

**Inspection of Stockton BCU  
Cleveland Police  
May 2004**



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## Introduction

1. The Inspection of Stockton District of Cleveland Police was conducted by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary between 24 and 28 May 2004.

2. There are over 300 Basic Command Units (BCUs) in England and Wales and no two are alike. They vary in size from a little over 100 officers to over 1,000; some serve densely populated, ethnically diverse inner cities, whilst others cover vast tracts of sparsely populated countryside. What they do share are some key aims and objectives, specifically to work with partner agencies on reducing crime in their areas and to do so with integrity. Scrutiny of police performance is shifting from aggregate force outcomes to the performance of individual BCUs, with the recognition that policing is essentially a locally delivered service. However, BCUs are not islands – they operate within a framework of policy and support determined by headquarters-based chief officer teams. The precise configuration of policing units and the balance of resources between headquarters and BCUs varies across the 43 forces in England and Wales.

3. The focus on reducing crime is likely to be relentless. Forces and police authorities, working with local authorities and other community safety partners, will need to raise their game year after year. Indeed, the statutory regime of Best Value demands 'continuous improvement' and an array of sanctions exist if authorities fail to deliver this. The government recognises the need for additional resources in the fight against crime and the comprehensive spending review 2002–05 is intended to build upon the generous settlement received by the police service nationally in the previous spending round. More police officers, better communications and information technology and ever more sophisticated forensic techniques should all enhance police effectiveness. However, the potential for the service as a whole to deliver better results in crime reduction and detection cannot conceal an inescapable fact – that performance between BCUs operating in similar policing environments and with comparable resources varies to a degree that is at times remarkable.

4. Leadership by BCU commanders and their senior management teams is an important determinant of BCU effectiveness. The responsibilities of command are significant, and some superintendents are not well supported in terms of the strength of their management teams and/or the quality of support from headquarters. Without exception, staff in pilot sites wanted their management teams to be more visible and accessible. 'Leadership' is an intangible concept, but one outcome from BCU inspections should be a better understanding of the practical manifestations of effective leadership.

5. In trying to make sense of the variations in operational performance, which exist – to different degrees – in every force, a key ingredient is *focus*. The best performers focus the efforts of their staff through timely, dynamic local briefings and tasking, which are supported by a well-managed intelligence system. They set targets and make sure that staff are aware of them, they communicate results and celebrate success, and they hold individuals to account for how they use their time. In some BCUs this performance culture is absent, reflected in the fact that the performance development review (PDR) system of setting and monitoring individual goals is in

abeyance. A nationwide rolling programme of inspections that homes in on performance and leadership is thus likely to produce an upturn in results.

**Note**

**For consistency the term Basic Command Unit (BCU) will be used throughout this report, albeit that within Cleveland Police local policing is delivered through a district structure.**

## Overview

- 1.** The Cleveland Police area covers approximately 590 square kilometres and has a population of over 541,300. The resident minority ethnic population was estimated to be 3% of the total population in the 2001 census.
- 2.** At the time of the BCU Inspection the Force employed 1,685 police officers, 943 police staff of which 80 are police community service officers (PCSOs), and there were 84 special constables.
- 3.** The Cleveland Police area is divided into four policing BCUs, which are known locally as districts. There are four unitary local authorities (Hartlepool, Redcar and Cleveland, Stockton, and Middlesbrough) in the Force area and their boundaries are coterminous with the boundaries of the BCUs.
- 4.** The Force is headed by the chief officer group, which has responsibility for the strategic direction and control of the Force. The Chief Constable leads the team and is supported by the deputy chief constable and two assistant chief constables.
- 5.** The annual revenue budget (2004/05) for the Force is set at £118.7m. Until very recently, financial management within Cleveland Police was highly devolved, with the majority of budgets including police officer and police staff salaries being devolved to BCU level. This position changed in April 2003 following the launch of the Force change management programme (FCMP).
- 6.** The FCMP came about as a result of:
  - The results of Best Value inspections/audits;
  - a recognition for the need to change in response to a significant increase in demand for police services;
  - a need to match demand with available resources; and
  - a requirement to continuously improve delivery of policing services.
- 7.** Changes at Force level in recent months have been significant. Cleveland Police has undergone a fundamental review of both its structure and the manner in which it delivers its services. In addition to an ongoing Best Value process – driven by the police authority - a £7.3 million-budget deficit has had to be tackled and a revival plan initiated. This has been a huge challenge for the Force and the police authority to address and the revival plan will be implemented in several phases over the forthcoming two years. This has meant the centralised control (on a temporary basis) of salaries and the freezing of recruitment on several posts. It has also necessarily resulted in significant overtime budget reductions across the Force area. As a parallel development, since February 2004, a newly drafted performance management framework and a monthly performance review (MPR) of all departments and BCUs across the Force have been initiated, led by the assistant chief constables for crime and support and territorial operations. This will undoubtedly impact on the way the Force conducts its core business.

**8.** At a Force level, reconfiguration had begun some months before this. The April 2003 Force change management programme had effectively been reversed in some areas by October of that year, with the removal of the central headquarters base for response policing; accountability for performance in this discipline now rests with BCU commanders. In March 2004, the management of crime investigation and district co-ordinating groups (COGs), housing incident management and crime desk personnel, were similarly devolved to BCUs.

## **Stockton BCU**

**9.** The Borough of Stockton is a unitary authority, comprising the townships of Stockton, Thornaby, Billingham and Yarm along with many rural village settlements. It covers 145 square kilometres. The population is estimated at 178,600 (2001) living in around 73,000 households, the largest population of any of the five authorities within the Tees Valley area. The resident minority ethnic population is estimated at 2.8%. There are in addition between 550-600 asylum seekers resident in the Borough at any one time.

**10.** There is a diverse economic and social profile, with a mix of heavy industry, retail and service industries providing employment to the Borough. Eleven of its wards are in the most deprived 10% nationally (as measured by the Government's deprivation index), although by contrast, other wards are included in the top 10% in terms of income, education and housing. Unemployment in the Borough is running at 3.8%, compared with a national average of 2.6%.

**11.** The changes driven at Force level are mirrored, at the present time, by a lack of continuity amongst the senior management team (SMT) on the BCU. Stockton BCU is commanded by an acting chief superintendent, who was formerly the operations superintendent on the BCU. A temporary detective superintendent – who, at the time of writing, was shortly to be posted away from the district - is the crime manager, with a recently appointed superintendent responsible for operations. He will be supported in this role by a newly appointed chief inspector, the latter being among the first to be promoted to the rank reintroduced by the Force since May 2004. The SMT is completed by a personnel and development manager - who provides cover at Hartlepool two days per week – and a finance and administration manager; both are police staff. The majority of personnel are based at the BCU headquarters, at Stockton.

**12.** The BCU has strength of 302 police officers, 75 police staff, 24 police community support officers (PCSOs) and 23 special constables (of whom three are deemed to be inactive). The devolved budget for Stockton BCU for 2004/05 is £1.2 million, taking into account the centralisation of salary controls within the headquarters personnel function. Almost 30% of this devolved budget has been allocated for forensic submissions, which is of some concern to the Inspection team. In the current financial climate facing the Force - and the BCU - some careful financial planning and management will be required to fulfil operational commitments.

**13.** The process of the inspection was focused around leadership and performance. Pre-inspection analysis of key data and relevant documents was coupled with a series

of interviews with portfolio holders, including the assistant chief constable (territorial operations). A presentation was also made to a meeting of the Cleveland Police Authority, followed up during the BCU inspection proper with further consultation with locally based members of the authority.

**14.** The Inspection team interviewed over 120 members of staff - at all ranks and grades - during the inspection week, through a number of focus groups and meetings. A cross-section of partner agencies, PCSOs and special constables were included in these groups. In addition, the Inspection team observed a consultation meeting and an area liaison meeting to gauge partnership activity. A number of reality checks and data-gathering exercises were performed during this period, including discussions with staff at outlying police stations, the intelligence unit, the custody suite and the COG. The process concluded with a verbal debriefs to the BCU Commander and the SMT, followed by a similar in-depth meeting with the assistant chief constable (crime and support).

**15.** The Inspection team would like to thank the BCU Commander and his staff for the courtesy and assistance afforded them during the course of the Inspection.

## **Part One – Leadership**

### **The BCU Management Team**

#### **The Commander**

**1.1** The acting District Commander has 20 years' service and prior to taking command of Stockton District in March 2004, was the superintendent operations at the same district. He came to Cleveland Police in July 2002 on promotion to superintendent and was posted to Stockton. Prior to this he had served as an officer in Durham Constabulary. His background has mainly been operational with experience in both uniform policing and CID up to the rank of Inspector. As a chief Inspector he spent two years as the Force performance review manager and two years as a BCU operations manager prior to his promotion to Cleveland. He had substantial experience in commanding public order, firearms incidents and major sporting events. He is fully qualified in all these aspects and is also designated senior officer for the deployment of baton rounds in a public order environment. He is a graduate of the Accelerated Promotion Course.

#### **Superintendent Operations**

**1.2** The superintendent of operations has 24 years' service and has been in post since April 2004. He has previously served in numerous operational posts including the special operations service and as a sergeant in the special enquiry unit (licensing & vice). He was promoted to inspector in 1994 working in the devolved resource management project team then as a shift inspector in Middlesborough. After a period in the Force communications centre as both a shift Inspector then deputy to the communication centre service unit manager, he was promoted to superintendent in 1999. He was head of the complaints and discipline department until his move to Stockton in 2004.

#### **Detective Superintendent**

**1.3** The detective superintendent has 23 years' service and has experience in both uniform and CID roles. He was posted as a sergeant in 1996 to the child protection unit whereupon he was involved in the development of the multi-agency public protection unit. He was promoted to inspector in 2001 remaining as head of both the child and public protection units. In December 2001 he was posted to Stockton CID and served as both district controller and operations detective inspector. He has been in post as detective superintendent since November 2003 (having been given temporary promotion). At the conclusion of this post he will move to Hartlepool as the community safety/operations manager in the rank of chief inspector. He is trained as an SIO and a firearms incident commander.

