. The training plan is compiled annually through a process coordinated by the Head of Training. Each Policing District and Specialist Department submits their predicted training requirements for the forthcoming year. The Training and Development Strategy Group consider these needs and, after approval, the training plan is drafted and costed. Currently this is little more than a paper exercise.</p> <p>Interviews with senior personnel confirmed that the costs for each year are arrived at by the simple addition of three per cent to the previous year's totals. After compilation the costing model data is not utilised either to inform actual training budgets or to plan and manage training. HM Inspector considers that this is unacceptable, and encourages the Chief Officer Group to ensure that the NCM is used for the purposes it was intended, and in a manner which is compliant with the principles of the model.</p>

Area Examined	Findings
<p>TRAINING NOT INCLUDED IN THE TRAINING PLAN</p>	<p>The devolved arrangements within Cleveland include training budgets, over which the Head of Training has no control. Interviews with personnel and development managers from both districts and specialist departments indicated that expenditure on training other than that which is contained in the annual training plan is commonplace. These 'emerging' training activities do not find their way into the overall training plan nor are they subjected to the NCM. HM Inspector strongly urges the Force to address this failing as a matter of urgency. Managing training budgets in this way will result in uncertain management information in relation to training expenditure, and the inability to challenge it from the centre, and difficulties in assessing priorities.</p>
<p>MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS FOR TRAINING</p>	<p>HM Inspector noted that the Head of Training does not have overall control of training for the whole Force. Whilst he does chair the Training and Development Implementation Group, he has neither the authority nor the remit to control training activity, or expenditure, which takes place outside of the Force training centre.</p> <p>This also extends to an inability to embed standards, or quality control mechanisms to other areas. This approach is unsustainable in terms of long term improvements to training being achieved within the Force. HM Inspector considers that the Head of Training should manage all training provision in the Force. Without this it is unlikely that corporate standards can be developed and maintained or that issues such as cost and the impact of training will be properly identified.</p>

Area Examined	Findings
<p>IMPLEMENTATION OF:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing Learning • Training Matters • Diversity Matters • Foundations for Change 	<p>HM Inspector found that, whilst action plans were claimed to be in place in relation to these reports, those examined do not appear to have been updated, and the processes for monitoring them are weak. Actions listed are generally in the form of summaries and are poorly audited.</p> <p>In relation to <i>Managing Learning</i>, the Force was unable to provide any documentation to support implementation of the recommendations contained in the form of checklists in the report.</p> <p>These reports contain guidance and recommendations reaching back almost five years. The issues contained in them are those, which if not appropriately addressed, will expose the Force and its personnel to significant risk.</p> <p>Cleveland Police was given both verbal and written feedback regarding the development areas pertaining to the Force in June 2001 (<i>Training Matters</i>) and July 2002 (<i>Diversity Matters</i>), and the written feedback in particular will assist in developing appropriate actions.</p> <p>Further concern exists in relation to the engagement of the Force with the implementation of the nineteen FfC that emerged from the national Best Value Review. All forces, including Cleveland, agreed to adopt, adapt or replace the FfCs. It appears that Cleveland Police, perhaps with all forces in the north-east region, are only actively working towards implementation of seven of the FfC. HM Inspector points out that the FfC programme is holistic, each element having a symbiotic relationship with the others. More importantly, the agreement signed up to nationally by all forces and authorities was to adopt, adapt or replace. Simply to set aside various elements was not an option available.</p>
<p>CURRENT IMPROVEMENT PLAN</p>	<p>HM Inspector was shown a copy of the completed IP that was born out of the BVR. The IP had been signed off in April 2003 as complete. This effectively means that, at the time of inspection, the Force had no IP.</p> <p>Immediately following the inspection HM Inspector agreed with the Chief Officer Group that a new IP would be developed to address the concerns raised in the inspection.</p>

Area Examined	Findings
MONITORING THE IMPROVEMENT PLAN	<p>HM Inspector was unable to verify the validity of any of the monitoring arrangements for the previous IP due to a lack of retained data. Interviews with relevant staff, including the BVR team and the PA representative in particular, revealed little or no knowledge of what the monitoring process had been.</p> <p>The PA has agreed that future monitoring arrangements need to be more robust.</p>
QUALITY ASSURANCE PROCESSES	<p>HM Inspector was encouraged to note that the Force has been awarded both IIP and Centrex Quality approval status. With regard to the latter, HM Inspector noted that this only applied to the Force training centre – not to districts or specialist departments, where a great deal of training activity occurs.</p> <p>HM Inspector notes that the absence of formal control on the part of the Head of Training may well be a factor in this. In respect of the former, the Force was re-inspected in August 2003 and a number of indicators were not met.</p>
EVALUATION OF TRAINING	<p>HM Inspector considers that the inspection process confirmed the inadequacy of the evaluation and planning processes within the Force. Whilst there is an evaluation strategy, which was an outcome of the BVR, there is no independent evaluation officer.</p> <p>The processes described to the inspection team in respect of levels one and two evaluation are largely unstructured and lack real utility to the organisation in terms of assessing the value added by or quality of training within the Force. The Force has no plans to recruit a full time evaluation officer for the purposes of training alone, but has indicated that personnel from the Force Inspectorate may be trained in appropriate skills.</p>

Recommendations

Recommendation 1

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

Recommendation 2

HM Inspector recommends that the Force ensure that the planning process for training is aligned to the guidance contained in *Home Office Circular 53/2003*. Further, the National Costing Model must be used to inform both the training budget and the planning process in a way which ensures that variations to the training plan are accurately monitored

Recommendation 3

HM Inspector recommends that the Force develops a mechanism to ensure that accountability for standards, costs and planning for all training rests with a single source, irrespective of where in the Force or by whom it is provided

