



HMIC Inspection Report

Cumbria Constabulary

October 2007



Cumbria Constabulary – HMIC Inspection Report

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Introduction to HMIC Inspections

For a century and a half, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) has been charged with examining and improving the efficiency of the police service in England and Wales, with the first HM Inspectors (HMIs) being appointed under the provisions of the County and Borough Police Act 1856. In 1962, the Royal Commission on the Police formally acknowledged HMIC's contribution to policing.

HMIs are appointed by the Crown on the recommendation of the Home Secretary and report to HM Chief Inspector of Constabulary, who is the Home Secretary's principal professional policing adviser and is independent both of the Home Office and of the police service. HMIC's principal statutory duties are set out in the Police Act 1996. For more information, please visit HMIC's website at <http://inspectorates.homeoffice.gov.uk/hmic/>.

In 2006, HMIC conducted a broad assessment of all 43 Home Office police forces in England and Wales, examining 23 areas of activity. This baseline assessment had followed a similar process in 2005 and has thus created a rich evidence base of strengths and weaknesses across the country. However, it is now necessary for HMIC to focus its inspection effort on those areas of policing that are not data-rich and where qualitative assessment is the only feasible way of judging both current performance and the prospects for improvement. This, together with the critical factor that HMIC should concentrate its scrutiny on high-risk areas of policing – in terms of risk both to the public and to the service's reputation – pointed inexorably to a focus on what are known collectively as 'protective services'. In addition, there is a need to apply professional judgement to some key aspects of leadership and governance, where some quantitative measures exist but a more rounded assessment is appropriate.

Having reached this view internally, HMIC then consulted key stakeholders, including the Home Office, the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) and the Association of Police Authorities (APA). A consensus emerged that HMIC could add greater value by undertaking fewer but more probing inspections. Stakeholders concurred with the emphasis on protective services but requested that Neighbourhood Policing remain a priority for inspection until there is evidence that it has been embedded in everyday police work.

HMIC uses a rigorous and transparent methodology to conduct its inspections and reach conclusions and judgements. All evidence will be gathered, verified and then assessed against an agreed set of national standards, in the form of specific grading criteria (SGC). However, the main purpose of inspection is not to make judgements but to drive improvements in policing. Both professional and lay readers are urged, therefore, to focus not on the headline grades but on the opportunities for improvement identified within the text of this report.

Programmed frameworks

This report contains assessments of the first three key areas of policing to be inspected under HMIC's new programme of work:

1. Neighbourhood Policing;
2. performance management; and
3. protecting vulnerable people.

Neighbourhood Policing has been inspected not only because it is a key government priority but also, and more importantly, because it addresses a fundamental need for a style of policing that is rooted in and responds to local concerns. The police service must, of course, offer protection from high-level threats such as terrorism and organised criminality, but it

also has a key role in tackling the unacceptable behaviour of the minority of people who threaten the quality of life of law-abiding citizens.

Performance management is an activity largely hidden from public view, although members of the public are directly affected by poor performance on the part of their local force. This inspection has focused on the need for forces to maximise the opportunities for performance improvement. It also posed questions as to whether forces have an accurate picture of how they are doing and the capability to respond to changing priorities. This area was selected for inspection because it is a key factor in delivering good performance across the board.

Protecting vulnerable people covers four related areas – child abuse, domestic violence, public protection and missing persons – that address the critically important role of the police in protecting the public from potentially serious harm. In the 2006 baseline assessment this was the worst performing area and raised the most serious concerns for HMIC and others. As a result, this area was prioritised for scrutiny in 2007.

Risk-based frameworks

In addition to its programmed inspection work, HMIC continues to monitor performance across a range of policing activity, notably those areas listed in the table below.

HMIC risk-based frameworks
Fairness and equality in service delivery
Volume crime reduction
Volume crime investigation
Improving forensic performance
Criminal justice processes
Reducing anti-social behaviour
Contact management
Training, development and organisational learning

While these activities will not be subject to routine inspection, evidence of a significant decline in performance would prompt consideration of inspection. For 150 years, HMIC has maintained an ongoing relationship with every force. This allows it to identify and support forces when specific issues of concern arise. On a more formal basis, HMIC participates in the Home Office Police Performance Steering Group and Joint Performance Review Group, which have a role in monitoring and supporting police performance in crime reduction, crime investigation and public confidence.

HMIC conducts inspections of basic command units (BCUs), also on a risk-assessed basis, using the Going Local 3 methodology. Combining these various strands of inspection evidence allows HMIC to form a comprehensive picture of both individual force performance and the wider national picture.

The grading process

Grades awarded by HMIC are a reflection of the performance delivered by the force over the assessment period April 2006 to July 2007. One of four grades can be awarded, according to performance assessed against the SGC (for the full list of SGC, see <http://inspectors.homeoffice.gov.uk/hmic/methodologies/baseline-introduction/ba-methodology-06/?version=1>).

Excellent

This grade describes the highest level of performance in service delivery and achieving full compliance with codes of practice or national guidance. It is expected that few forces will achieve this very high standard for a given activity. To achieve Excellent, forces are expected to meet **all** of the criteria set out in the Fair SGC and the vast majority of those set out in Good. In addition, two other factors will attract consideration of an Excellent grade:

- The force should be recognised, or be able to act, as a 'beacon' to others, and be accepted within the service as a source of leading-edge practice. Evidence that other forces have successfully imported practices would demonstrate this.
- HMIC is committed to supporting innovation and we would expect Excellent forces to have introduced and evaluated new ways of delivering or improving performance.

Good

Good is defined in the Collins English Dictionary as 'of a high quality or level' and denotes performance above the minimum standard. To reach this level, forces have to meet in full the criteria set out in Fair and most of the criteria set out in Good.

Fair

Fair is the delivery of an acceptable level of service, which meets national threshold standards where these exist. To achieve a Fair grading, forces must meet all of the significant criteria set out in the Fair SGC. HMIC would expect that, across most activities, the largest number of grades will be awarded at this level.

Poor

A Poor grade represents an unacceptably low level of service. To attract this very critical grade, a force will have fallen well short of a significant number of criteria set out in the SGC for Fair. In some cases, failure to achieve a single critical criterion may alone warrant a Poor grade. Such dominant criteria will always be flagged in the SGC but may also reflect a degree of professional judgement on the level of risk being carried by the force.

Developing practice

In addition to assessing force performance, one of HMIC's key roles is to identify and share good practice across the police service. Much good practice is identified as HMIC conducts its assessments and is reflected as a strength in the body of the report. In addition, each force is given the opportunity to submit examples of its good practice. HMIC has selected three or more of these examples to publish in this report. The key criteria for each example are that the work has been evaluated by the force and the good practice is easily transferable to other forces (each force has provided a contact name and telephone number or email address, should further information be required). HMIC has not conducted any independent evaluation of the examples of good practice provided.

Future HMIC inspection activity

Although HMIC will continue to maintain a watching brief on all performance areas, its future inspection activity (see provisional timescales below) will be determined by a risk assessment process. Protective services will be at the core of inspection programmes, tailored to capacity, capability and the likelihood of exposure to threats from organised criminality, terrorism and so on. Until its full implementation in April 2008, Neighbourhood Policing will also demand attention. Conversely, those areas (such as volume crime) where performance is captured by statutory performance indicators (SPIs), iQuanta and other objective evidence will receive scrutiny only where performance is deteriorating, as described above.

The Government has announced that, in real terms, there will be little or no growth in police authority/force budgets over the next three years. Forces will therefore have to maintain, and in some areas improve, performance without additional central support or funding. This in itself creates a risk to police delivery and HMIC has therefore included a strategic resource management assessment for all forces in its future inspection programme.

Planned Inspection areas
Serious and organised crime
Major crime
Neighbourhood Policing
Strategic resource management
Customer service and accessibility
Critical incident management
Professional standards
Public order
Civil contingencies
Information management
Strategic roads policing
Leadership

Force Overview and Context

Geographical description of force area

Cumbria is the second largest county in England by area and has a population of just less than half a million; it remains one of the most sparsely populated counties. The county's largest settlements, Carlisle and Barrow-in-Furness, account for only 15% and 12% of the total population respectively, while only 19 other settlements have a population of more than 2,500.

To the west of the county is the Irish Sea and to the east lie the Pennines. Within the county is the entire Lake District National Park, part of the Yorkshire Dales National Park, the Solway coast area of outstanding natural beauty, part of the North Pennines and Arnside-Silverdale areas of outstanding natural beauty. Some 37% of the county is national park and 30% is classed as areas of outstanding natural beauty.

Running north to south through the county are the M6 motorway and West Coast mainline railway, while the A66 trunk road crosses west to east. Much of the county is accessible using only 'B' and 'C' roads. Ports take commercial traffic and some passenger services and an airport near Carlisle serves the county.

Demographic profile of force area

Within Cumbria there are significant areas of isolated and rural community, and the county has one of the lowest black and minority ethnic populations in the country. Each year Cumbria, which incorporates the Lake District National Park, attracts more than 23 million visitors from all over the world, 7 million of whom stay more than one day. The static population is made up of 19% aged 0–15, 9% aged 16–24, 27% aged 25–44, 27% aged 45–64, and 18% aged 65+.

The local economy relies heavily on manufacturing for economic output and employment, centred in West Cumbria, Furness and Carlisle, and on tourism and agriculture in the Lake District and east of the county. Unemployment is only 3.4% and approximately 37% of the population are in full-time employment, with 14% part-time, 10% self-employed and 17% retired. Of those employed, 19% are employed in manufacturing, 17% in wholesale, retail and motor industry, 11% in health and social care and 4% in agriculture.

Strategic priorities

The constabulary's strategic priorities for 2007/08 are grouped in three distinct areas set out below.

1. To deliver enhanced local policing services to communities through Neighbourhood Policing.

Priorities for 2007/08:

- To reduce overall crime, with a focus on violent crime, drug crime, vehicle crime and burglary.
- To develop Neighbourhood Policing across all communities in the county, ensuring that they address locally identified community priorities, including fear of crime, anti-social behaviour and disorder.
- To work with their partners to further increase detection rates, targeting prolific and other priority offenders, bringing more offenders to justice and reducing serious road traffic casualties across the county.

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2. To improve protective services to protect and insulate the community from cross-border criminal threats, improving public protection capacity, and to minimise the disruption to everyday policing caused by single disproportionate incidents or events.

Priorities for 2007/8:

- To develop their protective services capability with a particular focus on serious crime, organised cross-border crime, counter-terrorism and extremism.
- To secure the policing capability and capacity needed to maintain and develop current performance and meet future demands, by working with other North West police forces to review shared services and other collaborative opportunities in the region.

3. To deliver these through an infrastructure that is affordable – applying good practice in change and resource management, with a focus on minimising risk exposure while maximising economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

Priorities for 2007/8:

- To develop a professionally-trained and integrated workforce, ensuring that people are supported, at all levels, to provide an excellent service to all the communities we served.
- To deliver the phased implementation of a new strategic intelligence infrastructure into Cumbria in a way that supports key police and partner decision making through proactive capture and use of well-managed data, intelligence and other information.
- To secure an affordable and fit-for-purpose infrastructure, which enables the delivery of effective Neighbourhood Policing and protective services.

The constabulary has also identified three areas not effectively covered by the current statutory performance indicators. These are:

- anti-social behaviour (number of incidents);
- sanction detections of violent crimes which occur between 7pm and 3am; and
- criminal damage (numbers, and percentage brought to justice).

There is an extensive and detailed internal strategic work programme in place, consisting of numerous initiatives, projects and programmes.

Force developments since 2006

Major achievements for the constabulary include its recognition as a beacon for work ongoing as part of the Respect agenda to tackle anti-social behaviour; being awarded beacon status along with its partners as part of the Local Criminal Justice Board; its strong and proactive approach to volume crime investigation resulting in improved detection rates and reducing crime levels; being nominated for a national training award as an example of effective training; becoming an NVQ assessment centre; and robustly implementing the police race and diversity learning programme.

In addition, since summer 2005, police officer and staff sickness has been lower than the national average and continues to improve year on year.

The British Crime Survey 2006/07 marked out Cumbria Constabulary as the highest-achieving force in the country, with 62% of local people having confidence in the police and feeling that their officers are doing an excellent to good job.

In the HMIC Baseline Assessment undertaken in 2006, Cumbria Constabulary was assessed as Poor with a direction of travel of Stable in the areas of managing critical

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incidents and major crime, tackling serious and organised criminality, and training, development and organisational learning. The first two of these frameworks will be subject to full reassessment as part of the ongoing inspection programme and as such they have not been re-graded at this stage. In respect of training, development and organisational learning, the constabulary has made swift and sustained progress within this framework which has become embedded. On this basis the constabulary has now been assessed as Good with a direction of travel of Improved.