#### **Personnel Manager**

**1.4** The Personnel Manager is fully qualified with member status of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) with over 13 years' personnel experience in public, private and now the police service. She has three years' service with Cleveland Police, being initially posted to Stockton as personnel and development manager managing a small team (district training officer, personal safety trainer and personnel and development assistant). As a result of the Force change programme, the personnel and development team was restructured and she now



covers both Stockton and Hartlepool managing two teams each with a district training officer, personnel and development officer and personnel and development assistant.

### **District Administration & Finance Manager**

**1.5** The district administration and finance manager has held this role for 15 years, mostly at Langbaugh District, transferring to Stockton District in November 2003. She is qualified as a member of the Association of Accounting Technicians. In 1986 Cleveland Police employed her as finance assistant in the prosecuting solicitors department, transferring to the CPS in the civil service department as the branch administrator. She returned to Cleveland Police in 1989 as divisional administration officer at Langbaugh.

### **Information and Audit Manager**

**1.6** He served 31 years with Cleveland Police, holding a full range of operational posts before specialising in IT systems development, ICT training and research. After retirement in April 2001, he rejoined Stockton District as a police staff member, taking up a post with the district management team. This was to become the focal point within the district to ensure an appropriate level of support, development and monitoring in relation to information systems and technology, whilst maintaining and fostering links to the centre, other districts and partners to promote best practice. This role has evolved into the position that he currently holds where, in addition to responsibilities in relation to information systems and processes, he also manages the district audit team. This team was set up to manage, co-ordinate, promote and nurture a performance culture within Stockton District, by instigating a structured collation and dissemination of performance data, compared with key targets and backed by a regime of information and process audits.

### **Business Planning**

**1.7** The BCU Commander has primary responsibility for the strategic development of the BCU. He is the chair of the local crime and disorder partnership group (known as the 'Safer Stockton Partnership' - SSP) and sits on the local strategic partnership (LSP), branded since 1998 as 'The Stockton Renaissance Partnership Board'. The board's keynote theme for its community strategy is '*promoting achievement and tackling disadvantage*', set out in a community strategy document (2004-07) which covers a total of 57 separate objectives across a wide range of economic, social, educational and cultural disciplines. In terms of crime and disorder, there are eight separate objectives, including the reduction of offending by young people and the reduction of road casualties (where the lead agency is the Cleveland road casualty reduction group). The chair of the board is the leader of the unitary authority for Stockton. The BCU Commander represents the SSP rather than Stockton Police.

**1.8** The other six objectives have as the lead, the SSP which are laid down within the SSP community safety plan for 2002-05. They are:

- Reduce the misuse of controlled drugs (SSP lead agency: local authority);
- reduce violent crime (lead agency: police);
- reduce anti-social behaviour (lead agency: local authority);
- reduce vehicle crime (lead agency: police); and
- reduce arson (lead agency: fire brigade).

**1.9** These mirror the priorities within the Stockton BCU district business plan for 2004/05. At 63 pages long and based on a corporate template, it is a somewhat detailed and unwieldy document, particularly in terms of describing the tactical application of enforcement powers. The crime section lists five strategic objectives for the borough, with the aim *'to help create a safer community by reducing crime and raising public confidence.'*

- Reduce the number of burglaries and increase the number detected;
- reduce the incidences of drugs misuse and associated criminality by reducing the availability of Class A drugs;
- reduce the incidences of violent crime and robbery and increase the number detected;
- reduce the incidences of vehicle crime and increase the number detected;
- and
- reduce the incidences of criminal damage and increase the number detected.

**1.10** Accountability for performance against these objectives lies with the crime manager. These are underpinned by a further six operational objectives, with a similar overarching aim, stated as *'to provide the people of Stockton District with the reassurance and confidence that they live and work in a safe community'*. These objectives read as follows:

- **Patrol:** to maximise the visibility of patrolling officers, provide a prompt and positive response and where appropriate provide feedback to the people we serve.
- **Anti-social behaviour:** in partnership with other agencies and utilising an intelligence-led approach, we will address anti-social behaviour throughout the district.
- **Vulnerable groups:** in partnership with other agencies, we will retain a special focus on the more vulnerable members of society, always ensuring positive action where appropriate.
- **Justice:** to improve our success in bringing offenders to justice.
- **Quality:** to provide a quality service (sic).
- **Road safety:** to reduce the number of road collisions involving death or serious injury within the district and provide an appropriate response to road traffic accidents.

**1.11** Accountability for performance against these objectives lies with the superintendent operations. The Inspection team noted that roads policing provision is the primary responsibility of the operations support department at headquarters, but was unable to identify a protocol for addressing road collisions and associated problems. **Her Majesty's Inspector is aware of research currently being commissioned on this issue by the Force and encourages the BCU Commander to contribute to the process.**

**1.12** The manner of communicating both the objectives and progress made against them was of concern to the Inspection team and is the subject of comment later in the report (see Performance section below).

## Organisational Culture

**1.13** Stockton BCU – in common with the other BCUs across the Force area is committed to a community based policing style, delivered primarily by community policing teams (CPTs). Uniform response colleagues and both reactive and proactive investigative teams, as well as the ‘extended police family’ of special constables and PCSOs support these. The Inspection team found that professional working relationships between police officers and staff in all disciplines to be positive and constructive. There was uncertainty expressed however, about the precise role and function of CPTs, which is explored later in the report.

**1.14** Inevitably the changes described above at Force level have generated some insecurity amongst its personnel and some concern was expressed at Stockton about the overtime budget restrictions. On a positive note, the Inspection team found that the refocusing of CPTs back into communities was widely welcomed, as was the impetus provided by the recently constituted Force command team in terms of operational performance and accountability. There was recognition that the Chief Constable had taken some difficult decisions to attain longer-term stability, albeit more changes were anticipated in the short term.

**1.15** The perception held by all those interviewed about the SMT was overwhelmingly upbeat. There was evidence of good work being recognised in the form of local commendations and PDR entries where appropriate. Much of this was conducted by e-mail or on paper as opposed to in person.

**1.16** SMT members were seen as approachable and helpful. All staff on the BCU without exception stated that they would be prepared to raise sensitive or difficult issues with them. The impact in terms of visibility was more mixed: CID personnel in particular felt that informal contact and liaison with SMT members was very limited, a view echoed by officers at outlying stations. Evidence seen by the Inspection team supports the notion that SMT members – in particular the BCU Commander – have made considerable efforts to meet with staff outside the formal mechanisms which currently exist at Stockton police station. Equally, the consultation framework, which is already in place on the BCU, is impressive. The Commander sees a random selection of staff on a monthly basis to exchange views on matters affecting the BCU, including staff welfare issues. Four or five sessions are held monthly at Stockton with constables and police staff alike.

**1.17** Nevertheless, given the combination of recent Force initiatives and a newly constituted SMT on the BCU, change management will be essential to building and sustaining morale and performance during the forthcoming months. A regular and purposeful presence of SMT members amongst staff across the BCU will assist this process. Therefore **Her Majesty’s Inspector of Constabulary recommends that a structured programme of interaction with all personnel is drawn up by the SMT, in order to provide information, advice and reassurance to all staff on the BCU.**

## Recommendation 1

**Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary recommends that a structured programme of interaction with all personnel is drawn up by the SMT, in order to provide information, advice and reassurance to all staff on the BCU.**

**1.18** Despite a positive attitude displayed by the majority of staff who were clearly motivated and took pride in working on the BCU, there was no clear understanding of what each team was or should be contributing to BCU performance. CPT officers saw themselves as a receptacle for all manner of calls, which the response units are unable to deal with. The current Force policy of CPTs tackling lower priority grade 3 calls is not being adhered to. The Inspection team saw evidence that CPT officers were being sent to a number of grade 2 incidents. The CPTs were the exclusive outlet for COG deployments: some of the calls seen by the Inspection team were subject to considerable delay in attendance.

**1.19** The response officers perceived themselves as too busy always to be able to deal effectively with the sheer volume of calls to which they were assigned. Response staff (and the majority of CID officers) were unclear about the priorities and contribution of CPT officers. Both uniform groups spoke positively about the assistance provided by the CID, although both referred to 'staff shortages' in the department as one reason why advice and assistance was not always forthcoming. This was at odds with the actual abstractions from the CID (totalling four officers at the time of writing) and was of some concern to the Inspection team.

**1.20** The CID officers interviewed were positive in their approach to their role, but made it clear that morale had been adversely affected by a combination of workload, priority payments going to uniform staff and a 50% reduction in their overtime budget. The Inspection team had considerable sympathy with this, but noted that approximately 50% of the BCU overtime budget was still allocated to investigation teams (a total of 4,765 hours). Neither was there any written criteria for the work the department would take on i.e serious or series crime, although the majority of staff seemed aware of the circumstances in which assistance should be sought.

**1.21** The biggest concern of the Inspection team was the discernible development of a 'hand-over' mentality amongst certain personnel, in particular response officers. The shift pattern worked by the response teams was the subject of adverse comment at all ranks on the BCU, including staff association representatives. This pattern (two 12-hour shifts 0700-1900, followed by two of 1900-0700, then four days weekly leave) militates against ownership of enquiries or investigations and a lack of continuity was apparent in some of the data seen by the Inspection team. It also meant those response officers were rarely, if ever, briefed with other units on the BCU.

**1.22** Whilst there is a need to strike an appropriate work/life balance, the widespread view expressed at Stockton was that the shift pattern worked by a number of staff did not match the identified needs of the BCU as a whole. The drive towards

achieving numerical targets and associated performance indicators (e.g number of intelligence submissions made per month) was also perceived as leading to some staff cutting corners to deal with the next task, rather than the one currently engaged upon.

