



Inspecting policing
in the public interest



Anti-social Behaviour Inspection Report

Cumbria Constabulary

Cumbria experiences a relatively lower level of crime, per head of population, and a low level of anti-social behaviour (ASB).

Our ASB review

In Spring 2010, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) carried out a review of anti-social behaviour in England and Wales. This included asking victims about their experience of reporting ASB to the police, and inspecting the quality of the processes that forces use in tackling and responding to the problem.

Working with the Police Science Institute at Cardiff University, we then used these results to answer the question of how the police can best tackle ASB.

What works?

Forces have the best chance to give victims a good service if they do three key things:

- Brief all relevant officers and staff (including neighbourhood policing teams, officers who respond to emergencies and CID officers) regularly and thoroughly about local ASB issues;
- Regularly gather and analyse data and information about ASB places, offenders and victims in their area, and use this information to allocate resources to tackle the problems; and
- Provide their neighbourhood policing teams with the right tools and resources to tackle ASB, and then monitor the plans the teams put in place to resolve local ASB issues.

This is how Cumbria Constabulary is performing in these areas.

Are all relevant officers and staff regularly and thoroughly briefed about local ASB issues?

While ASB is a consistent theme running through daily business at a neighbourhood policing level, plans to tackle ASB are not yet embedded throughout the force. ASB messages are not reaching all front-line staff and ASB-related processes are not yet fully adopted. The Chief Officer who takes responsibility for ASB is now reorganising the way the force tackles ASB problems. The force still relies heavily on the neighbourhood policing teams (NPTs) to tackle ASB. Daily management meetings (DMMs) provide the main briefing to front-line staff, and there was evidence that CID and response officers are also briefed. There was less evidence, however, of the road policing unit being involved in addressing ASB issues. The inspection found that partners had limited involvement in briefings. There is an emphasis on community safety teams liaising with partners and relaying information to NPTs.

Is the force using ASB information to target its work in tackling ASB?

The force uses a standard method of managing data and information to monitor ASB at DMMs which are focused on new incidents and those involving repeat victims. Tasks are allocated to specific officers who are required to provide evidence of action taken at subsequent meetings. The DMM is supported by a fortnightly tasking meeting, where there is a focus on repeat locations and solving longer term ASB problems. Supported by information from dedicated analysts, these meetings ensure that repeat and vulnerable victims and locations are dealt with and actions are regularly monitored. A Chief Officer conducts quarterly operational performance reviews, and these ensure that the effectiveness of the force's information and data management is monitored in each division. However, at the time of the inspection, some processes were still developing and there was a recognised need for more consistency in how the three local areas manage information, analysis and response.

Do neighbourhood policing teams have the right tools and resources to tackle ASB, and are the plans they put in place to resolve local ASB issues monitored?

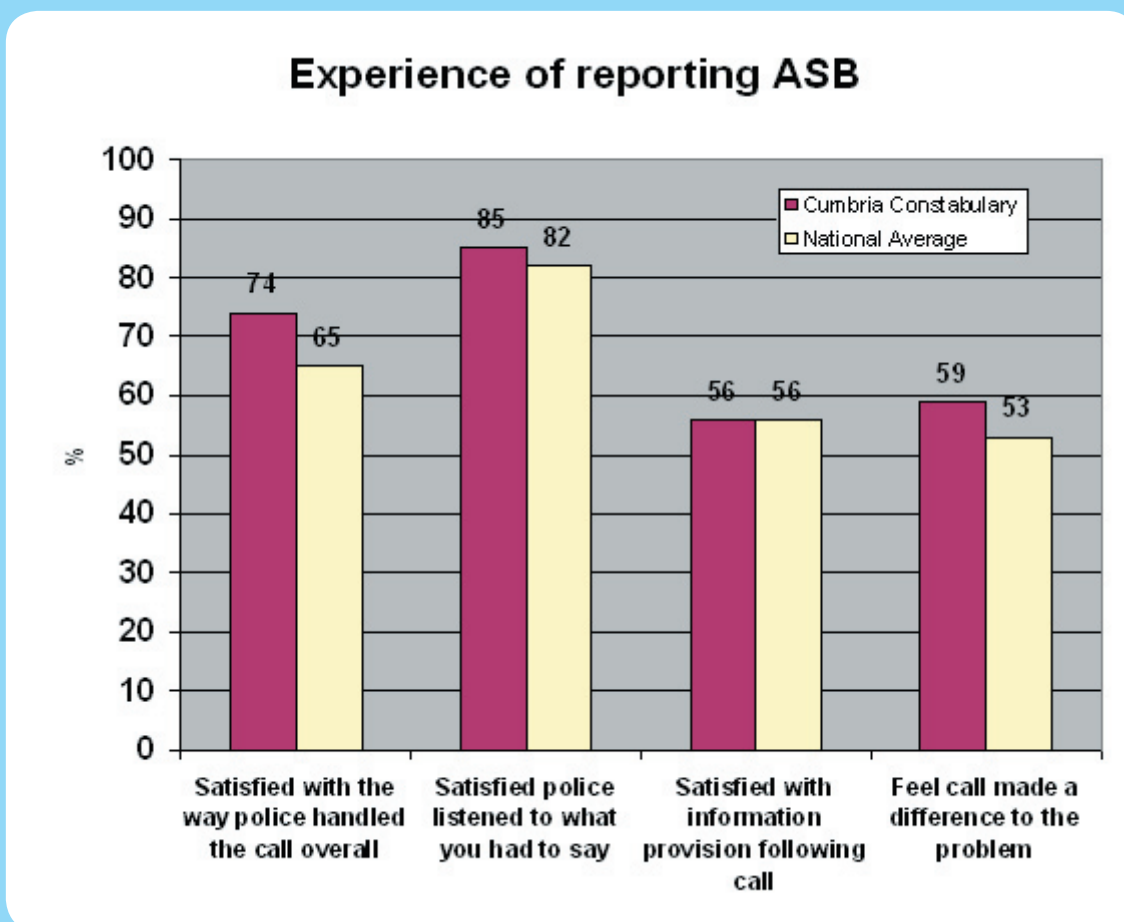
NPT staff work closely with partners to deliver solutions, and many have received awards for their successes in dealing with ASB. On a daily basis, community safety teams and the community intelligence analysts produce profiles of incidents and repeat victims in each NPT area. NPTs use a computer system to define problem profiles; the resulting plans are monitored by supervisors and there is clear accountability for their completion. However, while there are some excellent examples of local area staff solving problems, the force should consider the need for a system which identifies good practice across Cumbria.

Is ASB a priority for the force?

ASB is a clearly stated priority in the policing plan and other relevant force documents, and the Chief Constable's message on ASB is communicated on the force website. In terms of the resources devoted to ASB and the priority it is given, the high level of commitment to tackling ASB is clear; staff even have individual performance targets relating to their work to address ASB.

Results of the victim satisfaction survey

We surveyed 159 people who reported ASB in Cumbria during September 2009. They were asked a range of questions about their perceptions of ASB generally and their experience in reporting ASB to the police.



From the results, it can be seen that the force is performing broadly in line with the national average for the areas considered in the survey.

In addition to the above results, fewer victims than the national average perceive that ASB is a big problem in their area; and levels of satisfaction with how the police handled the call are better than the national average.