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Findings

National summary of judgements

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Neighbourhood Policing				
Neighbourhood Policing	6	14	21	2
Performance management				
Performance management	6	29	8	0
Protecting vulnerable people				
Child abuse	3	17	21	2
Domestic violence	1	13	27	2
Public protection	2	16	23	2
Missing persons	1	21	21	0

Force summary of judgements

Neighbourhood Policing	Grade
Neighbourhood Policing	Good
Performance management	Grade
Performance management	Good
Protecting vulnerable people	Grade
Child abuse	Fair
Domestic violence	Fair
Public protection	Poor
Missing persons	Good

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Neighbourhood Policing

GRADE	GOOD
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National grade distribution

Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
6	14	21	2

National contextual factors

The national Neighbourhood Policing programme was launched by ACPO in April 2005 to support the Government's vision of a policing service which is both accessible and responsive to the needs of local people. It was anticipated that, by April 2007, every area across England and Wales would have a Neighbourhood Policing presence appropriate to local needs, with all Neighbourhood Policing teams in place by April 2008. For local communities this means:

- increased numbers of police community support officers (PCSOs) patrolling their streets, addressing anti-social behaviour and building relationships with local people;
- access both to information about policing in their local area and to a point of contact in their Neighbourhood Policing team; and
- having the opportunity to tell the police about the issues that are causing them concern and helping to shape the response to those issues (Home Office, May 2006).

By focusing on the key areas of resources, familiarity and accessibility, problem identification and joint problem solving, this inspection has identified the extent to which Neighbourhood Policing is being implemented. It has also examined forces' capability and commitment to sustain implementation beyond April 2008.

Contextual factors

Cumbria Constabulary implemented a policing structure that supports Neighbourhood Policing principles in April 2003. Neighbourhood teams, of which there are 21, are named Local Policing Teams (LPTs) and each includes an integrated team of officers performing response, community and supervisory roles. While LPTs vary in number and staffing, the same basic structure exists across the constabulary with a single ethos of service to the community and common roles, lines of accountability, training and problem-solving methodology. A deployment plan and Neighbourhood Policing patrol plan are in place for each LPT which includes deployment of the wider police family of PCSOs and special constables.

The constabulary has in place a well-developed RESPECT campaign which, in partnership, aims to tackle anti-social behaviour. The RESECT campaign is integral to the Neighbourhood Policing ethos.

As part of the inspection process, a telephone survey of 100 randomly selected residents was carried out, consisting of six questions about their experience and view of how Neighbourhood Policing is being delivered. For all six questions the constabulary was performing better than the national average. Questions related to awareness of

Neighbourhood Policing teams in the area, ease of contact, and consulting on, prioritising and tackling local problems.

The British Crime Survey has indicated that the percentage of people who think that the constabulary does a good job has increased and is well above the most similar forces (MSF) average. Perceptions of anti-social behaviour have declined over the period 2005/06 to 2006/07 resulting in a figure below the MSF average. The constabulary demonstrated exceptional performance, being well above the MSF averages in understanding local issues, taking action to deal with the issues, and reliability in dealing with minor crime.

Strengths

Neighbourhood Policing is a philosophy that runs through the constabulary, visible through its culture. The Neighbourhood Policing change programme is structured and overseen by a project board, which includes police authority representatives, the assistant chief constable (ACC) (organisational development and partnerships) and the basic command unit (BCU) commander from the pathfinder site. Project staff are PRINCE2-trained and work is undertaken to an agreed standard. Governance arrangements are in place and there is a comprehensive communication strategy contained within the Citizen Focus project and specifically for Neighbourhood Policing.

The constabulary's policing style is communicated via the annual report, policing plan, strategy plan, posters, and the work of individual police officers when dealing directly with the community. Each LPT has its own team plan based on its relevant BCU priorities and defines what local teams intend to deliver in their communities.

The ACC (operations) drives progress of Neighbourhood Policing in an operational context, together with BCU commanders, and is responsible for effective service delivery, reinforced through the performance framework. The ACC (organisational development and partnerships) leads on all customer issues and drives the Quality of Service Commitment action plan. The constabulary has an established quality of service steering group and ensures that Neighbourhood Policing is fully integrated with quality of service.

Neighbourhood Policing, call handling and other customer-facing functions are all well integrated with the Citizen Focus agenda, consistent with the national Quality of Service Commitment, and collectively delivering.

Chief officers and the police authority are committed to a partnership approach to community policing and have seats on the county strategic partnership board and joint action group. They are meaningfully engaged in developing the Safer and Stronger Communities partnership as part of the county's Local Area Agreement (LAA). All BCU commanders work in Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRPs) to detailed action plans emanating from joint audits. Police authority members have a seat on the force strategic crime board and attend performance development conferences (PDCs).

There is evidence of a culture of responsiveness towards repeat victims, victims of hate crime, witnesses and vulnerable people, which meet the Victim Code and the National Quality of Service Commitment. Appropriate policies are in place. This approach is driven through Professionalising the Investigative Process (PIP) training, integrated competency framework (ICF) and performance development review (PDR) standards and the volume crime policy.

The further development of Neighbourhood Policing is a key priority in the annual policing plan and the constabulary has been recognised as a beacon for work ongoing as part of the RESPECT agenda to tackle anti-social behaviour.

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Strategic priorities and arrangements for Neighbourhood Policing delivery are developed as a result of influence from partners and groups, and partners use joint training and funding opportunities. Community officers and PCSOs actively engage in multi-agency problem-solving policing and there is evidence of successful outcomes resulting from joint initiatives.

Partnership information is fully integrated and disseminated to partners through the Cumbria partnership support department (CuPS) which is a jointly funded arrangement located within police HQ. There is a Neighbourhood Policing intranet website which provides all demographic and socio-economic information for each ward.

There is effective recognition given to Neighbourhood Policing teams, with investment in training for Neighbourhood Policing staff, the development of specific ward schemes and community officers being eligible for special priority payments. In addition, there is an annual award to the most outstanding community officer. A mature project plan is in place and all existing community resources (230) have been trained in Neighbourhood Policing modules 1 and 2. The modules for National Intelligence Model (NIM) and Problem Solving have been trialled.

It is envisaged that responsibility for continued implementation will be handed over to BCUs by November 2007. There is an effective structure for the continuation of implementation which involves a senior rank chairing regular implementation team meetings in their respective BCU. The process is fully documented in the Neighbourhood Policing *Beyond the Project* document and core business action plan. Implementation team meetings include all relevant staff and managers, including representatives of the force project team. Currently implementation is a dual HQ/BCU responsibility.

There is good evidence of the constabulary's commitment to self-improvement. The constabulary has adopted the national Neighbourhood Policing self-inspection process and the self-assessment has been completed in all three BCUs. Action plans for improvement are in place and are being progressed locally by BCU implementation teams and within departments.

The constabulary has an established PCSO development group to discuss, among other things, developments in roles, powers, equipment and patrol. This group is viewed as a valuable addition to the governance and improvement process for PCSOs and provides an opportunity for feedback from practitioners and the sharing of good practice.

Agreement has been reached with LAA partners to share ward profiles, which include identified neighbourhoods, key community contacts, engagement techniques and results. There has been significant strategic and tactical partnership involvement in joint training, engagement and profiling products. The project is fully funded through the finance department, with a dedicated budget holder at chief superintendent rank.

The force area is covered by a named community resource in every ward in the county. There are agreed posts for 105 PCSOs and the constabulary has recruited and deployed 87 of those to date. An achievable plan is in place to recruit and train the remainder. The PCSOs are supported by partnership funding in three neighbourhood management areas. The constabulary has in place a system of hybrid officers of which there are 68 at present. These are patrol officers in LPTs that have a dedicated community responsibility in the more quiet areas of the constabulary using evidence-based deployment methods.

Neighbourhood profiles are used effectively within NIM processes, such as strategic assessments, and are subject to regular review. Profiles undertaken include a range of data, for example socio-demographics and key local community groups. There are effective protocols in place concerning partner information sharing.

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There is evidence that partners are part of strategic tasking and co-ordination group (TCG) meetings in BCUs and are seen as adding value to the process. Partners included are the fire service, CDRP representatives, and local authority community safety and council housing departments, although their attendance to date has been sporadic and inconsistent. Additional meetings take place to allow BCUs to consult and liaise with key partners, ie CDRP, local strategic partnership (LSP) and LAA.

The constabulary recognises the importance of continuing to develop systems to define, capture and disseminate community intelligence through the NIM process. The community intelligence development officer (CIDO) is a new CDRP-funded post for 12 months in South Cumbria. Information is collated by the CIDO and published for public and partner access under the heading 'The Nexus' on www.streetsafe.org.uk. This is a monthly newsletter to provide information and insight into issues that affect the quality of life in communities across South Cumbria. In other BCUs clerks working within intelligence units have the responsibility for collating and disseminating community intelligence.

Community impact assessments are used by strategic and tactical TCG meetings to determine appropriate police and partner responses to community concerns, sensitive police operations, etc. Systems are in place to ensure that assessments are subject to external scrutiny.

There is clear evidence of the constabulary's commitment to dealing with issues of organised crime and counter-terrorism and clear linkages to Neighbourhood Policing activity. There is a clear vision in place to strengthen protective services to meet policing demands that extend beyond the constabulary's own geographical area, such as counter-terrorism and serious and organised crime. Each BCU has in place a dedicated special branch officer who drives activity in respect of the 'rich picture' and the gathering of intelligence within the intelligence requirement. These officers attend TCG meetings and contribute to strategic assessments, control strategy and relevant prevention activity.

There is clear evidence of the force community engagement strategy being implemented and integrated with the involvement and activity of partners, the community and voluntary support groups. Maintaining a high profile for Neighbourhood Policing is achieved with regular positive articles in the local press, responding to letters and, at a local level, placing flyers into residences and shops when engaged in problem solving.

Through the engagement strategy, Neighbourhood Policing officers have identified new and informal groups, such as young people, older people, gypsy travellers and the polish community.

Key Individual Networks (KINs) and Streetsafe in each BCU are ongoing community projects which aim to tackle local community problems at a local level. They are primarily used for formal community engagement, which meets the needs of the community. KINs are becoming more established and the constabulary's approach has been recognised by the Jill Dando Institute as excellent practice.

Independent Advisory Groups (IAGs) at both strategic (force) and tactical (BCU) levels are influencing issues across all strands of policing. BCU-based IAGs have a wide membership representing a number of hard-to-reach groups, including migrant workers.

A variety of methods of customer consultation are being used within the constabulary. In particular, victim surveys are distributed to victims of crime, and community focus groups are organised annually to assess policing priorities and more frequently for local policing needs. In addition, the force website has been redesigned and re-launched and provides the opportunity for users to give feedback.

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The LPT structure aims to improve customer access to services linked to an additional 21 LPT sites providing static police points of contact within the force area. Public surgeries are held in local areas and, in order to reach outlying villages and communities, mobile police stations are utilised. Each LPT inspector is responsible for liaising with community representative groups and agencies in assessing satisfaction levels.

In order to assess the views of local people, senior management teams make themselves visible through 'Face the People meetings, neighbourhood forums and police public consultative meetings (section 96 meetings).

The approach to problem solving is standardised across the constabulary. Problem solving is undertaken with partners and the public, and activity and a systematic corporate approach to recording problems in SARA (scanning, analysis, response, and assessment) problem-solving plans has been introduced using the Performance Dashboard. This allows the effective recording of activity and analysis of problems and issues in a graphical format, and facilitates effective evaluation using the problem analysis triangle (PAT) format. KINs are re-surveyed to ascertain perceptions as to the success of the activity, and when results are satisfactory the activity is signed off by a supervisor. The feedback process is relatively new and while some of the KIN cycles have been completed, others remain work in progress.

All community officers and PCSOs have received SARA problem-solving training and this problem-solving approach is having an effect, particularly in respect of reducing volume crime. The same staff have also been trained to identify community priorities through the use of KIN surveys.

The constabulary has introduced dedicated problem-solving teams in all BCUs which are trained to an advanced level, and support community officers and PCSOs to identify and deliver solutions to anti-social behaviour issues in partnership with other agencies, to complete KIN surveys, initiate SARA problem-solving plans, and, where appropriate, harness support from the BCU community safety department and the CDRP.

The North BCU has taken the activity of dedicated problem-solving teams a step further with the development of a multi-agency co-located management unit. This unit is located outside police premises and includes matched resources from the local CDRP, fire and rescue service, and a housing association. The unit has an agreed accountability structure and a SARA-based problem-solving approach.

For the purposes of problem solving and their Neighbourhood Policing project, police students are involved in problem-solving exercises in the community as part of their training which entail delivery of presentation to partners using agreed problem-solving techniques such as SARA and PAT.

Relevant partnerships are established across the county to address local priorities, support repeat victims and deal with emerging issues, for example anti-social behaviour, through case conferences and appropriate action. A county-wide operation is in place called RESPECT to deal with these issues at neighbourhood level. Community priorities are raised at neighbourhood, BCU and force-level tasking meetings. Partners are involved in police community engagement training and problem-solving training. Student officers are involved in visits to partner agencies to increase understanding of each others' role and problem-solving involvement.

There is reassurance that neighbourhood priorities are effectively identified, feedback is provided on action taken, and a wide range of engagement tactics are tailored to the specific needs of individual groups. There is a clear focus on capacity building within

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communities, an emphasis on neighbourhood priorities, and the use of staff with appropriate skills and knowledge and cultural understanding to build bridges with the community.