**1.23** In combination with the existence of the BCU prisoner handling team (PHT), the new statutory charging regime – both of which are explored in more detail further on in the report – and the Force-led SABRE initiative to deal with outstanding offenders, the shift pattern has undoubtedly contributed to an increase in the number of detainees bailed rather than charged. There is a genuine risk of deskilling of staff in what is a predominantly young workforce (the majority of uniform constables interviewed had less than three years’ service) since a good many enquiries are not followed through. An illustration of this was the adverse comment made by CID staff on the poor quality of some prisoner hand-over packages. One observation summed up the view of many: it was, apparently, akin to being a member of “*two separate police forces*”.

**1.24** Her Majesty’s Inspector of Constabulary is concerned that a work/life imbalance is inherent in the present shift pattern worked by a number of uniform staff on the BCU. Her Majesty’s Inspector of Constabulary recommends that a review is conducted on behalf of the BCU Commander into the various duty patterns on Stockton BCU with a view to effecting improvements in the deployment of operational personnel.

#### Recommendation 2

**Her Majesty’s Inspector of Constabulary recommends that a review is conducted on behalf of the BCU Commander into the various duty patterns on Stockton BCU with a view to effecting improvements in the deployment of operational personnel.**

**1.25** The other issue of some concern to the Inspection team was the number of “acting” or temporary ranks on the BCU. The current status of the SMT has already been outlined. At other ranks, of 13 Inspectors’ posts, five were carrying out the role in an acting capacity; the proportion for sergeants was ten in 33. More difficult to analyse was the rationale behind the duration of some of the appointments. Evidence supplied by the BCU showed that a small number of staff were acting up for a single duty tour or occasionally a 2-3 day stint. Others, conversely, were deployed in an acting or temporary capacity for a month or more. Whilst the desire to give experience to those qualified for promotion is laudable, there is also the impact on the teams involved of an individual performing a leadership role for a very brief period, then reverting back to his/her usual function. In the current financial climate of the Force, there is also the budgetary position to consider. **Her Majesty’s Inspector of Constabulary urges the BCU Commander to review the number and duration of acting and temporary rank appointments assigned on the district to ensure the needs of both the organisation and individuals is being met.**

## Operational Management

**1.26** In terms of personnel breakdown, around 21% of operational staff are on CPTs; 43% on response; 21% on CID, with 17% on other duties, including the community safety portfolio. These figures are comparable with other BCUs in the Force area. The BCU has a community based policing style, led by the CPTs.

**1.27** In operational terms, the district is configured into four distinct elements. There are four geographic **CPT** areas (S1-S4), although in practice, they are managed as three separate entities. Stockton (S1) has two inspectors and the largest CPT; Billingham (S2) has an inspector as does Thornaby and Yarm: the latter is constituted as S4, but shares its team leader with Thornaby (S3). The primary responsibility laid down in the BCUs community strategy is to take ownership of an area's problems and deal with them accordingly. PCSOs (who are assigned to the geographic areas) and special constables, who in theory work the CPT areas, but also cover response duties, support the CPTs.

**1.28** Four uniform **response groups** each also headed by an Inspector, have a primary responsibility to manage reactive demand on the BCU. The CID, both reactive and proactive supports them. These investigators include a proactive drugs unit, a burglary investigation team, and a street crimes unit (four officers focusing on auto crime). The burglary team is made up of one team on the reactive CID, which also contains all the CID tutors for the BCU. The detective sergeants on the CID estimated that around 60% of the workload was reactive and expressed concern about the amount of overtime available to deal with the demands (20 hours per team per month, with 58 hours per month for the proactive teams). It was clear that a great deal is being accomplished by the use of flexibility and goodwill: an example is the informal 'on-call' system operated by the CID supervision, to cater for specialist assistance out of hours. The Inspection team observed however, that the bulk of the CID officers work 0800-1600 day shift, which may need revising in the context of Recommendation 2 above.

**1.29** Underpinning the operational arm of the BCU is the **community safety unit**, also headed by an inspector. This unit has lead responsibility for overseeing the BCU response to domestic violence, missing persons, hate crime, youth justice, crime reduction and partnership working. Diverse issues such as asylum seekers and mental health (calls generated by those subject to care in the community) are also managed by this unit.

**1.30** In respect of tackling crime, the BCU crime manager has three detective inspectors: one informant controller and CHIS manager; one responsible for reactive investigations (operations) and an intelligence unit manager who is also accountable for the performance of the newly constituted SABRE team. SABRE is a corporate model, derived from a similar initiative in West Yorkshire and consists of a high profile enforcement team tackling outstanding offenders wanted for a variety of reasons on each BCU. At Stockton, these are as follows: Category 1 suspects (defined as those who are district targets, persistent adult offenders, or Level 2 targets); outstanding crimes with identified suspects, over 28 days old; failure to attend 47/3 bail; on warrant, on PNC or identified via DNA or fingerprint 'hits'. Exceptions to the latter are those identified for burglary or robbery offences or for

more serious crime, where the reactive CID will assume responsibility for arrest and interview of suspects.

**1.31** The team is multi-skilled. A detective sergeant and six constables form the drugs enforcement arm of SABRE (the district drug unit - DDU). A sergeant and eight constables who were formally part of the 'community task force' address core tasks of the team as the newly entitled proactive arrest unit (PAU). A third sergeant is in charge of the district support unit (DSU), eight constables trained in public order, method of entry and search tactics, who also address core tasks as part of the PAU. This team retains corporate responsibilities for public disorder response and football match duties, which abstracts them from SABRE tasks and, on occasion, from the BCU itself. Two detective officers supplement these latter teams. Finally, four constables form the auto crime unit on the BCU, but operate under the SABRE umbrella. The teams tend to work days or late (1400-2200) shifts, with the district support unit often driven by Force requirements as detailed above.

**1.32** SABRE, at the time of writing, was a recent innovation and members of staff at all ranks were at odds over precisely what the terms of reference were, what it would accomplish and even the name of the unit. The 'strike team protocol' published by the BCU offers guidelines in this respect and the Inspection team was confident the team would achieve some positive results. Personnel expressed concern across the BCU however, over the role of the detective officers on the PAU. The Inspection team has considerable sympathy with this view: given that all prisoners detained were, in theory, the subject of comprehensive hand over packages, and that the role of the PAU was principally to locate and arrest such persons, the requirement for investigative skills appears minimal. Neither is there provision for investigative interviewing or the securing of admissions for additional offences in the protocol. Performance of individual officers' remains addressed by MPR indicators, with none tailored for the SABRE team. There is also a division of accountability with the detective inspector (operations) responsible for prioritising the workload of the DDU, the auto crime unit, and the intelligence manager for the PAU and district support unit.

**1.33** Whilst the Inspection team was pleased to see the SABRE team's work tied in closely with NIM processes, clarity on the precise role of the team and its lines of accountability is undoubtedly required on the BCU. The Inspection team remained unclear from the protocol, why the DDU were involved: the supervisor on the DDU conceded that his team would generate their own targets outside of the published protocol: this is entirely appropriate, given the specialised nature of their work. The DDU has achieved considerable success in the past 12 months targeting major dealers in Stockton, albeit the Inspection team was concerned that they were operating more at level 2 than level 1. 'Operation Warrior' was a Stockton-led operation which recently secured the prestigious Home Office 'Tackling Drugs' Award in the middle markets category: a dozen key target offenders operating on the BCU were sentenced to a total of 180 years' imprisonment. This has been recognised by the Force and the BCU SMT.

**1.34** It is also important that a balance is struck between addressing core business on the one hand and delaying some enforcement operations pending a corporate 'SABRE day' on the other. Whilst the strength of the SABRE 'brand' will

undoubtedly raise public confidence, Her Majesty's Inspector believes there is scope for refining the process even at this early stage, to ensure opportunities for maximising detections are realised in conjunction with other units such as the PHT.

**1.35 Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary recommends that the membership of the Stockton SABRE team is reviewed and the precise terms of engagement are defined and publicised to all operational staff, with a view to maximising detected crimes on the BCU.**

### **Recommendation 3**

**Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary recommends that the membership of the Stockton SABRE team is reviewed and the precise terms of engagement are defined and publicised to all operational staff, with a view to maximising detected crimes on the BCU.**

## **Demand Management**

**1.36** The primary responsibility for incident management (of all categories) lies with response officers. The BCU has published its own demand management protocol which sets out how CPTs and PCSOs will assist response staff in addressing this challenge, with duty inspectors charged with constantly reviewing incident queues to ensure appropriate deployment occurs. Under the protocol, CPTs will be allocated tasks, which are not isolated, but '*symptomatic of a community issue*'. Low level anti-social behaviour (ASB) can be allocated to PCSOs but only after a risk assessment is conducted; in fast time, the practicality of this on occasions is questionable.

**1.37** None of the staff interviewed could describe the practical difference between the two types of incidents: CPT staff frequently attended low level ASB and were allocated response incidents when the active queue became too much for response teams to realistically tackle. It appeared to the Inspection team to be a question of availability of staff. CPTs were described as a dumping ground for all manner of reported incidents, which did not appear to be systematically analysed or supervised.

**1.38** Some of this can be traced back to Force command and control (C&C) systems. Examples were provided by both response officers and CPTs of incorrect call grading and lack of caller interrogation. Immediate and priority calls (graded 0 and 1 on Intergraph, the Force C&C computer system) are usually addressed by response teams. In recent months, when the active queue of incidents has become potentially unmanageable, CPT staff have routinely been assigned grade 1 jobs. If such tasks are not assigned, the default process is the Force integrated recording information system (IRIS), which is managed by the district based COG teams. COG assigns tasks on line to CPT supervision on S1-S4 areas. These tasks do not appear to be weeded by COG or operational supervision at the point of receipt from Intergraph: some, by the time they are actioned can be days or even weeks, rather than hours old. Neither can it be said that any analysis was apparent which flagged the tasks as '*community issues*'.



**1.39** Examples were provided to the Inspection team of inappropriate grading by Force C&C and, in turn by COG, which places officers in the difficult position of apologising to members of the public for delays in attendance. Some of these delayed responses (e.g found property) could be more appropriately allocated. Others like welfare concerns were simply no longer applicable. The often adverse impact of the shift pattern for response crews has been described elsewhere in this report, but is another factor to consider.