Recommendation 4

HM Inspector recommends that the Force develops structured implementation plans in respect of the reports referred to in this report and that these are regularly monitored through to completion

Recommendation 5

HM Inspector recommends that the Force introduces a structured implementation plan in relation to all 19 Foundations for Change irrespective of any decisions taken by other forces within the north-east region

Recommendation 6

HM Inspector recommends that the Force undertakes an internal review of the training function, with particular emphasis on how it compares with guidance given in all relevant Home Office Circulars, *Managing Learning, Diversity Matters, Training Matters* and the Foundations for Change programme

Recommendation 7

HM Inspector recommends that the Force develops a robust evaluation function for all training, with a tasking and reporting process independent of the Training Department. This should include a clear mechanism for commissioning and actioning evaluation projects and their recommendations

Judgements

Judgement 1:

The current training strategy was acknowledged to be in need of revision, and alignment to Home Office Guidance, as well as the Force strategic plan. Until this has been done the authority's aims will not be clear.

This weakness is further compounded by the inability to assess how robustly the Best Value Review process was undertaken, together with the lack of meaningful involvement and monitoring by the Police Authority.

The absence of a training evaluator will continue to leave the Force unable to analyse and judge the impact of training on performance. Unless action is taken on the issues raised, HM Inspector considers that the authority will not be in a position to state with confidence that the service is meeting declared aims.

In addition, the lack of overall control over training by a single person, who is able to ensure the application of common standards to processes, costs and planning, suggests that a significant number of core issues in relation to the management and provision of training are unknown.

HM Inspector acknowledges that the improvements to the structures, which were suggested in the Best Value Review, have been put into place.

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

Judgement 2:

HM Inspector has discussed the weaknesses of the Best Value Review candidly with both members of the Chief Officer Team and the Police Authority, and was encouraged by the ready acknowledgement on both sides that action is required. It was agreed with the Force that an internal review of training would be a useful exercise to undertake, and that this should result in a new improvement plan to effect the changes required.

This has now been provided, and HM Inspector is satisfied that its implementation, properly monitored and resourced, ought to lead to valuable improvements to the training function.

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

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

BEST VALUE AND PLANNING GUIDANCE FOR POLICE AUTHORITIES AND FORCES

Adult Learning Inspectorate

Summary of Findings

The Adult Learning Inspectorate undertook an assessment of several training sessions during the course of the HMIC (P&T) inspection. A summary of their findings is shown below:

Achievement and Standards

- Data about pass rates or learners' success rates on courses is not available from a single source within the Force. For most courses, pass rates are not routinely monitored or reviewed. There are national criteria and standards for firearms and driving training that learners must satisfy to gain certification. Records are kept of pass rates for these courses, and firearms training managers routinely review the pass rates for courses.

Quality of Education and Training

- The quality of all training is satisfactory or better. Just under half (45%) of observed sessions were good or very good. However, learning outcomes are not always described at the start of courses. Learners do not always know what skills they are expected to develop during training, but are usually aware of the operational impact of their training. In driver training, learners were given clear guidance about the standards and expectations for each session and stage of training. All firearms training courses and sessions are thoroughly cross-referenced to aspects of the operational activity to be carried out by the staff being trained.
- There is insufficient engagement of learners in the learning process, and tutors do not make sufficient use of learners' comments or questions to develop understanding. In many theory sessions, tutors read from handouts or projected screen displays while learners sat passively. There is no formal checking of knowledge or learners' understanding of key concepts in such sessions. Trainers do not assess the needs of individual learners, and most theory sessions are delivered through a narrow range of teaching methods. Where learners are encouraged to question and contribute to sessions, some active debate occurs.

- Resources are good or better. Classroom accommodation at the Force headquarters is well maintained and provides well-lit and comfortable spaces for theory sessions. There are modern and well-maintained audio and visual aids to training in classrooms. Firearms training takes place in a 3yr old, purpose-built complex offering excellent indoor range facilities exceeding those available elsewhere in the country. The facility is resourced through a successful PFI initiative on the part of Cleveland and a neighbouring Force, and is used by both Forces. The well-qualified firearms training team is drawn from the combined staff of the two Forces. Personal safety training takes place in a large hall at a territorial army centre. There is good space and equipment storage for practical activity, but classroom and social spaces are above a boiler room and are very hot and stuffy. IT classrooms are of adequate size, and contain hardware that is at least satisfactory for training, but some rooms lack sufficient workstations for all learners.
- Tutors are generally well qualified and have operational experience in their area. Most trainers have or are working towards a trainer qualification from Centex. All law & procedure trainers have had presentation training or are on Centrex courses for trainers. Firearms courses are Centrex validated and staff are all trainer qualified. IT trainers have a good knowledge of the software and hardware used operationally by officers and staff.
- Force trainers are sometimes retired officers or work part time in training and part time as serving officers or police staff in the Force. In many sessions, trainers were able to make use of recent operational examples to clarify elements of training. However, in the Force's four districts, demands on serving officers' time means that they are frequently taken off training activities to attend to other duties
- Training outcomes are inadequately evaluated across the Force. With the exceptions of driver and firearms training, there is no analysis of the effects of training on learners' subsequent job preparedness. Trainers collect learner feedback at the end of each session and course, but it is not analysed at Force level to make improvements to training. Several trainers commented that over months or years they had gathered very large number of learner feedback sheets that nobody ever wanted to collect or look at. In many cases feedback sheets are simply thrown away after sessions. Learners do not have confidence that their training needs are considered through evaluation feedback.



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

www.homeoffice.gov.uk/hmic