The constabulary has an established quality of service steering group and has undertaken an impact assessment and gap analysis of systems and current service delivery.

Each LPT team is led by an inspector and contains a mixture of patrol officers, community officers and PCSOs. Processes are in place to harness the support of patrol officers to help solve community problems, and community officers assist with demand management on their areas. Any such tasking of community officers does not constitute an abstraction.

LPT inspectors have a dual role which provides an effective and pragmatic solution within the limits of the constabulary resources. Inspectors clearly understand what is expected of them. During the course of a five-week cycle of shifts an LPT inspector has to devote some 30% of their time to being available for 24/7 duties (eg Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 requirements). There is flexibility in the remaining 70% of their time to arrange duties and commitments according to community needs.

Resources were allocated to the LPTs following an exercise in demand profiling, consultation with the LPT inspectors, and the professional judgement of the senior management team.

The constabulary has in place a human resources (HR) strategy for Neighbourhood Policing, although the strategy is new and at this time is not fully embedded. The strategy outlines clear role definitions, expectations and training for dedicated neighbourhood teams including PCSOs and special constables. Role definitions are understood by staff and feature as part of the PDR process.

There is clear evidence of continuity and succession planning for community officers and PCSOs, the responsibility for which is with area personnel advisers in BCUs. Due to the relatively small number of officers in the constabulary, community officers are not viewed as specialist posts.

There is clear evidence that objectives for LPT teams and specifically for community officers are relative to their role. Objectives feature in PDRs and help drive activity and performance. All PCSOs receive a PDR on an annual basis which includes generic objectives such as on race and diversity.

A generic and systematic approach to performance management is being employed across LPTs. Quarterly performance reviews are held between senior officers and LPT inspectors which entails an examination of local team performance, the BCU performance plan, staffing and sickness, PCSO roles/locations/performance, KIN surveys, problem profiles and any issues raised by the inspectors. Actions are agreed and progress is regularly monitored.

In some BCUs further developments have been made and community officers have a different set of performance measures from patrol officers. While some measures are common, additional measures reflect the community focus of the role.

The constabulary has adopted an external and internal communication strategy specific to Neighbourhood Policing. There is good awareness as to the policing philosophy and approach being practised by community officers and PCSOs. A variety of methods are being used to inform the public and partners of activities, including newsletters and bulletins, the internet and regular meetings. The constabulary hosts an annual partnership conference involving county-wide partners which is used to inform strategic priorities. The communication strategy includes the need to provide feedback to the community which is

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undertaken through various meetings and publications. The communication strategy is owned by the marketing and communication department as part of core business.

The force operations board has discussed the abstraction of community officers from LPTs which includes a 20% target. The current level of abstraction is stated to be 7%. Agreement has been reached to monitor abstractions through an annual activity-based costing exercise, and Neighbourhood Policing implementation teams in BCUs have a responsibility to monitor, review and implement actions if targets are not met.

LPTs are broken down into a number of neighbourhoods which have been defined through local agreements between police, partners and communities, which take local differences into account and are reviewed regularly. All neighbourhoods are identified within the force area and digitally mapped. There are a total of 757. This data is included in an electronic ward-profiling system. There has been meaningful consultation with partners in the neighbourhood definition process and there is an agreement to share ward profiles and engagement data with partners.

Community tensions are monitored by the HQ force intelligence bureau and BCU intelligence units, and assessments are produced monthly. If a grading of a situation is of concern, then the policing response will be raised. The constabulary has undertaken cultural audits which are being managed through the diversity unit and utilised by the Neighbourhood Policing project.

There is a good professional relationship and clear links between the force Neighbourhood Policing project manager and the head of training to ensure that training provision meets the needs of Neighbourhood Policing implementation. In addition, there is a named contact within the training department who owns the Neighbourhood Policing training portfolio.

Appropriate training is being delivered to community officers using products developed by the national police training organisation, NPIA. Training is being delivered in BCUs using a variety of approaches including e-learning and workbooks. The training department has now incorporated Neighbourhood Policing training into its normal business. Currently there are 230 Neighbourhood Policing officers trained to at least a minimum standard, including partners.

Training demands are being met for PCSOs which are overseen by the force professional development unit. Area-based training resources are dedicated to this task. Training sessions have been undertaken, with more courses planned to cater for the total of 105 PCSOs. Training needs are discussed in the PCSO development group.

An evaluation process is in place to test the impact of Neighbourhood Policing training. Neighbourhood Policing training modules 1 and 2 are evaluated by the force training assessor on an ongoing basis. The Performance Dashboard is used by supervisors to monitor the impact of training on the performance of individuals.

PCSOs and special constables are fully embedded in Neighbourhood Policing teams. Special constables are allocated to an LPT and are encouraged by managers and supervisors to work within it. They are treated as valued members of the team, often working without the supervision of a regular officer but with appropriate support. PCSOs provide a constant presence in wards.

There is evidence of a structured deployment, with deployment data used to deploy community resources within the remit of the deployment plan. Their neighbourhood activities are determined by the LPT sergeant or inspector in accordance with the deployment plan, with a focus being on addressing ward priorities. Supervision and the force dispatch centre include checks upon appropriateness of their deployment.

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Expansion of the PCSOs' role is being developed through the partnerships department which is exploring ways to effectively liaise and engage with young people through schools and other educational establishments in order to tackle anti-social behaviour.

Neighbourhood officers have appropriate and monitored investigative workloads and clearly defined roles in dealing with incidents. A volume crime policy is in place for all officers in LPTs (who perform roles as both response and community officers) taking into account neighbourhood practices.

There is 100% coverage of named points of contact across the force area through LPT community officers, hybrid officers and PCSOs. The constabulary has identified all of its neighbourhoods and is in the process of consulting with partners as to their make-up. There is evidence of systems in place to ensure that the community knows the name and contact details of neighbourhood officers, for example through its innovative use of KINs of which there are 1,980 key individuals. The force website, posters and leaflets make the public aware of how to find those details. Systems are in place, such as mystery shopper exercises, to regularly review and test effectiveness.

Work in progress

The existing core leadership programme includes Neighbourhood Policing as a key element. Currently the programme is for newly promoted sergeants and inspectors. The constabulary should progress its proposal to allow all sergeants, inspectors and suitable police staff to access relevant Centrex training modules.

The constabulary should continue to develop an effective evaluation method to assess the operational impact of modular-based training products on the provision of Neighbourhood Policing. Measurement methods should be in line with the capture of existing performance data.

Partnership involvement in Neighbourhood Policing is promoted through TCG meetings. The recent addition of community priorities to the control strategy will make this more meaningful by creating more opportunities for partnership tasking and participation through multi-agency problem-solving.

There has been discussion with key partners about harmonising planning cycles and processes to create a single partnership strategic assessment. The force partnership department is currently working to develop joint strategic assessments which are beginning to emerge. Meanwhile the CDRP maintains clear operational links to the BCU control strategy through key priority working groups on the themes of violent crime and disorder, anti-social behaviour and criminal damage, and acquisitive crime.

The CIDO is a new CDRP-funded post for 12 months in the south of the county. The post holder extracts community information mainly from intelligence and other reports submitted monthly by all community constables and PCSOs. Forms have recently been distributed for the first time to partners in some BCUs for completion when information they consider relevant is highlighted. The role is still developing.

In some BCUs, KIN surveys are in the process of being updated and are still developing. Initial surveys have been conducted, but to date follow-up surveys are not consistently completed to assess the impact of the previous three months of activity towards the identified local priority of anti-social behaviour. In this regard the feedback loop to the public is not complete.

In one BCU the community safety department is co-located with representatives of the fire service, victim support, the domestic violence team, the housing association and district

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council staff in a self-contained wing of the local civic centre. There is controlled and secure access to police databases and co-location will facilitate and promote more effective multi-agency solutions to problems and improved information sharing. This is new development which, when evaluated, should be considered for other BCUs.

The dedicated problem-solvers intend to divide their time between working with their LPT staff and multi-agency community safety staff in the co-location. To date the main task has been to work with community officers and PCSOs to ensure that problems are identified and solutions actioned through the KIN surveys. The constabulary should ensure that emphasis is placed on the core problem-solving responsibility of community officers and that the role of dedicated problem-solvers is made clear to staff within the constabulary and to key partners to avoid confusion and provide a consistent approach to their use.

Effective contact management (ECM) units have recently been implemented in each BCU to improve the effectiveness of demand management. The arrangements include a new grading system and extend options for dealing with calls to include telephone resolution. Responsibility for responding to calls graded 1–3 is shared between patrol, community and roads policing officers according to proximity and availability. Grade 4 calls (delayed response or planned contact within 72 hours) may be tasked through an LPT supervisor to patrol or community officers or PCSOs. The new policy removes some of the distinction between patrol and community officers and places the onus for responding to grade 1, 2 and 3 calls upon the nearest deployable resource. The new arrangement is a pilot scheme and will be reviewed later in 2007. There is potential to allow better diary management of community officers' work and more involvement in problem solving.

Investigators across the BCU in the south of the county are nominally aligned to LPTs. Alignment is intended to focus investigators on providing support to LPTs in respect of addressing community priorities. This still needs development.

The approach to the allocation of resources when originally undertaken was not scientific and anomalies currently exist in the allocation of PCSOs on account of funding streams. This anomaly will disappear with time, and resource allocation will be subject to periodic evaluation to inform future allocation. BCU allocation of officers has recently been reviewed within the context of the requirement to find force resources to support the ongoing force change programme.

The constabulary volunteer scheme is not yet in place but continues to develop. There is in place a dedicated volunteer scheme implementation officer as part of the Neighbourhood Policing project plan and scoping has commenced. The North BCU has been identified as a pilot base for this work.

The constabulary is in the process of developing the training programme to facilitate PCSO trainers to undertake future training with PCSOs.

To strengthen the constabulary approach to self-improvement work, a chief superintendent has been tasked with undertaking a review using the BCU self-assessment guide. Intelligence will specifically include community intelligence and developing a richer picture around wider level 2 or 3 intelligence. Work is yet to be commenced.

Areas for improvement

In order to highlight the continuing status of Neighbourhood Policing to staff and embed the philosophy into day-to-day policing, ACPO portfolio ownership should change from the ACC (organisational development and partnerships) to the ACC (operations) following the signing off of the corporate project.

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Each BCU at present has in place a Neighbourhood Policing implementation team to progress activity in line with the requirements of the Neighbourhood Policing project plan. This meeting is currently attended by the Neighbourhood Policing project manager for the force, although this will cease when the project is finalised later in 2007. The constabulary should put in place arrangements to maintain a corporate approach to development, particularly in respect of fundamental and complex outstanding issues and development such as community intelligence and the development of KINs.

LPTs are based around a collection of wards, and this is coterminous with partner activity. Vulnerable neighbourhoods have not yet been defined, although this is in the project plan for implementation.

Benefit would be added to the change process if key partners were to be invited to BCUs' Neighbourhood Policing implementation team meetings. This would encourage an inclusive approach and consultation within key phases of change.

Although the Performance Dashboard is in place to visually display community and ward profiles, further work is necessary to allow effective analysis to shape community profiles and assist senior management to target resources effectively. This issue should be resolved when more community analysts are recruited as planned.

Currently each LPT inspector is asked to nominate the priority community problem in their respective area. Progress in relation to these problems is closely scrutinised at BCU TCG meetings and additional resources can be sought internally or from partners through the tasking process. Although community problems remain predominantly a focus for community officers and PCSOs, there is scope to secure more involvement and participation from patrol officers through the briefing system.

The constabulary should drive the development of a suitable infrastructure for community intelligence in line with the terms of reference within the Neighbourhood Policing project. The aim should be to ensure that all streams of community intelligence are identified, to develop processes to analyse and disseminate that intelligence, to ensure that Neighbourhood Policing is integrated into the NIM process, and to allow a two-way intelligence flow within the community so that results of community intelligence are fed back.

The constabulary should ensure that sufficient analytical capability is in place in all BCUs to effectively manage community intelligence via the NIM process. Other than a recently appointed force Neighbourhood Policing community intelligence analyst to whom BCUs have access, there are no dedicated community intelligence resources in place in BCUs and this severely reduces proactive capability to develop an improved system and to effectively analyse intelligence. The constabulary should seek funding to employ community intelligence resources in all BCUs to develop systems and drive community intelligence.

Appropriate awareness training should be provided to officers, staff and relevant partners as to the potential value of community intelligence and how they can contribute effectively to the NIM process. However, it is noted that in order to promote this the constabulary is taking part in a national community tensions team and Neighbourhood Policing programme pilot of intelligence and community engagement training for community and intelligence unit staff.

Although the IAG has been used to check the progress of the Neighbourhood Policing project and as a sounding board for community engagement tactics, the approach could be enhanced and communication progressed with hard-to-reach groups such as new or emerging groups into Cumbria and those historically reluctant to engage. The IAG should be utilised for this purpose.