**1.40** In the opinion of Her Majesty’s Inspector, this position is not sustainable in the medium to long term. He is aware of work being conducted at a Force level to streamline the call handling process, but in the interim, a process should be initiated on the BCU to proactively manage demand and increase public confidence. **Her Majesty’s Inspector of Constabulary recommends that proactive and intrusive supervision of incidents is introduced at Stockton to address demand levels and utilises resources appropriately. This should include feedback to callers to manage public expectation.**

#### Recommendation 4

**Her Majesty’s Inspector of Constabulary recommends that proactive and intrusive supervision of incidents is introduced at Stockton to address demand levels and utilises resources appropriately. This should include feedback to callers to manage public expectation.**

**1.41** This situation obviously impacts on the amount of time CPTs can spend on community problems. The shift patterns of staff are varied: a mix of days and late shifts is combined with one 1900-0300 weekend shift each month to provide public order/reassurance patrols in Stockton town. The Inspection team understands that the shift pattern is currently being reviewed. **It is suggested that this should include team leaders, since comment was made that it was not unusual to find three CPT inspectors working the same (day) shifts at the same time.** This may well be justified, but it is important that the duties of the BCU leadership reflect the corporate as well as the sector demands.

**1.42** CPTs need to be able to match staffing levels to identified community need: at present it is clear that CPT staff are often performing response roles and are playing ‘catch-up’ to a considerable degree, with tasks which may not impact on core business. Whilst effective partnership intervention and detailed problem analyses will undoubtedly assist, this is primarily a question of managing demand more effectively and is a considerable challenge for the BCU Commander and his team to address in the forthcoming 12 months.

**1.43** Corporately, a substantial investment has been made in driving problem solving policing - also referred to as problem oriented policing (POP) - across the Force area. The initiative is a relaunch of a similar scheme, which was introduced some years ago by the Force. POP co-ordinators have been appointed on each BCU to provide training input on basic principles to all staff and act both as a champion of

the scheme and as a conduit/facilitator for POP initiatives at an operational level. The Inspection team was pleased to note that the individual concerned was managed by the intelligence co-ordinator at Stockton. The BCU's published community strategy lays considerable emphasis on longer-term, problem solving policing and the 'POP register', which is a database of the problems identified. I-task forms (a briefing and tasking tool generated by TCG or local supervision) are the means by which actions on the problem are recommended. This tool is inappropriate for the purpose, since it records activity and does not easily accommodate more detailed, holistic solutions. Data will be recorded on the system by the co-ordinator, who will act as a gatekeeper and monitor of the system. Ownership and accountability for progress of the POP will rest with CPT inspectors.

**1.44** Whilst this is an encouraging step, the Inspection team had some concerns about its application. There do not appear to be any partner agencies participating in the training sessions, which will not generate mandatory action plans for those staff attending them. Neither will the gaps in demand management identified at Force level above be addressed by the training, particularly in terms of linking different IT systems (although it is acknowledged that the intention is to introduce a database on IRIS later in the year). On the positive side, the BCU Commander participates in a monthly problem solving group with partner agencies, examining a range of specific problem areas on the BCU, in particular on ASBO and eviction orders. This is in addition to the work conducted at sector level and helps feed the CDRP process at a more strategic level.

**1.45** Staff interviewed conceded that the judgement on whether to submit a "POP form" (currently manifested on I-task at Stockton,) remained a very subjective one and dependent, in the words of one officer, on '*human intervention.*' The sources of POPs, conversely, were listed in the community strategy as including the tasking and co-ordinating group meetings (TCG), ALMs and repeat callers, in addition to individual officers. This implies a degree of analysis not apparent to the Inspection team. The number of POPs at Stockton on I-task have been reduced from 21 to 8, although one of the principal causes of repeat calls on the BCU which remained the subject of such a form contained disappointingly little detail on what was being done to action the problem.

**1.46** Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary recognises that the POP initiative is one of many interventions being made by the Force and accepts that it will need time to make an impact on community problems. Nevertheless, it is recommended that a clear project plan is published for the implementation of problem solving at Stockton, including – with the assistance of partner agencies - an evaluation of POP training, in order to gauge the impact on demand levels, particularly the level of repeat incidents.

## Recommendation 5

**Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary recommends that a clear project plan is published for the implementation of problem solving at Stockton, including – with the assistance of partner agencies - an evaluation of POP training, in order to gauge the impact on demand levels, particularly the level of repeat incidents.**

### Partnerships

**1.47** The Inspection team met with a range of partner agency representatives during the Inspection and observed two forums where external agents were engaged in both consultation and problem solving. Those interviewed included the head of community protection (secretary of the CDRP), the borough community safety manager, the head of public health for Stockton Primary Care Trust (PCT), the head of operations for Stockton social services and the co-ordinator for the neighbourhood management pathfinder scheme (Parkfield and Mill Lane area). The additional meetings involved elected members, housing association representatives and community wardens. The latter are 36 in number and are deployed from the council security centre in Stockton.

**1.48** All external agencies encountered were extremely positive about working relationships with staff on the BCU. Favourable comment was made concerning the return of CPT officers to a role which mirrored the one held prior to April 2003, although it was also clear that demand levels meant CPT officers were unable to be present on their allocated beats as often as was required.

**1.49** The BCU Commander's commitment to public consultation was clear during the visit. There was also evidence of effective partnership working at different levels within the BCU. Strategically, the SMT members work with a variety of groups, which focus on regeneration or community improvement, including New Deal for Communities. The formal partnership structures are described earlier in the report. Although the CDRP and the DAT remain separate, co-ordination meetings are held twice annually. The CDRP itself convenes every six weeks, with a quarterly performance review held against the six objectives specified in the SSP community safety plan. The Inspection team are unable to comment on the robustness of the performance regime, although some concern was expressed in this regard (an illustration being that full reports on actions taken against objectives are supposed to be submitted to every full CDRP meeting. On occasions, this does not happen). The CDRP was awarded beacon status in March 2004, with the adjudication panel commenting favourably on its monitoring, evaluation and consultation processes. This is an extremely positive step for the Borough and Her Majesty's Inspector commends the efforts of all involved in securing this award.

**1.50** At the operational level, the vast majority of the interactions with external agencies flow through the CPTs. This may alter with the introduction of problem solving training on the BCU (see paragraph 1.43 above), but for the moment, the main conduit appears to be the community teams. On a monthly basis, there are area

liaison meetings (ALMs) involving the relevant CPT inspector and a range of practitioners from housing, education, community protection and the local authority (the Inspection team observed one such meeting). A generic information sharing protocol is in existence, although a more specific one is currently being drafted. This protocol underpins discussions on problem locations and offenders, with analysis supplied by the BCU. The meeting was an effective illustration of local partnership practitioners addressing community problems. The Inspection team, however, would like to have seen more in-depth analysis packages developed for this meeting with contributions from all agencies represented. The information under discussion appeared to be police driven and whilst the summary information on repeat callers was useful, there was no indication of how such calls would be prioritised and what current intelligence was being developed on those named.

**1.51** CPT officers also gave examples of inter-agency working (for instance on under-age consumption of alcohol), but these appeared to be comparatively isolated instances, owing to competing priorities for all operational staff on the BCU. Access to multi-agency resourcing (housing, social services) was said to be quick and effective when required. One CPT base at Hardwick also houses the council run community wardens, as well as Tri Star Homes, who are responsible for managing the housing stock in the borough.

**1.52** Relationships are most productive where officers are permanently assigned and the funding is secure. The BCU has invested two constables in the Borough anti-social behaviour team (ASBT), a six-strong unit based at the council offices. This team draws up both the 'acceptable behaviour contracts' (ABCs - a code of conduct agreed between police, perpetrator and, where relevant, parent/guardian) and, if required, progresses the securing of anti-social behaviour orders (ASBOs). At present, there are 64 ABCs and 4 ASBOs at Stockton, with two more ASBOs pending. Given that recorded disorder incidents totalled over 21,000 in 2003/04, (a 16.9% increase on 2002/03) and that Middlesbrough BCU - a busier district but with fewer such incidents - has taken out 16 ASBOs and over 200 ABCs, this process may require further examination, to ensure its potential is being maximised at Stockton. This includes the paper based system currently operating on the BCU (form ASBO13), which was examined by the Inspection team. A database is maintained by the local authority's ASBT which feeds off this information, but the team received conflicting messages as to who could access it and how. **Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary encourages the BCU Commander to examine these issues in the context of intelligence-led policing for the Borough.**

**1.53** A number of officers are externally funded for specific projects on the BCU in partnership with other agencies. Neighbourhood renewal funding supports one constable and a neighbourhood watch co-ordinator. A 'behaviour in schools' initiative has seen a constable allocated to work alongside education professionals for the next 12 months. CJIP has funded a constable for 12 months, whilst the Parkfield pathfinder project referred to above has two constables and a crime prevention officer dedicated to the area. A dramatic improvement in crime figures and public satisfaction levels has been one outcome at Parkfield, which the Inspection team was pleased to note has sustained itself over the course of the past 12 months. The LSP has similarly funded an analyst for 2004/05. Other funding has been allocated (e.g to fund overtime for the DDU) but does not necessarily involve partner agencies on a

routine or statutory basis. **Whilst Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary commends these efforts, funding on the majority of posts is due to finish in the next 12 months and he urges the BCU Commander to devise a contingency plan with partner agencies to address this.**

**1.54** One example of such collaboration is the Stockton domestic violence empowerment service (DOVES). Set up in 2000, DOVES is a team of specialists (two social services officers, two constables and a NSPCC worker) managed under the aegis of the NSPCC. All domestic related referrals are processed, but child protection issues are referred to more specialist investigators. The purpose of DOVES is to provide a rapid and co-ordinated response to families exposed to domestic violence, proactively raising awareness and servicing the needs of victims. One of the objectives stated in its protocol is to reduce repeat victimisation. **Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary is concerned, in the light of this objective, about the relatively high levels of repeat domestic violence incidents at Stockton** (current levels are running at over 53%). The Inspection team noted that DOVES intends to focus on extending its work with perpetrators of violence in the near future and it is expected that their efforts will have some impact on this figure. The team was satisfied that officers take positive action in the majority of cases reported. A recently published report (written by a former senior officer with the Force) may also have a bearing on the corporate approach to domestic violence issues on the BCU in the future.

**1.55** Overall the partnership structures were clear and the enthusiasm of the participants about police involvement was apparent. **Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary recognises the good work conducted at Stockton by various agencies in partnership with the BCU and encourages those involved to build on the foundations laid during the next 12 months.**

### **Performance Development Review (PDR) - Audit**

**1.56** Cleveland Police are in the process of rolling out a new electronic version of their performance development review system. This system aims to focus on force priorities through team and individual objectives (linked to policing plan objectives); an appraisal system with job specific activities for every role and how to achieve a high performance level; a set of behavioural competencies that supports the standards and values of the organisation, and are linked to the national core competency framework; and a training and development plan for the next 12 months.

**1.57** The intranet based system flows through a number of stages, including performance review, objective setting (related to organisational and developmental needs), formulation of a personal development plan with a planned time scale, and SMART action plans to address particular issues or deficiencies if necessary. The system has been some time in development and is now being rolled out via a 'top down' process. Recent instructions from the Force executive have stated that all officers should receive the new electronic PDR before the end of June 2004.

**1.58** The decision made by the development team is that the system will not include any electronic method of recording evidence for appraisal elements of the PDR. It is expected that the supervisors will record evidence of their officer's performance using their own systems and with the full knowledge of officers under their command.

**1.59** This new system has been in development for some time. In the interim, the older, paper based system has fallen into some discredit. The system looked at achievement against the previous list of priorities (self-evidenced by the appraised), then evidence from the appraiser against seven areas of performance, with a numerical scoring being given (communication, self-motivation, professional and ethical standards, decision making, creativity and innovation, team working and leadership). There are sections for additional areas of performance to be recorded according to the role held. An action plan is then agreed according to local and/or Force objectives. The system also allowed for the setting of additional areas for personal development.

**1.60** Whilst acknowledging the forthcoming changes, the Inspection team conducted an audit of the paper system, in order to ascertain the level of compliance with Force policy (which states the PDRs should have been carried out) and whether their completion is linked to a performance culture on the BCU.

**1.61** Fifty PDRs were examined (40 police officers, 10 police staff) of varying ranks and grades. Of these, 45 had been completed within the last 12 months (since April 2003), five were outside of this period, the oldest of which was dated August 2002. Of the 50 reviewed, one was completed in January 2004 which covered an appraisal period of three and a half years!

**1.62** The paper based system had no method of recording interim reviews. The only method of ascertaining if a review had been conducted in the preceding 12 months was by reference to the fact priorities had been set that had to be evidenced against at the start of the form. When this previous appraisal had been conducted, is not recorded. The line manager assessment in the PDR is against performance areas and not against objectives. These assessments generally tended to be 'happy sheets' with 82% of staff being assessed as performing above requirements. None were assessed as having a performance below requirements.

**1.63** The system did call for an action plan against local or force priorities. Up to three tasks could be set and there is an additional area for personal development. Generally this action planning section was found to be very poor. Only 31 PDRs (62%) had plans that could be linked to priorities, four had no action plan. Generally, even those linked to priorities were very poor and contained no 'SMARTS' elements. The Inspection team was disappointed to find action plans for the year such as 'I would like to further develop my skills base', 'develop leadership skills' or 'to be promoted' - all with no further planning aspects at all. **Her Majesty's Inspector is concerned at the poor standard of action planning apparent and urges the BCU SMT to be rigorous in its approach to SMARTS action planning (linked to Force and local objectives) with the new system if these flaws are not to recur. Supervisory training on the aspects of SMARTS may assist.**

## **Special Constabulary**

**1.64** The special constables seen by the Inspection team were positive and enthusiastic, led by a dynamic BCU commandant with 37 years' service. Generally, relationships with all ranks - including the SMT - were seen as constructive and those interviewed felt valued and appreciated by the majority of staff. Aside from isolated incidences of equipment going missing, there were no obvious difficulties

experienced. The commandant and his officers saw themselves as an integral part of the BCU.

**1.65** In terms of deployment, 20 out of 23 special constables were deemed to be active by the commandant. Shifts worked were usually between 1800-2400, where the local intelligence officer often briefed those on duty. Assignments varied, often, special constables would be paired up with each other if response crews had already been allocated. This is undoubtedly due in part to the fact that briefing for response crews is at 1900 hours. There did not seem to be a systematic, intelligence-led process in evidence to the Inspection team. This particularly applies to the deployment of most of the special constabulary on a Wednesday evening. Although some of this is training related, there does not appear to be a rationale behind what is a Force-wide phenomenon. **Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary considers that it may be of benefit to reconfigure shift patterns to dovetail directly with response crews or CPT staff. This will ensure intelligence briefings and debriefings are shared and should enhance officer safety by enabling the deployment of double crewed vehicles where appropriate.**

**1.66** Surprisingly, those special constables encountered by the Inspection team felt that arrangements for working alongside CPT officers were '*haphazard*' even compared with response crews. In theory, special constables are allocated CPT areas to develop more comprehensive knowledge of local communities. In practice, this rarely applies in deployment terms and there was a perception amongst those interviewed of feeling undervalued by CPT staff. The same lack of intelligence-led deployment or tasking by supervision was in evidence and will need to be addressed.

**1.67** In terms of outputs, the special constabulary will shortly become part of the MPR process at Stockton. There is a comprehensive range of performance indicators against which the contribution of members is measured; the number of hours worked exceeds all other BCUs in the Force at the present time. The commandant has raised a concern with the local SMT, however, that those actual outputs (e.g arrests) are not properly credited to special constables, since Force computer systems apparently cannot recognise their identity numbers. **This will need to be progressed if the special constabulary is to feature meaningfully in the MPR process.**

**1.68** Currently, there are some logistical difficulties for the special constabulary to overcome at Stockton. A lack of office accommodation is one such problem, although the Inspection team has some sympathy with the BCU SMT on this issue. More pressing is the lack of Airwave radios for special constables: the Force has set aside a pool of such radios, of which there are insufficient numbers on the BCU. The local 'pool' will be held at Stockton police station, which will not in any event service the requirements of those members who book on duty at outlying stations. **The BCU Commander is urged to examine this issue in more depth to try and arrive at a mutually acceptable solution.**

**1.69** Overall, the Inspection team was impressed with the commitment and dedication of the special constabulary at Stockton. Most of the issues raised were not insurmountable and it was clear that those interviewed identified strongly with Stockton BCU and took pride in the contribution they made to policing its communities.

## Police Community Safety Officers

**1.70** There are 24 PCSOs at Stockton, divided between CPT areas S1 (12), S2 (4) and S3/4 (8). Shift patterns cover between 0800-2200, six days on followed by three off. A protocol covering deployment and use of PCSOs has been published by the BCU.

**1.71** They are supervised and directed by CPT sergeants, although they can spend some considerable time without direct supervision. The relevant CPT constable provided briefing on occasion, where no supervision was present. On many occasions, PCSOs self-briefed.

**1.72** The Inspection team was surprised to learn that PCSOs sometimes patrolled alone. Usually, they deploy in pairs, unaccompanied by CPT staff. The protocol makes specific reference to the need to avoid placing PCSOs in situations where powers of detention/arrest may be required: in such circumstances, it may be of some benefit on particular tours of duty to utilise PCSOs alongside regular (CPT) officers. **Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary suggests that the deployment of PCSOs is monitored more closely by CPT supervision in the light of the feedback provided.**

**1.73** In addition to the ability to issue fixed penalty notices for littering and dog-fouling, PCSOs powers were restricted to ASB incidents, abandoned vehicles and confiscation of alcohol from under-age drinkers. Those interviewed were conscious of the impact they were having in some areas, particularly in terms of visibility. Frustration was expressed over the lack of arrest powers and over the livery worn by PCSOs, where the corporate badge has no link to Cleveland Police and where the male headgear was seen as offering no protection to its wearer.

**1.74** Concern was expressed over the lack of feedback provided on performance or output. The PCSOs have no performance measures currently in place and whilst they are clearly positive, motivated individuals, briefing, debriefing and deployment issues need to be addressed with a view to maximising the output from a valuable community resource. **Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary urges the BCU Commander to revisit these issues to optimise the use made of PCSOs at Stockton.**

## Training and Development

**1.75** An annual training needs analysis is produced at Stockton, with all managers and supervisors asked to identify requirements for the forthcoming 12 months. The personal development review (PDR) process is used to underpin this. The intention is to make the national competency framework a feature of the system: the new e-PDR will, in theory, generate training needs as part of a costed plan. The final product will, as now, be co-ordinated by the district training officer (DTO), a who is also a police federation representative.

**1.76** The DTO is no longer responsible for the management of tutor constables. The BCU has set up a full-time tutor unit (based at Stockton), with 10 constables drawn from both Hartlepool and Stockton BCUs taking charge of probationers assigned to both districts. Probationers will be assigned to BCU personnel only if the tutor unit cannot accommodate them. Those tutor constables interviewed did not



support the deployment of probationers to CPTs on completion of their time in the tutor unit. The view expressed was that the newer recruits did not experience the wider range of challenges undertaken by response teams, particularly dealing with confrontation and public disorder issues. This was supported by some officers on the DSU, but was not tested by the Inspection team.

**1.77** The DTO is responsible for the administration of much of the training on the BCU, including personal safety training (PST). The Inspection team was concerned to discover that PST was temporarily suspended following the initial change programme in April 2003, causing a considerable backlog at Stockton (40% of staff were overdue refresher courses in December 2003). This position has now improved considerably.