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Although the grading policy is in place, there is no requirement in the case of low-graded calls to inform the public who ring the police of the estimated time it will take to have an officer attend the incident. Although this approach is within the guidance of the ECM policy, the constabulary should be mindful of the potential negative impact on customer satisfaction levels and through proactive education ensure that the public are made fully aware of the new deployment arrangements.

While the principal role of patrol officers is to respond to calls from the public, they also have allocated geographic responsibility. In reality, however, they are directed according to need and availability rather than geography and respond across the whole of the BCU area. Some patrol officers have little awareness or understanding of the role of community officers and in some parts of the constabulary collaboration is very limited. There is scope to improve collaboration by promoting the Citizen Focus agenda and raising awareness of the importance of the role of community officers and PCSOs.

To allow increased accessibility, the constabulary should consider the introduction of personal email addresses for community officers and PCSOs which should be published on the website. This approach will complement the Citizen Focus agenda.

There are plans in place for the force and BCU performance processes to hold Neighbourhood Policing staff to account for delivery of locally agreed plans taking into account confidence and satisfaction measure levels and appropriate measures at neighbourhood level. Currently there are no specific performance indicators for Neighbourhood Policing community officers assigned to LPTs, although in some parts of the force supervisors are developing ad hoc approaches. Draft proposals as to an appropriate performance framework for Neighbourhood Policing officers are being developed and progress should be driven by chief officers.

There is an inconsistent approach to performance management for PCSOs or special constables across the force. In general, accountability for performance is undertaken through individual LPT sergeants or inspectors, but there is no corporate framework. The constabulary should put in place a corporate performance management framework which captures the qualitative contribution of their role as well as relevant quantitative measures.

The constabulary has discussed and defined abstractions of staff from Neighbourhood Policing duties in depth at strategic level and has developed a clear understanding and agreement at this level to robustly manage abstractions. There was no evidence that all Neighbourhood Policing staff, supervisors and managers were aware of this policy decision or that abstraction levels were effectively monitored over the long term. As Cumbria Constabulary is relatively small, it is essential to maintain some flexibility of staff, but the success of community officers is built upon the consistency of approach and operational availability in their nominated geographical area. The constabulary should ensure that managers are made fully aware of the decision of ACPO officers around abstractions from Neighbourhood Policing and make a specific force policy available to supervisors.

Formal monitoring of abstractions takes place only once a year in line with activity-based costing activity which is insufficient to allow a meaningful management overview of levels of abstraction and generate action if targets are not met. Monitoring and targets should include both pre-planned and spontaneous incident abstractions (with allowances made for local major incidents that temporarily skew the level of abstraction) and abstraction from key roles, not merely geographical abstraction. This monitoring should distinguish between the abstraction levels for police officers and PCSOs, the former being potentially more likely to suffer abstractions. Ongoing monitoring will allow the constabulary to identify any emergent pressures that have the potential to impact upon the delivery of Neighbourhood Policing and take remedial steps as appropriate.

Developing Practice

TITLE: Ward profiles

PROBLEM:

The constabulary identified the opportunity to develop a knowledge and resource intranet site to provide a central point of information, available to police and partners, providing corporacy and continuity in a number of areas:

- how to know they understand their communities;
- how to know the context of problems in neighbourhoods in order to provide correct solutions;
- how to prevent the loss of knowledge with staff change;
- how to pool best practice and good ideas;
- how to support neighbourhood practitioners;
- how to provide a corporate and meaningful image of Neighbourhood Policing to individual members of staff; and
- how to performance-manage community engagement.

SOLUTION:

Partner agency data was pooled and information products provided to draw together demographic, fire service, health, education, crime and other social data. Using the Audit Commission's standard as a template, ward profiles were created for all 168 Cumbrian wards, presented within specific ward pages on the force intranet under the banner of Neighbourhood Policing. Also created were links to pages or sites of best practice in engagement, problem solving, good ideas, marketing, funding opportunities, PCSO information and guidance, and other useful links.

Every community officer and PCSO was trained in community engagement and the use of ward profiles to better understand communities as part of the scanning and analysis process.

Each officer now has their own ward profile page, containing ACORN, CCTV location and neighbourhood maps. Ward summaries containing demographics, crime and anti-social behaviour trends down to output area level are presented. Key contacts charts covering the Audit Commission categories are created and populated for each ward, including Key Individuals from KIN surveys. Links to the vulnerable locality index and statistical work to identify and prioritise vulnerable neighbourhoods were also placed on the site.

OUTCOME(S):

- Key contacts have become corporate knowledge, along with data products to provide continuity beyond staff changes.
- Problem solving, marketing, funding streams and new PCSO practices are now

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resourced from the one site.

- Partners are on board with the sites, joining a data-sharing group to export the additional Neighbourhood Ward profiles to each agency.
- Work has begun to build the covert side to the site to inform the 'Richer Picture'.

Neighbourhood Policing practitioners are better resourced and informed using this as a one-stop shop for officers' Neighbourhood Policing information. The latest HMIC and British Crime Survey shows that Cumbria Constabulary is a leading area for local communities' knowledge about their LPTs, what police are doing in their local area and their confidence in the local police service.

FORCE CONTACT: Inspector David Willetts – 01768 217334

TITLE: Key individual networks

PROBLEM:

The constabulary considered how best to target engagement at individual communities to identify the correct signal crimes and incidents that affect their confidence. Included in these considerations was how to know they have consulted the correct people about what the whole community priority is, and how to know the context of a problem in a particular neighbourhood in order to provide the correct solution and performance-manage community engagement.

Established consultation methods did not allow these questions to be answered as effectively as they might. Some meetings had too many or too few attendees, many of whom had single agendas or were not representative of the make-up of a community as a whole. Large surveys are not answered by all sections of the community, do not identify issues to a neighbourhood level, and are both costly and time consuming to administer.

SOLUTION:

Cumbria Constabulary developed a KIN for each identified priority community in Cumbria. Such groups consist of individuals who, by nature of their lifestyle or occupation, are more sensitive to their local environment than their peer group. A total of 20 key individuals are selected according to the make-up of each neighbourhood, with considerations for the strands of diversity.

Examples of the lifestyles of a key individual are shopkeepers, caretakers, taxi drivers, publicans, street cleaners, young parents, residents who have taken 'defensive measures' on their property, and teenagers.

Every community officer and PCSO was trained in the KIN concept and tasked with identifying their highest-priority neighbourhood. Each officer then had to choose 20 key individuals within that area and ask them 14 set questions. The answers to these questions were recorded and then the results submitted onto an easy-to-use spreadsheet which automatically produces graphs to clearly show what the issues are. These results are shown on a constabulary-wide performance site.

After the community officer or PCSO feels they have made a difference with their problem solving, they return to the same key individuals and ask them the same questions to see if the police response has made a difference. There is no predetermined time that an officer

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must return to the KIN, except that it must be at least once every six months. The results of this engagement are recorded in the same way, so officers and supervisors can see whether the problem-solving activity has had an effect and whether tactics have to be reviewed.

OUTCOME(S):

A total of 110 communities have been engaged with in this manner and their priorities identified. The majority of these related to anti-social behaviour and over 90% have already been addressed by the police, public and partners.

The results of the KIN surveys have correlated with existing consultation data but local context is now known and the personal follow-up to these individuals is contributing to confidence in the local police service.

FORCE CONTACT: Inspector David Willetts – 01768 217334

Performance Management

GRADE	GOOD
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National grade distribution

Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
6	29	8	0

National contextual factors

There is no single accepted model of performance management across the police service but any such model or framework must be fit for purpose. Ideally, forces should demonstrate that individuals at every level of the organisation understand their contribution to converting resources into agreed delivery, and know how they will be held to account. On a daily basis, first-line supervisors monitor, support and quality assure the performance of their teams. At the other end of the spectrum, chief officer-led performance meetings – often based loosely on the American Compstat model – are a vehicle for accountability and improvement. Robust leadership, a commitment to improvement and reliable, real-time information systems are all critical factors in effective performance management.

There is no mechanistic link between overall force performance and the grade awarded in this framework. The grade is based on the quality of the force’s processes that enable it to identify and react to changes in performance.

Contextual factors

The constabulary has had some notable successes over recent years. The performance of the constabulary over the previous 12 months is impressive with the best-ever performance figures for the constabulary being announced. The constabulary has reduced violent crime by 12%, criminal damage by 8%, house burglary by 25%, robbery by 24%, and theft from a motor vehicle by 12%. Some 11.5% of all calls received over the previous 12 months are reports of anti-social behaviour. This is a key focus for the constabulary during the next year and links to the RESPECT programme.

There has been a significant investment in leadership delivering well-developed command teams who are purposeful, organised and co-ordinated. Business intelligence has been developed, for example in call handling, NIM and finance, and there has been investment in the communications and marketing department.

Strengths

There is a clearly articulated vision and strategy for the constabulary, with which staff are familiar and that is consistent with the strategies of partner agencies and with the National Community Safety Plan (incorporating the National Policing Plan). Force objectives are complementary to the priorities of key partners and joint tasking both at tactical level and strategic level is in place. The policing plan 2007/08 outlines key priorities on which the constabulary will focus. This has been well publicised.

Strong and proactive leadership is provided by chief officers on performance management and development of a performance culture and personal involvement in the targeted implementation of a range of new performance management tools, PDCs and interim BCU

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performance meetings. Actions are allocated as part of the process to specific owners with dates for completion and reporting back.

The constabulary and police authority have in place appropriate arrangements to oversee the development of the annual policing plan through frequent meetings of the policing plan and performance committee leading up to the plan being published. This development necessarily involves target setting taking account of national, local and partnership targets (through the LAA) which is undertaken.

There is clarity about the roles and responsibilities of the police authority, Chief Constable and senior managers at all levels for performance. A corporate governance structure is in place, with clear authority levels for decision making on force strategy and policy arrangements for timely reviews, which engages with the police authority.

The PDC process has been in existence for 18 months and is well established in the constabulary. The conference takes place on a quarterly basis and is attended by all ACPO officers and senior managers in the constabulary. Police authority representatives also attend. The process allows the chief officers to drive key messages regarding performance and to scrutinise operational performance across all BCUs against set targets. The ACC (operations) encourages a 'just one more' approach to crime detections and to drive performance improvement which has had notable success over the past 12 months with almost all crime categories showing improvement.

The key strategies of support departments, such as finance, information and communications technology (ICT) and HR, are becoming more integrated with corporate strategy, force and command plans. The head of strategic development liaises with the heads of ICT, finance and HR and all work collectively to deliver force goals.

There is a clear vision in place together with a major change programme and accompanying strategy to strengthen protective services to meet policing demands that extend beyond the constabulary's own geographical area, such as counter-terrorism and serious and organised crime. There is an acceptance that level 2 capacity falls short of acceptable, as is evidenced in the 2006 Baseline Assessment.

The constabulary has embarked on a four-year change programme to address shortfalls. Significant proactivity has taken place in respect of intelligence gathering and working with other agencies in the force area which have been successful. Currently plans and agreements are in place for cross-border challenges with surrounding regional and Scottish forces and formal and informal collaboration exists with other forces such as the Police Service of Northern Ireland.

Performance targets are cascaded down to LPTs from BCU level. Different targets are agreed with each LPT inspector according to the performance requirements and capacity to improve. Targets are based on a three-year average performance and targets are documented in the annual LPT plan. BCU targets are meaningfully discussed with CDRPs prior to being finalised.

The strategic planning framework in place presents a logical approach to planning. Plans cascade down from the force three-year strategy to the annual policing plan then to departmental and unit plans and team plans. Priorities and objectives are clearly linked in plans. Officers and staff have individual objectives in PDRs and activity sheets, all of which are intended to drive improvement and performance. There is clear evidence that due consideration has been given to the reconciliation of national and local priorities.

The police authority has in place effective scrutiny arrangements through a policing plan and performance committee which meets quarterly. The committee is chaired by the lead on

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performance management and attended by the ACC (operations). The police authority is supported by a performance officer. The role of the committee is to oversee performance of the force against the performance targets and operational priorities documented in the policing plan and challenges are effectively made by members. There is focus on main crime types as well as key performance issues such as contact management, progress of the Respect campaign, public satisfaction levels and attendance at work. Scrutiny arrangements are relatively new following a review of police authority committee structures undertaken by the authority. There is in place a newly established governance committee and the policing plan and performance committee, both of which were set up in January 2007.

Effective monitoring systems are in place underpinned by a performance management framework, with clearly articulated priorities, which is widely understood by officers and staff at all levels.

Quarterly PDCs and their supporting processes are held at constabulary, BCU and LPT levels to ensure accountability for performance. They are linked to NIM processes, drive inspection and improvement review processes, and feed reporting arrangements to the police authority. Police authority representatives attend this meeting at force level.

The Chief Constable provides leadership and direction through the chairing of PDCs which focus on force-wide trends in volume crime and are an effective means of assessing the progress of crime-related activity, holding key staff to account and the sharing of best practice. The police authority attends and contributes to the PDC and also has a seat on the strategic crime board. Volume crime figures are part of the performance pack that is presented to chief officers the operations board where in-depth discussion takes place and actions are agreed.

Chief officers hold meetings at least on a weekly basis and for a full day each month. Regular meetings with BCU commanders and department heads take place to monitor the application of standards.