**1.78** It is clear that the DTO co-ordinates a largely reactive regime at Stockton. At the time of the inspection, corporate requirements included RIPA, NIM and NCRS and the sheer volume of mandatory training means there is little time for developmental work. Often this is due to late notification by headquarters based departments. The latest example is the training for the statutory charging regime, the package for which arrived at the BCU on 26 May for a launch date on 28 May. It was interesting to note that the DTO had no input into the design or running of the problem solving training at Stockton: this was mirrored across other BCUs in the Force area.

**1.79** There is no training provision built into the rotas at Stockton. The DTO is obliged to arrange small sessions involving two or three officers at a time, wherever she can secure agreements with local staff and supervision. On occasions, this is simply lacking. A recent example is major incident training: nominations were sought from sergeants and inspectors across the BCU, but the response was zero.

**1.80** In the opinion of Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary, this is an unsatisfactory position. It may be partially addressed should the shift patterns be re-aligned. At present though, perceived skill gaps amongst uniform constables (in areas such as interview skills, statement taking and report writing) cannot be addressed other than through ad hoc attachments to CID by some of the more progressive supervisors on the BCU. Neither, in these circumstances, are there any sanctions applied for non attendance.

**1.81** At supervisory ranks, the Force provides modular training for newly promoted sergeants, developing skills over a 12-month period. This is seen as particularly important given the number of acting and temporary ranks on the BCU. There is nothing structured on offer for existing supervisors, although some inspectors attend the Centrex based courses on leadership development. For police staff, satisfaction was expressed at the training on offer and they continue to feature in the BCUs training plan, albeit opportunities for career development were seen as limited.

**1.82** Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary recommends that the SMT, in liaison with relevant headquarters departments, reviews training and development at Stockton with a view to implementing a more focused regime, which matches organisational need with development programmes for staff.

## Recommendation 6

**Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary recommends that the SMT, in liaison with relevant headquarters departments, reviews training and development at Stockton with a view to implementing a more focused regime, which matches organisational need with development, programmes for staff.**

### Financial Management

**1.83** The backdrop to financial management at Stockton has been outlined earlier in the report. Much of the uncertainty, which characterised financial administration under the 2003 change programme, has now been resolved.

**1.84** Until February 2004, the finance and administration manager (FAM) covered both Langbaugh and Stockton BCUs. Since that date she has been able to concentrate on Stockton, albeit in the new financial climate which has seen control of salaries retained by headquarters. There is also a freeze on recruitment (no new probationers are expected until October 2004 at the earliest) and a cut of at least 10% in supplies and services budgets. No new spend on furniture or IT at Stockton is likely in the foreseeable future under the Force revival plan.

**1.85** The FAM has responsibility for managing local training budgets, premises hire, car allowances and hire vehicles, supplies and services and the BCUs forensic budget. The latter is devolved for 2004/05 and amounts to £395,172. The forensic spend for 2003/04 was over £505,000. This was of some concern to the Inspection team, since any repeat would see a considerable deficit carried by the BCU into 2005/06. The gatekeeper for forensic submissions is the detective inspector (operations). **The BCU Commander is urged to ensure that all operational staff are aware of the restrictions placed on the BCU and that forensic awareness training is provided to educate staff on how to optimise the returns generated at Stockton.**

**1.86** The total devolved budget for Stockton totals just over £1.2 million. Overtime is devolved in turn to inspector level, bar a contingency fund retained by the superintendent (operations) for court attendance. He also retains and manages a budget for operational contingencies, including planned operations. The FAM discusses finance issues on both a daily and weekly basis as part of the SMT; there is also a daily review of overtime spend against the target figure for the year.

**1.87** The FAM maintains a monthly control spreadsheet for audit purposes, which includes accounting for the external funding which the BCU has proved extremely successful in generating with its partner agencies. Including the Parkfield Pathfinder project, BCU funding, neighbourhood renewal and other initiatives, the total funding for 2004/05 comes to £585,674. Notwithstanding the need to plan exit strategies for much of this funding, the BCU and its partners are to be congratulated for securing funding across a wide range of activity.

**1.88** The financial position of the Force means that all FAMs are required to manage budgets with the utmost care. The Inspection team was satisfied that procedures are sufficiently robust at Stockton to meet corporate and BCU requirements.

## Absence Management

**1.89** The sickness levels in Cleveland Police and Stockton BCU for 2002/03 and the end of 2003/04 are illustrated at Figure 1, below.

<b>Figure 1: Sickness absence compared with Force</b>		
	<b>Stockton BCU</b>	<b>Cleveland Police</b>
<b>Average number of days sickness – police officers 2003/04</b>	10.38	8.98
<b>% change compared with same period 2002/03</b>	-5.67%	-13.81%
<b>Average number of days sickness – police staff 2003/04</b>	12.49	10.34
<b>% change compared with same period 2002/03</b>	-33.02%	-10.79%

**1.90** The Inspection team found ample evidence that sickness absence is vigorously managed at Stockton. There has been a significant improvement in sickness levels amongst both police officers and staff over the past 12 months and all supervisors are made aware of their responsibilities under the Force attendance management policy.

**1.91** The policy is co-ordinated by the BCU personnel and development manager, who also ensures that those who need it at the appropriate time access support services (e.g occupational health and physiotherapy). Whilst the emphasis is on staff welfare, there is a robust edge to the way absence is addressed at Stockton. A total of six competency-related threshold payments (out of a total of 50) were withheld on grounds of sickness absence; there are also, at the time of writing, two cases of unsatisfactory performance where sickness trends will form part of the case material under consideration by the SMT.

**1.92** The targets set by the Force for 2004/05 are particularly challenging (average number of days lost to sickness absence to be no higher than 7.5 per staff member). The Inspection team is confident that the SMT will maintain a balanced and robust stance in attempting to achieve this target.

**1.93** Her Majesty’s Inspector of Constabulary acknowledges the improvements in sickness absence sustained by all personnel involved at Stockton and encourages the continuation of this trend in the forthcoming 12 months.

## Health and Safety

**1.94** Regular health and safety (H&S) meetings are scheduled on the BCU chaired by the BCU Commander. Audits are conducted at appropriate intervals and the

Inspection team saw evidence of risk assessments signed off for policing operations. The personnel and development manager has a role-related H&S remit for recuperative and restrictive duties on the BCU.

**1.95** The staff association representatives at Stockton were satisfied with the current arrangements. Examples were provided to the Inspection team of issues raised with, and subsequently being actioned by, the SMT (e.g the rehousing of the PHT). Representatives were confident that any matters raised would receive a sympathetic hearing from the SMT.

**1.96** The only matter of concern brought to the attention of the Inspection team was the perception of isolation felt by some police staff members at outlying stations, such as Billingham. A feeling of vulnerability was clearly present when officers were away from these stations or offices and although incidents are obviously rare, **Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary urges the BCU Commander to undertake a separate risk assessment on this issue.**

### **Grievance Procedure**

**1.97** There were no formal grievances registered at Stockton in 2003. Whilst the SMT members were confident that the procedure was understood, the view expressed elsewhere on the BCU was that the procedure was perceived to be a last resort, with all efforts directed to resolving matters informally. This was couched in constructive terms, although the Inspection team was informed during one discussion that invoking the procedure might identify individuals as 'problematic'.

**1.98** The Inspection team does not share this view, given that all staff interviewed stated they would be happy to raise any sensitive issues with managers across the BCU and there were no obvious gaps between personnel and supervision to concern the team. Nevertheless, whilst dialogue should be encouraged in resolving matters, staff should feel free to use grievance procedures if necessary. On a related note, there is also an acceptance that the 'first contact' scheme lacks credibility on the BCU: it is currently being reviewed. In addition June 2004 sees the launch of a corporate 'resolution' policy, which will replace the existing grievance procedure. **Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary urges the SMT to market the new Force policy vigorously on the BCU and provide assurance to staff that individuals will be supported should they decide to invoke the procedures involved.**

## Part Two: Performance

### Performance Management and Accountability

**2.1** Since 2000 Cleveland Police has utilised an IT based performance tool (T-PAM), which allows managers to access performance data at Force, BCU, ward and team level. Data warehousing technology is used to automatically update incidents and crimes.

**2.2** Whilst the majority of staff interviewed at Stockton were aware of BCU priorities and an increasingly performance focused culture was apparent to the Inspection team, there was little information displayed on progress against targets. Although there is a wealth of information on the Force Intranet, it was clear that most staff did not access it. It was disappointing to see data pinned up behind doors or inserted on a notice board already crammed with non-operational material. Progress is an important motivator for teams at all ranks and grades and the 'traffic light' system in use by Cleveland Police is an ideal method of communicating data in this way. **As part of the BCU communication strategy, Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary urges the BCU Commander to set aside specific areas where performance information is prominently displayed and updated on a regular basis.**

**2.3** In terms of accountability, the new monthly performance review (MPR) process already described in this report is applied to every BCU in the Force. The assistant chief constable (territorial operations), accompanied by the heads of finance and personnel, visits the BCU on a monthly basis to measure performance under four key headings:

- finance;
- people;
- professionalism (performance against targets); and
- problem solving and partnerships.

**2.4** This process, in similar format, is cascaded down from the SMT at Stockton, with senior police staff and inspectors held to account for performance. The relevant portfolio holder on the SMT conducts these. All meetings are documented and actions flagged for the following review as appropriate. It includes complaints against staff as well as those concerning poor quality of service.

**2.5** The principle held on the BCU is that all teams are responsible for performance. CPT inspectors are seen as being accountable for service delivery on their 'patch', although the CID are totally accountable for performance against burglary dwelling targets. In terms of partnership working, it was encouraging to see the different levels of activity on the BCU, with the Commander held to account by the CDRP and the CPT inspectors furthering issues with various agencies at the ALMs.

**2.6** Illustrated below are the performance figures for Stockton BCU for 2003/04, compared with the previous year. These figures are benchmarked against the Force and the BCU family for the same period.

**Figure 2: Crime Performance with BCU Family**

Indicator	Financial Year 2003/04	% Change from 2002/03 to 2003/04	BCU Family 6 average Rank <sup>1</sup>	2003/04 Family 6 Average
Total recorded crime per 1,000 population	114.289	6%	15 <sup>th</sup>	105.37
% Total crime detected	21.5%	-0.1 p.p.	16 <sup>th</sup>	26.71%
Burglary dwelling per 1,000 households	27.673	-10%	19 <sup>th</sup>	19.27
% Burglary dwelling detected	11.0%	-0.3 p.p.	18 <sup>th</sup>	16.80%
Robberies per 1,000 population	1.458	-8%	19 <sup>th</sup>	0.91
% Robberies detected	17.6%	2.1 p.p.	15 <sup>th</sup>	24.78%
Vehicle crimes per 1,000 population	18.072	-12%	13 <sup>th</sup>	16.67
% Vehicle crimes detected	5.7%	-0.6 p.p.	17 <sup>th</sup>	11.53%
Violent crime per 1,000 population	17.861	58%	13 <sup>th</sup>	17.63
% Violent crime detected	44.4%	-5 p.p.	16 <sup>th</sup>	58.76%

Please note: This data is not validated and therefore is only provisional

**2.7** In summary, all key crime offences were down on the previous year. The increase in violent crime (+58.3%) and criminal damage (+28.7%) meant overall crime rose by 6.3%. Detection rates remained static but in the first quarter of 2004/05 they are falling (whilst key crime offences are rising), which was of concern not only to the Inspection team but a number of staff across the BCU.

**2.8** Closer examination of the available data revealed a level of repeat incidents, which has contributed to the current downward trends in performance. The report has already made mention of the repeat victimisation rates for domestic violence, which totalled 53.6% in 2003/04. Repeat burglary rates for the same period stood at 12.22%, where the target was 11.35%. Disorder incidents from the same locations (with data generated by the BCU's own analyst and incorporating anti-social behaviour as well as violence) between November 2003-May 2004 averaged almost 25%.

**2.9** The latter is of equal concern to the Inspection team, since analysis does not appear to be routine on this type of incident and the majority of operational staff stated that much of the demand was predictable and alcohol related. Whilst this is anecdotal, the underlying problem appears to be twofold:

- A lack of ownership of the problem sites/offenders, notwithstanding the existence of the CPTs; and
- despite the investment in POP, an apparent lack of application of its principles by those officers who are called to attend incidents of disorder in particular

<sup>1</sup> Data for offences is out of 22 BCUs and data for detections is out of 18 BCUs due to the four BCUs from Durham Constabulary not submitting any detections data.

**2.10** Reference has already been made to the lack of mandatory action plans emanating from the POP training and the need to be realistic in setting expectations for sustainable results. Nevertheless, the Inspection team was not convinced that the CPT inspectors were asking for the relevant data with which to map trends and on which specific bids could be made via the TCG process. If POP is to embed itself in the culture of the BCU, the biggest single indicator of its success would be a reduction in repeat calls.

**2.11 Her Majesty’s Inspector of Constabulary recommends that repeat incidents are made the subject of the MPR process for the relevant teams on the BCU and that in-depth analysis is conducted on a routine basis on such calls for service.** It is suggested that this should include the CPT inspectors for disorder incidents (defined to suit BCU requirements), the CID for repeat burglary dwellings and the community safety inspector for domestic violence.

#### **RECOMMENDATION 7**

**Her Majesty’s Inspector of Constabulary recommends that repeat incidents are made the subject of the MPR process for the relevant teams on the BCU and that in-depth analysis is conducted on a routine basis on such calls for service.**

**2.12** It is recognised that all teams have a part to play in reducing repeat calls for service. Demand management is an equally important part of the equation, where the onus is on both supervision and managers to address the active queues and free up CPT officers as much as possible for community based problem solving.

**2.13** In terms of the declining detection rate the picture is more complex. The Inspection team raised this question with all operational focus groups and interviewees. Some of the explanations provided have already been documented in this report: the development of a ‘hand over’ mentality by some young-in-service staff who were relatively unskilled in investigation was seen as a significant factor. There was also a widely held view (particularly amongst CID personnel) that there was a lack of good quality intelligence going into the intelligence unit and (as a natural corollary) a dearth of offender ‘packages’ emanating from it. The effectiveness of the informant handling unit was also questioned.

**2.14** The inception of SABRE had initially seen the disbandment of the dedicated burglary team in April (now reinstated) which was viewed by many at the time as a backward step. The existence of SABRE, whilst a positive and innovative step, is also seen by many as a disincentive to manage workloads, since any prisoners generated by enquiries may well be taken on by the team in due course.

**2.15** In the view of the Inspection team, there are two equally significant factors, which help account for the current decline in detection rates at Stockton.

## Prisoner Handling

**2.16** The processes which operate within the custody suite, managed by the headquarters criminal justice department, were examined in some detail. The PHT was seen as a positive innovation. Its remit is primarily to deal with unplanned arrests from response officers. It is difficult to see how prisoners could be processed more effectively in the light of the current demands made on CPT and response staff. More complex enquiries are usually the responsibility of others, although PHT members interviewed did state they would deal with '*anything asked of us*'.

**2.17** Whether the team has the requisite skill levels to do this is another issue. CID staff informed the Inspection team that the PHT would almost automatically refer anything of any complexity to them. The number of TICs obtained by the PHT would also appear to warrant further examination. Notwithstanding that the majority of prisoners dealt with by the PHT maybe less likely to be involved with 'other offences'. For the 12 month period ending 31 March 2004, the Stockton PHT secured 11 TICs. By way of contrast Middlesbrough BCU's PHT secured 55 and Hartlepool's 51.

**2.18** Of some considerable disquiet to the Inspection team was the high level of no further action (NFA) or '*insufficient evidence to proceed*' within the relatively small sample of 200 records reviewed as part of the Inspection (see paragraph 2.38 below). A more detailed examination of these records revealed that 31 of the 63 NFAs (49%) related to 'theft' offences (burglary, theft of or from motor vehicle, theft other). Only nine (14%) related to a personal violence arrest (assault) which the Inspection team was assured would account for the majority of NFA, (with those involved declining to prosecute. The majority of the NFA arrests were conducted by response officers, (38- a total of 60%), but the disposal outcome of the arrest was often the responsibility of the PHT or CID as appropriate.

**2.19** In 2003/04, 276 detainees were NFA'd by the PHT. On at least one occasion, a prisoner reported on bail was booked into custody and then refuse charged NFA. This is simply a waste of time and effort.

**2.20** During the month of March 2004, 30% of adult offenders were granted 47/3 bail, the highest total in the Force. Stockton BCU also had the lowest percentage (31%) of those bailed for 21 days or less.

**2.21** The Inspection team was unable to ascertain from the custody records the reasons for these NFAs. One notable record made reference to a shadow charging decision taken by the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) (where an admission was made but no charge was preferred on the advice of CPS) but the majority were marked as 'insufficient evidence'. Some were even marked as such by a rubber stamp. Further investigation of the reasons behind this decision making is required.

**2.22** In summary, whilst the quantity of arrests are undoubtedly being made, it would appear that the quality of the investigation (both prior to and post-arrest) is often lacking. The issues documented elsewhere in the report have also contributed to a position where there appear to be an excessive number of bailees and those against whom no further police action is being taken.



**2.23** It is recommended that more comprehensive records are maintained in the custody suite at Stockton and that refuse charge, 47/3 and NFA rates form part of the monthly performance reviews for all operational teams on the BCU.

#### **Recommendation 8**

**Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary recommends that more comprehensive records are maintained in the custody suite at Stockton and that refuse charge, 47/3 and NFA rates form part of the monthly performance reviews for all operational teams on the BCU.**

### **Statutory Charging Regime**

**2.24** Numerous complaints were made to the Inspection team from a variety of sources about the current charging regime involving the CPS at Stockton. Whilst professional relationships were in the main perfectly satisfactory, it was made clear that a great many prisoners are being bailed rather than charged with substantive offences because of the requirement for full transcripts and key statements prior to submission of any file. All those interviewed expressed frustration at the lack of opportunity for informal consultation with CPS; a number of examples were also provided where custody sergeants had declined to sign the relevant MG3 forms to enable submission to CPS. The Inspection team remains unclear whether this is the responsibility of custody or team supervision.

**2.25** Of greater concern was the number of examples provided concerning the decision making of the CPS in particular cases. The Inspection team requested written evidence of any supposed shortcomings. This was supplied and was forwarded in turn to the assistant chief constable (crime and support). This will be examined further and progressed by the Force through the appropriate channels.

### **National Intelligence Model**

**2.26** The intelligence handling structure on the BCU is made up of four main elements. There is a firewalled, stand alone dedicated source unit (under a detective inspector as controller – referred to locally as DI source unit), a local intelligence officer (LIO), an analyst unit and the COG. These three units are under the command of a detective inspector (DI intelligence).

**2.27** Overall the intelligence handling capabilities on the BCU are good, with some committed individuals working in the offices and providing timely valuable information to frontline officers. Checks with those officers revealed they are content with the product and how to obtain information they need. However, the Inspection team was concerned at how much this intelligence product is actually driving activity and feel that some of the issues may lie with the processes/product in place as well as how those products are then transmitted by frontline supervisors. The Inspection team was satisfied with the standard of briefings provided to operational officers, notwithstanding either the shortcoming of I-task (see paragraph 2.28 below) and the need to incorporate the extended police family into the briefing and tasking process.

**2.28** The dedicated source unit is currently understaffed with only three detectives (instead of six), although these officers seem to be able to handle the nine registered CHIS's at the current time. The unit deals only with level 1 resources and tries to align its work to the biweekly tasking meeting – without chopping and changing the focus for the informants. In common with most dedicated source units, the majority of the information received is drugs related but the unit is trying to build up intelligence on acquisitional crime. At the current time, principally owing to a scarcity of trained staff, the BCU is not conducting intelligence debriefs with prisoners. **The BCU Commander is urged to reconsider this position as a matter of priority.**

**2.29** The LIO contains a detective sergeant, three detective constables and three research assistants. The unit has responsibility for handling all intelligence submissions and for producing the daily briefings. It also handles the I-task system for controlling tasking from various sources. The majority of intelligence submissions from officers are via an electronic template that has been in use for approximately six months. Staff within the LIO report that after an initial decline, submission levels are now the same as before the system was introduced. The electronic system means all data is rated within 24 hours and there are no backlogs.