Volume crime performance is monitored by the use of the Performance Dashboard which allows early identification of deteriorating performance and quarterly performance together with the national iQuanta database. All BCUs address volume crime issues and notable incidents at daily management meetings and the fortnightly TCG meetings. The Performance Dashboard has been developed to support force and LPT performance review and decision making from a daily to quarterly basis.

The ACC (operations) provides a strong lead on volume crime investigation and maintains a focus on investigation and detection throughout the force. BCU commanders are effectively held to account by CDRPs, quarterly PDCs and interim performance reviews undertaken by the ACC (operations) on a monthly basis.

BCUs hold individual monthly performance reviews which are chaired by the relevant BCU commander. The posts of superintendent (operations) at each area are 'champions' for the management of volume crime reduction targets and LPTs hold individual performance targets across the range of volume crime categories. The ACC (operations) also chairs and drives the Respect campaign which is an initiative to reduce violent crime, criminal damage and anti-social behaviour.

The positive outputs in relation to detection rate and crime levels are reflective of the constabulary's strong and proactive approach to volume crime investigation.

There is effective use of survey data, with demonstrable evidence that survey findings inform service delivery. KIN surveys are undertaken on a regular basis across the force to

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identify local priorities. The constabulary's investment in the KIN process informs local priorities from which local policing action follows. Revisits are then used to inform the success of activity and to influence continuing action where necessary. Every problem-solving approach at a neighbourhood level included specific results analysis.

User satisfaction results are included in force performance conferences. In addition, the police authority reviews user satisfaction results on a quarterly basis and holds the force to account on user satisfaction performance alongside crime and detection performance.

Additionally, consultation takes place with the public and partners for the purposes of the policing plan. At a BCU level, consultation takes place in neighbourhood forums and in Meet the Police meetings. The constabulary also hosts seminars and meetings to deliver key messages and seek feedback. Themed consultation has recently taken place in respect of dealing with anti-social behaviour.

The constabulary has in place a resource allocation model which has been used to review resources across the three BCUs as part of work to identify resources for the protective services enhanced structure. The model involves senior budget holders and has resulted in an equitable distribution of resources according to workload and risk management. The model will be applied on an annual basis. PCSOs are allocated according to priorities and the influence of partnership funding.

Following the PDC, which is hosted and chaired by the Chief Constable, there are interim monthly meetings chaired by the ACC (operations) and rotating to each BCU. Each meeting is attended by the BCU commanders and their performance managers.

In BCUs there is a performance conference every three months which gathers together all LPT inspectors and managers and is chaired by the superintendent (operations). In addition, detective chief inspectors and chief inspectors speak to units on a monthly basis at the meeting. LPT inspectors are held accountable for performance, including crime rates, detection rates, arrests and maintaining local systems (important for access by call-handling and deployment staff).

A list of key performance headings are used as a framework which, in part, match the control strategy priorities, eg crime figures, detection rates, DNA/Finger Print hits, and are examined against previous performance. There are no targets at the present time.

The protective services command unit (PSCU) is included in interim performance visits undertaken by the ACC (operations) on a monthly basis. Visits are centred on BCU performance using the dataset from the previous PDC. BCUs take turns to host the meeting which focuses on that BCU's performance and the venue is changed monthly. Each meeting is attended by all BCU commanders and the commander for the PSCU.

Each BCU has its own policing plan setting out crime-related targets based upon an analysis of the local situation, the previous year's performance and any specific planned initiatives or operations intended. In areas where no national targets have been set, local targets have been defined.

Performance monitoring in BCUs is drilled down to individual level, with all police officers completing an individual activity and performance sheet on a monthly basis. These are assessed by the officers' own supervision and clear links are made with the BCU control strategy priorities.

BCUs are engaging with CDRPs to improve volume crime performance at a multi-agency level. Specific examples of local crime-related initiatives include Operation Streetsafe in Barrow, South Cumbria, to address house burglary; work with the CDRP in North Cumbria

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on a Safer Homes initiative; and the use of risk assessments in each domestic violence incident.

There is a clear link between force priorities outlined in the policing plan and PDR objectives for LPT officers, although objectives are not specific for the role of community officers and are more generic.

A role profile has been developed and agreed for performance inspectors that covers minimum corporate requirements. The post is centrally managed and is viewed as a corporate resource, although post holders are based locally in BCUs and the PSCU.

The performance inspectors meet formally on a monthly basis to discuss issues around their role, share good practice, and assess audit returns. Audit returns are examined. The process is mainly quantitative and not qualitative.

The constabulary has in place an audit systems manual which is categorised into various police activities covering 13 areas of police activity. The manual is managed locally by performance inspectors and requires them to undertake scheduled checks on a quarterly basis. Feedback is provided to the BCU senior management team as to areas for improvement. Currently strategic development is reviewing and updating the manual.

There is recognition of good performance, with appropriate and inclusive processes to reward good work and celebrate success, and there are effective monitoring systems enabling poor performance to be identified. Staff are aware of mechanisms for acknowledging good work and performance.

There is evidence of regular Chief Constable's commendation award ceremonies and there is an award for LPT officer of the month. There is an annual award for community constable of the year and the Tilley award which promotes innovative problem solving. Additionally, the ACC (operations) awards certificates to officers for outstanding operational performance and the force facilitates awards for partners and the public contributing to the RESPECT programme.

Police staff can be recognised for good work by any chief officer in accordance with the existing policy and appropriate examples exist from the operational arena.

Strategic planning is integrated with NIM processes, with the force control strategy reflecting national and local priorities. Plans are informed by feedback from service users, staff and partners and community consultation within a comprehensive consultation strategy. There is constructive engagement of the police authority in the planning process through regular scheduled working meetings between formal committee meetings.

Resource allocation involves senior budget holders, being based on efficiency savings according to risk management and reinvestment according to priorities. There are robust monitoring and review arrangements in place, with clear deliverables, timescales and review points. There is use of activity-based costing models in assessing and improving productivity, efficiency and effectiveness of activities.

There are monthly TCG meetings at force and BCU levels. These drive activity via the setting of policing priorities and objectives, which are collated on tactical menus with relevant action managers. There is a requirement for updates to be provided at the following meeting. All BCUs and HQ have control strategies, which highlight relevant priorities, and groups commission strategic and tactical assessments. Daily briefings are undertaken in all BCUs. The constabulary applies NIM principles to the selection and management of priorities within the policing plan.

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There is appropriate investment in business analysis capability, ie specific analysis of performance achievement across national and local indicators. Annual data requirements for core performance data are met in a timely and appropriate manner. There is monitoring of comparative data (force and BCU), enabling benchmarking of performance levels principally using iQuanta.

Work in progress

One key support department, the PSCU, has in place a departmental plan which commenced on 1 April 2007. The plan is new and not yet fully developed due to deliberation and delay caused by the national amalgamation debate. The format and management of this unit has been recently agreed; it follows a logical process and puts operational support, intelligence and public protection under the direction of an individual detective superintendent. The performance manager meets with heads of the various functions in the PSCU on a quarterly basis to review actions in the various team plans in place (which form the basis of the departmental plan).

The constabulary has been proactive in developing an ambitious approach to performance management, including not only operational performance which is already established but also the PSCU and the performance of other support departments, such as criminal justice, finance, professional standards, personnel and development, and training. This performance framework is in the early stages of operation and in many cases performance indicators are yet to be developed and embedded. It is structured around the policing plan priorities and the Chief Constable's stated strategic vision for the future configuration of the constabulary – to maintain and improve Neighbourhood Policing, provide effective protective services and secure an affordable infrastructure. The performance framework has been recently agreed by chief officers.

In respect of the newly formed PSCU, a departmental plan is in place with some initial high-level performance indicators. Although good progress has been made, the constabulary currently lacks baseline data to set targets. A baseline is being established by analysing current performance. The constabulary acknowledges that what is in place is a starting point and remains work in progress.

Areas for improvement

The constabulary has in place computerised crime-recording, incident-logging and intelligence systems that are all stand-alone and separate systems. This makes single entry updating unachievable and leads to a drop in performance in respect of crime recording. The constabulary has a plan to implement the Sleuth system with underlying applications as one of the primary means to drive integration.

The constabulary should consider the introduction of thematic PDCs to discuss in depth and address current issues such as in relation to the restructuring of the force to enhance protective services. Such conferences would facilitate discussion as to staffing, training, sharing of good practice, etc and allow the attendance of specialists from the police service and other external organisations such as the Serious Organised Crime Agency, the probation service, and HM Revenue and Customs.

Despite an open invitation to members, there is little involvement of the police authority in performance monitoring in BCUs. Members do not regularly attend performance meetings in BCUs and only occasionally attend TCG meetings. The constabulary should be proactive and encourage police authority members to attend and to understand force and BCU performance.

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There are no performance framework or activity sheets in place for special constables linked to policing plan priorities or the force control strategy. Currently special constables are expected to complete a simple monthly return which outlines hours worked and activity undertaken. There is an inconsistent approach to this return across the force area. The constabulary should develop a more robust system to drive activity towards force priorities.

The Performance Dashboard system only allows review of performance on LPT areas. It does not allow analysis of individual performance. It is hoped that, as SLEUTH is introduced, drilling down to individual contributions will become commonplace, eg number of 5x5x5 submissions compared with actionable intelligence resulting.

There is a good understanding of roles and accountability in respect of performance improvement among supervisors and management and a number of documents are in place that outline various elements of the force's performance regime. The constabulary would benefit from introduction of a performance management handbook which could include a clear flowchart for the performance framework and identify links between the police authority, PDCs, interim performance meetings and more frequent supervisors' performance meetings.

The constabulary should put in place a corporate audit board to oversee and drive inspection and audit activity within an agreed schedule and ensure that organisational learning becomes a key theme of audits.

Performance inspectors should focus on encouraging a performance culture across the organisation. There should be more clear links between training and the PDR process, to assist performance inspectors to identify local and corporate trends in training needs and opportunities for performance improvement. Emphasis should be given to improving both the qualitative and quantitative aspects of policing.

Currently the standard audit systems manual is the main method of undertaking mainstream scheduled systematic audits in the force. Checks are undertaken by LPT inspectors and detective inspectors on the request of performance managers, but there is no method of independent checking or dip sampling of checks undertaken. In essence, returns are taken on trust. No training is provided for officers undertaking audits.

The constabulary should develop an audit methodology to systematically undertake focused intelligence-led inspections and audits in BCUs and key departments. Such inspections and audits could take one to two days and be resourced using the performance inspectors. Key issues, areas of vulnerability and the effectiveness of new processes could be assessed using this format. An agreed rolling programme, based on risk, would introduce more transparency and independency and act as a reality check on current audit arrangements within the audit systems manual.

Protecting Vulnerable People – Overview

National contextual factors

The assessment framework for Protecting Vulnerable People was first developed in 2006 as part of HMIC's baseline assessment programme. It replaced two existing frameworks – Reducing/Investigating Hate Crime and Crimes against Vulnerable Victims – which focussed on hate crimes (predominantly racially motivated), domestic violence and child protection. Following consultation with practitioners and ACPO leads, a single framework was introduced with four components – domestic violence, the investigation and prevention of child abuse, the management of sex and dangerous offenders, and vulnerable missing persons. Although the four areas are discrete, they are also linked and share a common theme – they deal with vulnerable victims where there is a high risk that an incident can quickly become critical, and where a poor police response is both life-threatening and poses severe reputational risks for the force.

This year's inspection has been carried out using similar assessment standards as those in 2006. These highlight the importance of leadership and accountability; policy implementation; information management; staffing, workload and supervision; performance monitoring and management; training; the management of risk; and partnership working.

The work carried out by forces to protect the public, particularly those most vulnerable to risk of serious harm, is complex and challenging. No single agency, including the police, has the capacity to deliver the required response on its own. Success is therefore, dependent on effective multi-agency working and there are a number of established partnerships, involving a wide range of services and professionals, aimed at ensuring that an integrated approach is adopted to protecting those most vulnerable to risk of serious harm.

Contextual factors overview

During last year's baseline assessment Cumbria Constabulary was graded Fair with a direction of travel of Stable for the inspection area of protecting vulnerable people. The constabulary and police authority recognised that this was a key area of vulnerability and embarked on a major change programme with detailed project planning and consultation. This was made a key organisational priority and other workstreams were rescheduled to ensure that focus was maintained.

The ACPO team has demonstrated clear leadership throughout this process, with each of the three key strands of the project, ie Neighbourhood Policing, protecting vulnerable people and securing an affordable infrastructure, being led by an ACPO officer. An element of restructuring of resources has taken place with the formation of the PSCU. By the end of 2007 the intention is that the three key projects mentioned will become 'business as usual'.

Previously the constabulary retained a central policy function with BCU-based child and adult protection units (CAPUs) and public protection officers (PPOs), who were based within the BCU intelligence units. There is now a central PSCU which develops policy, practice and procedure on behalf of the ACPO lead and each BCU retains a public protection unit (PPU). They are accountable to the BCU commander and each has a dedicated detective inspector who splits their team between each of the protecting vulnerable people disciplines. The changes resulted in an overall increase of 11 posts in these areas of work.