**2.30** The analyst unit is made up of one senior analyst, two analysts and a research assistant. They produce packages under the NIM and take active parts in the daily and biweekly tasking meetings and also attend some of the community based ALMs, for which they produce information packages. Also located within the analyst office is the problem solving co-ordinator. At the time of the Inspection, this was a virtually new post and the co-ordinator was more concerned with forthcoming PDP training. However, longer term this would seem the ideal location for the co-ordinator to facilitate analytical back up to problems to be developed.

**2.31** The COG is made up of the crime desk (responsible for all crime management functions) and the resourcing centre (responsible for allocation of grade 3/4 command and control logs). The COG also carries out an administrative function by reviewing all command and control logs and linking the elements within them in order to provide a searchable database in the future. In terms of intelligence-led policing, the relevance and added value of the COG in its current format is of concern, for reasons outlined elsewhere in this report.

**2.32** The BCU held its last strategic meeting in May 2004 and utilised a comprehensive strategic document to produce its current control strategy. The control strategy highlights five priority crime categories (burglary dwelling, vehicle crime, Class A drugs, violence and criminal damage). A sixth area ('other') deals with some generic crime prevention tactics such as CCTV and high visibility patrol. Of minor concern to the Inspection team was the BCUs inability to produce a current control strategy during the visit due to technical computer problems. This could question how much attention is being paid to it at the current time.

**2.33** TCG are held biweekly and utilise a 'PowerPoint' format tactical assessment. This assessment has a number of sections and provides the structure for the TCG. The assessment document – which is a Force template – begins with a statistical section that gives details of crime trends and performance information. There is then

a 'progress' section in which details of activity carried out against previously identified hotspots and targets are recorded. The next sections deal with ongoing series/trends, hotspots and targets. The final section deals with 'other' information such as prison releases, quality of life issues, hate crime, problem solving and preventative measures. The make up of this section varies according to need.

**2.34** The Inspection team had the opportunity to observe a TCG. It was chaired by the crime manager and was structured around the tactical assessment with one of the analysts going through the document section by section. The meeting observed was attended by 22 people and included representatives of partner agencies. It was held in the gym area due to the size of the attendance. It was notable that no-one had been supplied with a copy of the tactical assessment, relying on the projected display which at times was difficult to see. The Inspection team observed that only a few individuals made notes and that no minutes for the meeting were taken.

**2.35** Overall the TCG observed would be better described as a briefing with some interaction with attendees. Discussion that did occur over planned or needed activity tended to be of very short-term focus or of the need to develop an action plan, rather than decisions being made and resources allocated to actually work on the problem or issue. Vague discussions occurred over problems of getting CPT staff at appropriate times or the availability of PCSOs, rather than giving direct instructions on activity. It was noticeable that much of the tasking went to roads policing (a non-BCU resource) who were able to pledge some limited activity dependent upon other Force commitments.

**2.36** The meeting observed, whilst structured, lacked clear accountability and tasking focus. Individual problem owners were asked for comment but activity reports seemed to come from the analyst rather than the owners and no challenge was made over the progress made. The 'owners' seemed detached from activity made in relation to their problems over the last reporting period. The entire process lacked any sense of needing to make a difference in terms of the problems the TCG examined.

**2.37** The Inspection team felt this was due to a number of factors. These included physical environment; the number of participants; lack of formalised minutes; the need for robust chairing and clearly defined feedback loops with problem owners called to account for their activity.

**2.38** When the Inspection team challenged TCG participants over the lack of minutes and for evidence of how taskings are communicated, they were referred to the 'I-task' system that contains details of problems/trends and records activity undertaken. As part of an I-task, the owner is required to produce an 'Investigation/Enforcement/Prevention' plan to outline what activity is to be undertaken. These plans are tactical menus. The plans are not recorded electronically as part of the I-task and the Inspection team is concerned that these plans are not driving the activity of those believed to be responding to the I-task. **As a user tool the I-task system is effective but the tasks it holds need to outline more clearly defined activity, so that supervisors and managers alike can be more directive in the requirements made of local resources.**

**2.39** It became apparent to the Inspection team that a lot of decisions with regard to priorities and where activity is to be undertaken are made in advance of the TCG, hence the briefing style nature of the meeting. There was no evidence of participants bringing items or requests to the TCG for its consideration and approval. In advance of the meeting an intelligence meeting is held (this in itself is good practice), however, by having key members of the TCG at this meeting decisions over taskings and priorities are made, thereby circumventing the TCG process.

**2.40** The BCU holds a daily tasking meeting that was also witnessed by the Inspection team. This is good practice and is to be applauded. The meeting includes representatives from the intelligence unit, response and proactive teams. A member of the SMT normally chairs the meeting, although the intelligence detective inspector chaired the one observed. The agenda was a review of incidents overnight, an update on hotspot activity, task activity and some intelligence items. At the meeting observed there was no direct tasking other than one 'bail buster' for arrest and the meeting was very 'review' in focus.

**2.41** Immediately prior to the tasking meeting the intelligence cell holds its daily tasking meeting. This meeting again has a review function of events overnight and would appear primarily to be a briefing tool for the intelligence detective inspector to take forward to the tasking meeting. However, discussions at both meetings were similar and only a small part of the intelligence meeting was actually intelligence specific. **The BCU is strongly urged to review the purpose, participants and agenda of two meetings and consider combining them, thus allowing for streamlining of processes.**

**2.42** The BCU has some very capable individuals working within its NIM environment and the Inspection team would like to congratulate them on their commitment and drive. However, with the focus, format and location of the TCG, its lack of analysis of activity and poorly directed tasking from the meeting, **Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary is concerned as to whether the NIM is driving activity on the BCU. He recommends that the BCU revisits the national guidance and subsequently reviews the attendance, recording methods, accountability mechanisms and tactical tasking role of the TCG.**

#### Recommendation 9

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## DNA Sampling and Forensic Management

**2.43** DNA samples must be taken from all detainees who are charged with a recordable offence, unless DNA has previously been taken and confirmed on the Police National Computer (PNC) database. It is essential that samples be taken where

appropriate to ensure that the opportunities to gather intelligence and detect offences are maximised.

**2.44** In addition, samples should not be taken where DNA has previously been confirmed since this will incur unnecessary expenditure for the Force.

**2.45** Cleveland Police operate a system whereby the custody staff are 'line managed' by the central criminal justice department. This department provides all staff, including provision of PACE inspectors for custody matters (although this is not as yet 24 hour cover). As a result processes within the custody office do not come under the direct control of the BCU management team, despite the custody office being located within Stockton police station (the Inspection team is aware of ongoing PFI plans for a centralised custody complex for the Force in Middlesbrough).

**2.46** Any forensic under sampling in particular in the custody office would be of significance to the BCU, as this could lead to intelligence and offence detections being lost. The custody handling procedures is a combination of computer based and paper record systems. The computer system should prevent any under or over sampling occurring.

**2.47** The Inspection team examined 200 consecutive custody records for prisoners handled at the Stockton custody office between 1-10 January 2004. Of these, 39 records related to non-recorded crime arrests - no DNA was taken for any of these.

**2.48** Of the 161 recorded crime arrest records, 63 (39%) were disposed of as no further action, 11 (7%) were closed as section 47(3) bail with no final update, 24 (15%) had DNA taken for the first time and 60 (37%) were DNA confirmed. There was no evidence found of any over sampling. Only three records were found where a DNA sample should have been taken but wasn't (1.8%). Of these, one related to a release for summons for a public order offence, a second for a juvenile reprimand for shoplifting. The Inspection team is satisfied that the sampling procedures in place in the custody arena are robust and sufficient.

## Summary

**2.49** Stockton BCU, in common with the other BCU's in the Force, has had to undergo a great deal of change in the past 12 months. A number of challenges lie ahead, not least in the areas of demand management, repeat calls and embedding both problem solving and the National Intelligence Model. Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary is confident that, in collaboration with the relevant headquarters departments, a positively-led BCU and its staff will address these challenges and improve performance during the next 12 months.

## Recommendations

Her Majesty's Inspector makes nine recommendations:

1. That a structured programme of interaction with all personnel is drawn up by the SMT, in order to provide information, advice and reassurance to all staff on the BCU.  
[Para 1.17]
2. That a review is conducted on behalf of the BCU Commander into the various duty patterns on Stockton BCU with a view to effecting improvements in the deployment of operational personnel.  
[Para 1.24]
3. That the membership of the Stockton SABRE team is reviewed and the precise terms of engagement are defined and publicised to all operational staff, with a view to maximising detected crimes on the BCU.  
[Para 1.35]
4. That proactive and intrusive supervision of incidents is introduced at Stockton to address demand levels and utilises resources appropriately. This should include feedback to callers to manage public expectation.  
[Para 1.40]
5. That a clear project plan is published for the implementation of problem solving at Stockton, including – with the assistance of partner agencies - an evaluation of POP training, in order to gauge the impact on demand levels, particularly the level of repeat incidents.  
[Para 1.46]
6. That the SMT, in liaison with relevant headquarters departments, reviews training and development at Stockton with a view to implementing a more focused regime, which matches organisational need with development programmes for staff.  
[Para 1.82]
7. That repeat incidents are made the subject of the MPR process for the relevant teams on the BCU and that in-depth analysis is conducted on a routine basis on such calls for service.  
[Para 2.11]
8. That more comprehensive records are maintained in the custody suite at Stockton and that refuse charge, 47/3 and NFA rates form part of the monthly performance reviews for all operational teams on the BCU.  
[Para 2.23]

9. That the BCU revisits the national guidance and subsequently reviews the attendance, recording methods, accountability mechanisms and tactical tasking role of the TCG.

[Para 2.23]