Strengths

The ACC (operations) provides strong and visible leadership for all aspects of protecting

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vulnerable people and has been instrumental in driving the formation of the PSCU and PPU's.

Strategic accountability is maintained on behalf of the ACC (operations) by the superintendent (public protection) within the PSCU who, with the dedicated detective chief inspector, supervises the newly appointed detective inspectors leading each PPU.

Staff working in the PPU's have specific job descriptions within the ICF framework and feature as part of the PDR process.

The force occupational health unit has in place mandatory meetings with all PPU staff to cater for their health and safety and welfare. The meetings take the form of group meetings for each office with the opportunity at that stage, or at any stage throughout the year, to arrange one-to-one meetings. However, this is a new development and some staff were unaware of arrangements and the frequency of visits.

The constabulary's move towards PPU's will see a growth in supervision by providing a detective inspector and two detective sergeants within each unit. This will formalise pilot and ad hoc arrangements. In two BCUs one detective sergeant will be responsible for child abuse and domestic violence issues, with the second having specific responsibility for public protection, management of dangerous offenders and hate crime. In the other BCU there is a geographical split of the PPU between two sites, with a detective sergeant based at each.

The constabulary is demonstrating commitment to staffing within PPU's. The force's operations board has recently agreed that any backfill for officers abstracted from PPU's, eg for the extended training of current constables through the Initial Crime Investigators' Development Programme (ICIDP), will be with a qualified detective. This will maintain staff numbers in the PPU's and will develop the skills of other BCU-based detective officers.

The constabulary has in place a developed practice of providing training input to students in the disciplines of child abuse investigation, domestic violence and missing persons. This training is conducted in BCUs, normally by a PPU detective sergeant over two days as part of the probationary period.

At a strategic level, a workshop has been held with all relevant partners to consider crossover areas in domestic violence, public protection and child abuse. The strategic management board (SMB) on each area has developed issues, and further events are planned to maximise opportunities to manage offenders and protect victims across the county.

Partners describe working relationships with the constabulary at a tactical level as excellent, with agreed information-sharing protocols for all areas associated with protecting vulnerable people.

With the number of separate IT systems in place, the constabulary has introduced STAN which will search all systems to identify if a record exists. Until SLEUTH is introduced there remains a requirement to interrogate each system separately after the use of STAN, which is inefficient. The crime and intelligence aspects of SLEUTH are planned to be introduced before the year end.

Work in progress

There are now three detective superintendent senior investigating officers (SIOs) based within the PSCU. The activities of the duty SIO for the constabulary is to be reviewed in

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order to make the role more proactive, with daily contact with each BCU to identify any emerging issues which would benefit from early engagement of an SIO.

Once all three PPU detective inspectors are in place, they will have regular meetings with the superintendent (public protection) and relevant specialist detective chief inspectors to ensure that consistent approaches are in place throughout the constabulary.

The constabulary has been proactive in developing an ambitious approach to performance management, which includes associated protecting vulnerable people disciplines. The PSCU has in place a departmental plan with some initial high-level performance indicators. At the present time the indicators in parts of the performance framework have not yet been consulted on with relevant partners. Although good progress has been made, the constabulary acknowledges that what is in place is a starting point and remains work in progress. Performance of the PSCU will be discussed, using appropriate performance measurement, within forthcoming PDCs.

At present there is a recognised shortage of trained detectives in some PPUs. ICIDP training plans for the constabulary take account of this fact.

Areas for improvement

Although staffing levels of the new PPUs have been agreed that should provide increased resilience and audit capacity, new staff are in the process of being recruited and specialist training for them has not as yet commenced. The constabulary should give priority and drive to the recruiting process, and ensure that staff are trained to the required level as soon as possible and that an appropriate audit capacity is retained.

Although the force occupational health unit has commenced mandatory meetings with all PPU staff, this is a new development and some staff are unaware of arrangements and the frequency of visits. It is important, given the number of staff with flexible working arrangements, that the constabulary capture all staff as part of these structured visits.

The supervisory officers and managers involved in the supervision of the PPU functions are not in every case trained or experienced to the point where they can add value to the process. There is a lack of awareness of the specialist business they are supervising, particularly in respect of strategy meetings, the IT applications of the case administration tracking system (CATS) and the Violent and Sex Offenders Register (ViSOR), and multi-agency public protection arrangements (MAPPA). The constabulary should ensure that supervisors and managers receive specialist training to the level required and that they are aware of their responsibilities.

The PPUs are formed from staff who are domestic violence, child abuse and now also public protection specialists. Some individuals were multi-functional in role, with seven-day cover being provided on a rota basis in some BCUs. With the growth at all levels within the PPUs, the constabulary should ensure that only those staff who are trained to the appropriate standard in each area undertake specialist work.

Concerns have been expressed that the review of protective services has introduced additional specialised management and audit capability, but has not taken account of the workloads of staff. There is a variation in the approach to the supervisory involvement in specific cases and of levels of individual workloads across the three BCUs. Intrusive supervision and support to specialist investigators, together with a detailed understanding of current workloads, is essential to ensure standards of investigation and engagement with partners. The constabulary should review workloads across all three PPUs at supervisory, investigator and support levels against centrally agreed criteria.

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There is an ad hoc approach to call-out among senior detective officers. In general terms, although there is one detective constable on night duty across the force at all times, there is no senior detective on call. This ad hoc approach has the potential to impact negatively on the management of any serious incident. In the West BCU an on-call rota has been introduced. The constabulary should consider this approach as good practice and introduce an on-call rota for senior detective officers across the force.

There are no on-call arrangements for staff within the PPU's, with staff recalled to duty as required. Currently some PPU's provide cover seven days a week for domestic violence and child protection issues, with others providing five-day cover. As the new structures within the PPU's evolve, the constabulary should consider on-call arrangements, at least at supervisory level for the constabulary, for child protection, domestic violence and public protection issues; and consider formalising force cover at detective constable rank during weekend daylight hours.

An internal performance-management framework has recently been developed and is now being implemented. The constabulary should continue to develop its performance framework and consider hosting a thematic PDC to discuss and address issues in relation to protecting vulnerable people. Such a conference would facilitate discussion as to staffing, training and sharing of good practice, and allow the attendance and involvement of key partners.

The police authority involvement in the functions of the PSCU is extremely limited although members have had sight of the draft guidance. The nature and work of the department involves high-risk policing areas and the constabulary should facilitate more involvement of the police authority to enable effective oversight of performance on a regular basis.

Protecting Vulnerable People – Child Abuse

GRADE	FAIR
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National grade distribution

Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
3	17	21	2

National contextual factors

The Children Act 2004 places a duty on the police to ‘safeguard and promote the welfare of children’; safeguarding children, therefore, is a fundamental part of the duties of all police officers. All police forces, however, also have specialist units which, although they vary in structure, size and remit, normally take primary responsibility for investigating child abuse cases. Officers in these units work closely with other agencies, particularly Social Services, to ensure that co-ordinated action is taken to protect specific children who are suffering, or who are at risk of suffering, significant harm. The Children Act 2004 also requires each local authority to establish a Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB). This is the key statutory mechanism for agreeing how the relevant organisations in each local area will co-operate to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in that locality, and for ensuring the effectiveness of what they do.

Membership of LSCBs includes representatives of the relevant local authority and its Board partners, notably the police, probation, youth offending teams, strategic health authorities and primary care trusts, NHS Trusts and NHS Foundation Trusts, the Connexions service, Children and Family Courts Advisory and Support Service, Secure Training Centres and prisons.

Contextual factors

In April 2007 the constabulary had 12 officers identified as child abuse investigators, equating to a full-time equivalent of 9 officers, with no vacancies. Those officers worked in one of three CAPUs. Additionally, the CAPUs retained a number of staff who were identified as domestic violence and hate crime specialists, all working to dedicated supervision within the CAPU. In many cases, there was a crossover of skills and expertise which allowed the CAPU supervisors to refocus officers, providing resilience at times of need.

Strengths

The force policy statement, recorded on the force’s intranet system, is that “Cumbria Constabulary is dedicated to protecting and safeguarding the lives of children and ensuring that they receive the same protection in law and the same level of service from the police as adults. It is committed to investigating all reports of child abuse and neglect thoroughly, facilitating effective action against offenders and adopting a proactive multi-agency approach to prevent and reduce child abuse.”

A detailed action plan was developed and implemented to manage the constabulary’s progress towards compliance with the guidance developed by ACPO and the National Centre for Policing Excellence (NCPE) on investigating child abuse and safeguarding

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children, and this resulted in the implementation of a detailed force policy in August 2005.

Every Child Matters has been embraced by the constabulary, with every officer receiving a booklet, endorsed by the Chief Constable, explaining the role of the constabulary and partners in delivering in this area to ensure the safety of children.

The police authority has been briefed in respect of draft guidance prepared by the APA, which was designed to assist police authorities in meeting new duties under the Children Act 2004 (Every Child Matters). A lead member (chair of the communities, equality and diversity committee) has been appointed as a champion for this area of activity.

The superintendent (public protection) is an active member of the county-wide local children's safeguarding board and reports to the ACC (operations) on its areas of activity.

The force policy document provides clear guidance on actions to be undertaken by any member of staff receiving a referral from another agency. Further detailed guidance is available for dedicated child abuse investigators and provides a structured approach to joint strategy meetings and discussions and setting out how the various agencies can work together in the best interests of the child.

Inspectors were clear about their role and responsibilities as designated officers in police protection issues. A series of force forms designed for the police protection role is available and in use.

There is evidence of the police contributing positively and appropriately in case conferences and strategy discussions. The officer in the case attends case conferences for their particular workload, as required by force policy, with supervisors attending case conferences where there has been limited police involvement. Minutes of these meetings are produced to managers and retained on police systems.

There is effective oversight of police response to child abuse incidents. On a day-to-day basis the PPU staff review the previous day's reported incident logs to ensure that appropriate activity has been taken to protect vulnerable children in accordance with force policy. Results of this checking process are embedded within the BCU daily management team meetings. This provides the opportunity to ensure that the National Crime Recording Standard (NCRS) has been complied with and, where necessary, to complete remedial activity.

Officers dealing with an incident or receiving a referral are required to complete a force form which includes a risk-assessment framework. The risk assessment is checked and signed off by a PPU officer.

Policy logs have recently been introduced and are part of the child abuse investigation process, be that a police only or a police and social services investigation, from the outset. These include the initial investigation plan agreed with the supervisor and seven-day reviews. Upon completion of the investigation, the area detective chief inspector reviews the policy log and 5% are subject to central scrutiny.

The constabulary has a standard audit systems manual which includes a formal audit of 20 child abuse investigations, including 10 where arrests were made. It is the responsibility of the area detective inspector to complete these audits, which include the risk-assessment process, the undertaking and recording of joint strategy meetings, NCRS compliance and other quality issues.

The constabulary has recognised and acted upon the need to train all child abuse

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investigators and supervisors in the ICIDP. Around 60% of the establishment of PPU's are already trained and there are identified plans to train the remaining staff currently in post and those who will be joining the PPU's following the restructuring.

To support the Centrex training modules to practitioners, workshops have been held in each BCU with first- and second-line managers, together with senior management team members, to explain changes to practices and procedures which have been introduced in child abuse investigation.

Joint and multi-agency training takes place in the areas of managing victims and perpetrators, which ensures a shared approach to prevention of child abuse and raises awareness at all levels

An individual who is completing a degree relating to their work within social services is undertaking a 100-day attachment with one PPU to develop skills and understanding of the police environment. A risk-based approach is being used to manage their development.

There is evidence that the constabulary is using NIM processes to inform the strategic priorities for the investigation of child abuse where appropriate, with daily scrutiny by the BCU senior management team through the daily management meeting and fortnightly through the TCG meeting.

Under previous structures, child abuse and domestic violence investigators were co-located within CAPUs. The recent structural changes will see them joined by PPOs within the PPU's, enhancing the cross-fertilisation of information.

Working relationships at a tactical level are described as excellent, with effective links with other related disciplines, ie domestic violence, public protection and missing persons.

The superintendent (public protection) is a regular attendee at the Cumbria local safeguarding children board. Minutes of these meetings reflect the active involvement by police in a serious case review. The relevant BCU detective chief inspector also sits on one of the local safeguarding children boards. There is consistency of attendance at meetings and a lot of overlap and integration of disciplines.

Work in progress

Cumbria Constabulary delivers a national training course to all child abuse investigators. Two courses have been provided to date. The course is now being reviewed with due regard being given to the specialist child abuse investigators' development programme. Almost all sergeants and constables in the constabulary will be trained to PIP level 1 in the near future, increasing the eligibility of staff to undertake the Centrex child abuse investigation modules. PIP course trainers are now responsible for delivery of vulnerable witness interview training.

Achieving Best Evidence interview training has been provided to relevant staff in the constabulary, with the training staff supported by specialist staff.

The constabulary is working with partners to develop multi-agency performance indicators through the local safeguarding children board's performance and outcomes sub-group under the lead of social services.

Areas for improvement

The child abuse and safeguarding children force policy was written in 2005 and has not been reviewed since that time. Although based around NCPE practice documents and providing the framework for operation of key staff, it does not reflect the new structures within this area. The constabulary should review the child abuse and safeguarding children policy in the light of new structures, to include an accountability framework at force and BCU levels and current national good practice.

Policies and procedures should be amended to take account of the attachment of secondees into PPUs (such as social services). Policies should make clear the role and status of secondees within the units.

The constabulary has not specifically included child abuse within policing plans and strategies, although the drive towards increased provision of protective services is integral to the plan. The force control strategy includes the requirement to gather intelligence about child abuse offenders, working in partnership with schools and colleges in respect of personal and internet safety and recognition of how the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre can assist in this area. The constabulary should consider the inclusion of child abuse as a specific priority within the policing plan.

Public and child protection are to become part of the force's strategic threat assessment process and will include partnership data. The constabulary should undertake strategic analysis of child abuse, developing appropriate control strategies at both force and BCU levels.

Intrusive supervision and support for child abuse investigators, together with a detailed understanding of current workloads, is essential to ensure standards of investigation and engagement with partners, thus maximising the safety of children. The constabulary should ensure that appropriate supervisory overview is maintained of all activity within PPUs, and evidenced by independent audit of each PPU on a regular basis. The inspection team identified a variation in the approach to the supervisory involvement in specific cases.

The force policy throughout makes reference to the Cumbria child protection committee child protection procedures, *Working Together to Safeguard Children*. These procedures are available on the Cumbria children's services website and provide detailed information on the operation of child protection procedures in the county. The force policy is not explicit on the thresholds for police-led, joint and social services-led investigations, which could allow for a variation in approach throughout the constabulary. When the force policy is reviewed, these thresholds should, after consultation with partners, be made explicit and be in accord with national good practice.

The constabulary has not undertaken any themed audit of NCRS compliance in the areas of child abuse investigation or domestic violence. This could form an integral part of the audit and inspection function undertaken by the dedicated detective sergeant, or a thematic review undertaken by the crime registrar with particular regard to the recording of crimes following referrals to the police.

Although policy logs have been introduced for the use of staff when dealing with child abuse investigations or for joint investigations, there is confusion as to their purpose. Staff are unsure as to whether the logs are for recording ongoing investigative activity or for decision-making purposes or for both. Detective sergeants are unsure as to their role in checking and signing off logs. The constabulary should reiterate instructions and guidance as to their use to ensure a corporate and quality approach to their completion.

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When officers deal with incidents involving children they are required to complete a form CID 5 which is submitted to the PPU. Staff had received no training in the undertaking of the risk assessment on the CID 5. The constabulary should implement awareness training around the completion of the risk assessment on the CID 5 to increase the confidence of front-line officers and improve their assessment approach.

The constabulary uses a dedicated IT system, CATS, for child abuse investigations and the force intelligence system, CMIS, which is to be replaced in the current financial year by SLEUTH.

The IT systems used by PPUs provide only a basic computerised record for relevant functions. Its use for child abuse investigations requires double keying of entries and where intelligence is submitted treble keying of entries (CATS, CMIS and an Access database). This will reduce to double keying of entries when SLEUTH is introduced as the intelligence management system. Where there is both a child abuse and domestic violence issue, two separate parts of the CATS system have to be populated, again with double keying of entries. The constabulary should review and prioritise the IT requirements for child protection and domestic violence, to maximise the opportunities for management, audit and review of these areas of work and reduce the administrative burden.

The constabulary should ensure that a process is put in place to facilitate organisational learning following audits undertaken in respect of child abuse and linked disciplines. Currently discussions on the results of quality audits take place, but there is no formal mechanism in place to share learning across all BCUs or with the force.

Protecting Vulnerable People – Domestic Violence

GRADE	FAIR
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National grade distribution

Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
1	13	27	2

National contextual factors

There is no statutory or common law offence as such of 'domestic violence'; the term is generally used to cover a range of abusive behaviour, not all of which is criminal. The definition of domestic violence adopted by ACPO does, however, take account of the full range of abusive behaviour as well as the different circumstances in which it can occur:

'any incident of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional) between adults, aged 18 and over, who are or have been intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality'.

As with the investigation of child abuse, responding to and investigating domestic violence is the responsibility of all police officers. Again, however, forces have dedicated staff within this area of work, although their roles vary. In some forces staff undertake a support/liason role, generally acting as a single point of contact for victims and signposting and liaising with other agencies and support services; in others, staff have responsibility for carrying out investigations.

Irrespective of who carries out the investigation in domestic violence cases, an integral part of every stage is the identification of risk factors, followed by more detailed risk assessment and management. In 2004, HMIC, together with HMCPSI, published a joint thematic inspection report on the investigation and prosecution of domestic violence. At that time, risk identification, assessment and management were in the early stages of development throughout the service. Since then, there has been considerable progress in developing formal risk identification and assessment processes and - in a number of forces - the implementation of multi-agency risk assessment conferences (MARACs). Other improvements include the introduction of specialist domestic violence courts and the strengthening of joint working arrangements.

Contextual factors

The newly appointed superintendent (public protection) is the regional chair of the police domestic violence functional area and is a member of the corresponding ACPO working group and strand leader for the compliance to national standards sub-group. Locally they are an active member of the Cumbria domestic violence Strategic Management Board, reporting to the ACC (operations) on its areas of activity.

The constabulary has a well-developed policy and practices, and significant scrutiny is

applied to assure compliance with these.

Strengths

A detailed action plan was developed and implemented to manage the constabulary's progress towards compliance with the guidance developed by ACPO and the NCPE on investigating domestic violence, and this resulted in the implementation of a detailed force policy in April 2005.

The superintendent (public protection) is an active member of the Cumbria domestic violence Strategic Management Board and reports to the ACC (operations) on its areas of activity. The board manages county-agreed performance targets. Regular reports are produced on performance by the force information management unit.

The 2007/08 policing plan details outturns and targets for domestic violence arrest rates, while the current force control strategy highlights the requirement to identify repeat victims and offenders, break down violent crime data and ensure adherence to force domestic violence policy. In 2005/06 the constabulary had an arrest rate of 29.2% which became the target for 2006/07 and was exceeded by 0.4%. The 2007/08 target is 30%.

There is specific inclusion of domestic violence within the force and BCU policing plans, with the force plan reflecting the strategic priority of domestic violence for each of the county's four CDRPs.

The North BCU policing plan for 2006/07 specifically tasked a detective inspector to review all high-risk incidents, and others by means of dip sampling. The South BCU policing plan for 2006/07 documented that work to prevent repeat victimisation for domestic violence incidents be undertaken. The West BCU policing plan for 2006/07 directed that problem-solving approaches should be instigated to reduce repeat domestic violence incidents.

Each BCU commander has operational responsibility for the management of individual domestic violence investigations. Domestic violence features on the agenda under violent crime profiles within the force PDC, where the ACC (operations) holds BCU commanders to account.

The constabulary's domestic violence, family liaison officer and major incidents policies set out clear standards for the service in respect of treatment of victims and witnesses. In the past, presentation roadshows have been conducted in all BCUs to ensure that all staff are aware of their role and expectations, particularly in respect of quality of service issues.

All officers have been issued with the constabulary domestic violence guide which has identified risk factors. The inspection team noted a high level of awareness among all staff spoken to of the force policy, in particular application of the 10 Point Plan, which guides the activity of staff when responding to domestic violence incidents, and the positive arrest policy. Compliance with these standards is being monitored on a daily basis via divisional management teams.

The constabulary has effective command and control recording procedures in place, which ensure that domestic violence incidents are correctly identified and that officers can be deployed in accordance with force policy. Domestic violence incidents, given that they will involve a vulnerable person, will receive a grading of either an immediate response or a response within one hour.

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The command and control system allows specific flags (CMS 7 alerts) to be attached to a location (eg a residence) where specific risk factors are identified (eg a potential repeat victim). These flags give clear and bespoke guidance to communications centre staff to direct staff attending incidents linked to these locations. Locations are routinely updated by the IT department, although in urgent cases this can be immediately updated by communications staff 24/7. Duty supervisors are responsible for monitoring the actions of officers responding to incidents, with particular regard to instances where no crime is recorded or where no arrest results.

The mapping system is in addition to the paper-based checklists used by communications staff to ensure that information collection is maximised from the caller and police systems to inform the responding officers. The checklist is prescriptive about which IT systems should be checked, and relevant results are given to the deployed officers. Included in this is the Police National Computer (PNC) which is the medium for recording bail conditions and relevant injunctions or court orders against individuals.

The newly appointed superintendent (public protection) is the regional chair of the police domestic violence functional area and is a member of the corresponding ACPO working group and strand leader for the compliance to national standards sub-group. As such he is well positioned to develop force policy, practice and procedure in line with national good practice.

The standard audit systems manual requires the performance inspector in each BCU to audit 20 domestic violence incidents once a quarter. As a part of this audit, the initial incident coding and immediate actions of communications staff are checked. Any issues are fed to the communications management for consideration and attention.

The constabulary uses a dedicated IT system, CATS, for domestic violence investigations and the force intelligence system, CMIS, which is to be replaced in the current financial year by SLEUTH due to its limitations.

Timely risk-identification and assessment procedures are in place, based around the NCPE guidance. They include all the risk factors identified in the 'special cases' model but also consider a further 12 risk factors. Specialist domestic violence officers conduct this risk-assessment process, which is validated by their supervisor on a corporate force form retained on file and supported by an entry on the CATS domestic violence database. Once risk is identified and assessed, an appropriate and timely response is put into place.

The risk-assessment process for domestic violence provides a numerical score which translates into a standard bronze, silver or gold response. The bronze response, as a minimum, generates a letter and advice leaflet to the victim, with consideration of other prevention and support actions. The silver response includes all bronze activity plus, as a minimum, it generates follow-up contact with the victim by the officer in the case, which is recorded on the incident log, and all additional information is passed to the PPU staff together with consideration of a range of other relevant tactical options. The gold response includes all bronze and silver activity plus, as a minimum, personal contact by staff from the PPU together with consideration of a range of further relevant tactical options.

The PPU resources are involved in related, focused BCU activity when necessary. An example of this approach is the recent domestic violence campaign, which was undertaken in the Christmas 2006 period throughout the force area following the development of a domestic violence problem profile. The initiative involved PPU (then CAPU) staff being on duty at key times during the day and night and providing direct guidance and intervention when necessary.

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To address a decline in arrests at domestic violence incidents, the constabulary developed and marketed Operation Coverture to raise staff awareness about expectations of positive action. This has seen a reversal of this decline.

There is a high degree of awareness of the potential for domestic violence incidents to become critical incidents, with a high degree of focus on ensuring an appropriate police response on every occasion.

There are clear procedures and processes in place for identifying to specialist PPU staff where children are living in households where domestic violence is taking place and this is supported by joint arrangements with social services for referral. The 10 Point Plan, completed for every domestic violence incident, specifically includes the details of any children linked to, or affected by, an incident. This information is then passed to the PPU on the appropriate force referral form.

Many members around the table examining MAPPA issues are also members of the local safeguarding children board in Cumbria and some are members of the serious case review committee (or its sub-committees). There is consistency of attendance at meetings and good overlap and integration of disciplines, particularly in respect of domestic violence and the application of the domestic violence policy, both informally and formally. As such all partners can directly influence the force strategic assessment and policy and procedures.

A domestic violence-related joint protocol is in place between the constabulary and Cumbria children's services, which clearly defines roles and responsibilities of both organisations in respect of children who have witnessed incidents of domestic violence or live in households where it has been reported. A joint working group meets quarterly to develop these services and good practice.

The constabulary has a full-time equivalent of nine officers identified as domestic violence investigators working in PPUs. Additionally the PPUs have retained a number of staff identified as child abuse violence and hate crime specialists, all working to dedicated supervision. There was a crossover of skills and expertise which allowed the PPU supervisors to refocus officers, providing resilience at times of need.

On a day-to-day basis the PPU staff have oversight and review the previous day's reported incident logs to ensure that appropriate activity has been undertaken in accordance with force policy. Results of this checking process are embedded within the BCU daily management team meetings. They observe regular evidence of the use of victim personal statements and the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) also has made requests for these statements to be provided. This oversight provides the opportunity to ensure compliance with the NCRS and, where necessary, completion of remedial activity.

The quarterly PDC includes breakdowns of domestic-related violent crimes according to their severity and type. The CuPs produces detailed breakdowns of domestic violence incident data. This information can be represented at force, BCU and ward levels. Additionally, in response to partnership working, the data is further broken down into specific localities known as Let Go areas.

There is three years' funding from the LSP which has allowed the constabulary to undertake performance and profiling work for CDRPs. In this respect, the CuPs team receives data from partners and shares this and police data with partners at a district level. Access has now been gained to CPS data as part of this initiative.

Domestic violence courts are being trialled in Carlisle and the constabulary aims to use this approach to assist in the drive to increase the number of reported domestic violence

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incidents and to reduce the repeat victimisation levels by the involvement of trained domestic violence advisers, prosecutors and victim supporters.

Partners identify a healthy working relationship and collaboration at all levels which is able to deliver results. Information-sharing protocols with partners such as social services, the probation service, mental health services and hospitals are in place and easily accessible on the force intranet.

Work with multi-agency projects such as SAFE (South BCU) and Let Go (North BCU) are ongoing initiatives. Strategies are discussed at every opportunity to include a wide range of ideas, from dealing with the victim to addressing the needs of the offender. This includes input from social services, the probation service, housing associations, the CPS and a number of other partner agencies.

A problem profile has been undertaken on domestic violence which has examined hotspots, vulnerabilities and interventions.

Work in progress

Multi-agency risk assessment conferences (MARACs) are in the process of being introduced across the county, with the police playing a lead role. One CDRP has provided £25,000 to its BCU to support the administration of the MARAC. Suitable cases are being identified by PPU supervisors as controllers of the process in each BCU. At this stage a meetings structure with partners is still being arranged and, as developments are in the early stages, the process is not at the point of having a multi-agency assessment as yet.

Additional family liaison officers are now being trained with a clear focus on minimising abstractions from PPUs.

As part of the ECM project there will be extensive evaluation undertaken to embed new call-handling standards, although the constabulary is confident that calls for service relating to domestic violence are properly graded through accepted working practices.

Areas for improvement

The accountability framework for the strategic and operational aspects of all issues associated with domestic violence investigations should be clearly set out in a revised force policy that takes account of the new structures and the development of MARACs, to provide clarity to all involved. In addition, the revised policy should reflect the guidance developed by ACPO and the NCPE on harassment and the code of practice for victims of crime.

The current force control strategy highlights the requirement to identify repeat victims and offenders, break down violent crime data and ensure adherence to the force domestic violence policy. These requirements are not currently reflected in BCU control strategies, although there are general violent crime reduction activities highlighted. The constabulary should ensure that BCUs specifically include domestic violence activities within their control strategies to demonstrate the constabulary's obvious commitment to this area of policing.

The referral process to social services to inform staff of children living in households where domestic violence is taking place is mainly administered through the use of fax machines. This approach should be reviewed as there is the potential for essential information to be lost or mislaid and therefore not reach the intended recipient. A more robust IT solution should be sought to professionalise the process and put in place a more auditable

arrangement for transferring sensitive information.

The inspection team did not find evidence of a systematic approach to share lessons learnt from detailed reviews of domestic violence cases or to receive and evaluate national learning from Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) investigations. The constabulary should review its structures to ensure that it is continually learning and demonstrably takes account of findings from inspections and investigations such as those of the IPCC.

The IT system in use for domestic violence investigations is limited in its capability and inefficient, requiring multiple keying of entries. The constabulary has plans to adopt the SELUTH intelligence management system and should drive this development to its fruition without delay.

The constabulary should review the current IT capability and IT requirements for child protection and domestic violence, to maximise the opportunities for effective management, audit and review of these areas of work and reduce the administrative burden.

The undertaking of audits as part of the audit systems manual regime has highlighted the failure by communications staff to check relevant IT systems as part of the 10 Point Plan. The constabulary should review working practices within the communications centres to ensure that timely and complete checks of all relevant systems are completed on behalf of officers responding to domestic incidents in every case.

The risk-assessment process for domestic violence provides a numerical score which translates into a standard bronze, silver or gold response. Silver and gold responses, together with ongoing police investigations, provide opportunities to formally review the risk assessment. In order to demonstrate a defensible decision-making process, the constabulary should consider being explicit within the force policy that the information gained as part of the investigation should be used to identify risk factors and be fed into the risk-assessment process.

The constabulary already gathers significant management information in respect of domestic violence through the CuPS team and has strong strategic and tactical partnership links. In autumn 2006 the constabulary produced a limited problem profile which resulted in a focused force-wide operation over the Christmas period followed by results analysis. It is important that the constabulary fully understands the strategic issues surrounding domestic violence in order that focused tactical responses can be implemented. The constabulary should consider providing a more detailed focus on this area of violent crime within the strategic assessment process on a regular basis.

Although the constabulary is in the process of developing MARACs, there has been no provision of administration support for the process. BCUs are expected to absorb the additional administrative burden and make necessary arrangements to manage the process. The constabulary should explore staffing possibilities in order to effectively administer the MARACs process.

Communications staff are the only part of the organisation who have not received domestic violence training in accordance with the national modules, due to prioritisation of training time. Pre-implementation workshops were undertaken and included communications line managers. The constabulary should review the level of training to communications staff and ensure that all new staff are appropriately trained.

Protecting Vulnerable People – Public Protection

GRADE	POOR
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National grade distribution

Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
2	16	23	2

National contextual factors

The Criminal Justice and Courts Services Act 2000 led to the formation of the Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements, commonly known as MAPPA, requiring the police and probation services to work together as the Responsible Authority in each area of England and Wales to establish and review the arrangements for the assessment and management of sexual and violent offenders. Subsequent legislation brought the Prison Service into the Responsible Authority arrangements and also requires a range of social care agencies to co-operate with the Responsible Authority in the delivery of the assessment and management of risk in this area. These agencies include health, housing, education, social services, youth offending teams, Jobcentre Plus, and electronic monitoring services.

Under MAPPA, there are three categories of offender who are considered to pose a risk of serious harm:

Category 1 – Registered Sex Offenders (RSOs)

Category 2 – violent and other sex offenders

Category 3 – other offenders (with convictions that indicate they are capable of causing, and pose a risk of, serious harm).

To be managed under MAPPA, offenders must have received a conviction or caution. However, there are some people who have not been convicted or cautioned for any offence, and thus fall outside these categories, but whose behaviour nonetheless gives reasonable ground for believing a present likelihood of them committing an offence that will cause serious harm. These people are termed Potentially Dangerous Persons (PDPs).

Following risk assessment, risk management involves the use of strategies by various agencies to reduce the risk, at three levels:

- Level 1 offenders can be managed by one agency;
- Level 2 offenders require the active involvement of more than one agency;
- Level 3 offenders – the ‘critical few’ – are generally deemed to pose a high or very high risk and are managed by a multi-agency public protection panel (MAPPP).

In 2003, the Home Secretary issued MAPPA guidance to consolidate what has already been achieved since the introduction of the MAPPA in 2001 and to address a need for greater consistency in MAPPA practice. The guidance outlines four considerations that are key to the delivery of effective public protection.

- defensible decisions;
- rigorous risk assessment;
- the delivery of risk management plans which match the identified public protection need; and,
- the evaluation of performance to improve delivery.

Contextual factors

The constabulary is in the process of introducing a strategic change programme which will provide appropriate protective services, secure budget savings and sustain improved Neighbourhood Policing. Over the next four years, the constabulary aims to continue its success by reshaping itself to make the best use of resources, by taking a balanced approach to managing risk over the medium term and by maintaining its focus on protecting communities in Cumbria from harm.

The Resolve programme has defined a programme of work to improve protective services, make savings to meet budget shortfalls and reinvest in protective services. The constabulary is now moving forward with a change programme under three strands, each of which is led by a chief officer, and the chief officer group has effective oversight of the overall programme's progress and performance, including risks, benefits and interdependencies.

Strengths

Changes to staffing levels in PPU's have been derived after reviews of MAPPAs SMB and force public protection management information reports monitored over a period of time and as a result of research and comparison with the best-performing forces. Areas for improvement were identified and proposed with a resulting new force structure for public protection and additional resources.

New posts have been advertised to allow all three BCUs to have a dedicated detective inspector, but currently only the North BCU has a dedicated detective inspector. BCUs have now changed the name of the CAPUs to PPU's and they are now under a common management arrangement.

The profile of the PPU's has been raised through the work of the change management programme and accompanying strategy, through messages as to the restructuring of the disciplines by the chief officer team and through the force bulletin – *Staff matters*.

The chief officer has clear direction over the strategic priorities which include public protection. Progress is recorded through the PDC and interim performance meetings.

The ACC (operations) monitors the work of the NCPE stakeholders group via the operations board and the vulnerable persons steering group.

The constabulary representative on the SMB is a superintendent who has specific responsibility for MAPPAs. Relevant performance is monitored through this board at high

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level, focusing on agreed objectives and targets in the SMB annual business plan and to the ACC (operations) at regular update meetings which occur on a frequent but informal basis.

The constabulary comprises three BCUs, and the management of sex and violent offenders has been devolved to the BCU commanders via the detective inspector and BCU intelligence detective sergeant. At the time of the inspection the restructuring had led to each BCU having a PPU with responsibility for sex and violent offenders and also child protection, domestic violence and vulnerable adult protection. These units will be managed on a day-to-day basis by two dedicated detective sergeants in each BCU who report to a dedicated BCU detective inspector. There is a dedicated detective chief inspector in the HQ-based PSCU with line management responsibility for the BCU detective inspector and there will also be a further dedicated detective sergeant and support at HQ specifically for sex and violent offenders.

The constabulary has put in place an up-to-date management of sexual offenders and other potentially dangerous persons policy which sets procedures for reporting, managing, responding to and investigating both registered sex offenders and violent and sexual offenders registered within the MAPPAs process. The policy was made effective from late April 2007.

The guidance is based on draft versions of the ACPO MAPPAs guidance and has been consulted on with key partners, particularly the MAPPAs registrar and the probation service, and takes account of the draft ACPO guidance on MAPPAs. The policy will be reviewed and further updated following the publication of the impending ACPO guidance on protecting the public. It is monitored by the superintendent (public protection). The policy sets out roles and responsibilities of staff involved in the MAPPAs process and outlines an accountability structure.

BCU commanders continue to own the risk-assessment process and are responsible for the management of the day-to-day business. Similar to other areas of business, such as volume crime, BCU commanders are responsible to the ACC (operations) and the PDC on a quarterly basis for performance management of PPUs. The constabulary is still in the process of developing effective performance indicators for this area of work, which are in the development phase.

The superintendent (public protection), located within the newly formed PSCU, oversees the performance and policy of public protection across the force. Currently only one new dedicated detective inspector is in post, in the North BCU, the pilot for the constabulary in respect of increased supervisory levels. A detective inspector will lead these services in all BCUs once recruited and in post. The current PPU staff and new PPOs will remain part of BCU staff dealing with the day-to-day public protection business supported by the NIM tasking processes. A detective chief inspector deals with the strategic delivery of policies as well as manages PPU inspectors.

Daily scrutiny of public protection and associated disciplines is undertaken by the divisional senior management team and the fortnightly tasking and co-ordination meetings.

There is evidence that police are contributing positively at MAPPAs levels 1, 2 and 3. The structure of MAPPAs meetings and their management follows the new MAPPAs guidance. Meetings are appropriately structured, with all key partners attending on a consistent basis, and are chaired jointly between the police and the probation service at levels 1 and 2. Level 3 meetings, which are more infrequent, are chaired by a detective chief inspector. Level 2 meetings are chaired by the MAPPAs registrar. The SMB is chaired consistently by a senior probation officer and managed by an experienced and dedicated MAPPAs registrar.

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There is adequate preparation for MAPPA meetings and effective information sharing across partners using agreed information-sharing protocols. There are strong local links between the police, social services and the probation service and there is collaboration to share and deal with issues. Joint and multi-agency training ensures a shared approach and good awareness at all levels.

Attendance at MAPPA meetings and the quality of partner contribution are monitored through the SMB minutes and performance indicators, in addition to the MAPPA registrar who attends all meetings.

The SMB has an executive group, made up of representatives of the probation service and police, which meets between regular SMB meetings in order to discuss issues, trends and training and, where necessary, to check progress with individual cases, within the principle of a duty to co-operate.

Many agency representatives in MAPPA meetings are also members of the local safeguarding children board in Cumbria and of the serious case review committee (or sub-committee). There is consistency of attendance at meetings and overlap and integration of disciplines. Partners directly influence the force strategic assessment and policy and procedures.

Processes are in place to allow information exchange and reviews to be undertaken if an offender or potentially dangerous person commits a serious offence. Following discussion, the SMB decides whether any relevant review should be single or multi-agency. Reviews conducted by the constabulary involve necessary consultation with partners and other agencies and forces. Where a risk is raised, a MAPPA meeting would be initiated.

The constabulary and MAPPA partners are proactive in assessing the need for joint activity and there is evidence of joint training and awareness sessions involving strategic and tactical partners. The chair of the SMB is also a member of the local criminal justice board which facilitates cross-flow of information at a strategic level. Relationships between all partners in the MAPPA process at strategic and tactical levels are effective and there is clear evidence of day-to-day joint working and decision making.

Potentially dangerous persons are not routinely recorded on ViSOR but are managed on paper files. In some circumstances nominals may be recorded on ViSOR, depending on the risk level and the resources required to manage the offender. Where this is the case, the entry is authorised by the director of intelligence.

In order to create new offender records on ViSOR, the PNC bureau staff and MAPPA registrar create a nominal record at the centre. The record is created at the point of charge and allocated to the relative BCU local point of contact (the manager) and then onto the owner, ie the PPO. The PPO is responsible for managing the nominal or record, updating risk assessments and management plans, etc, with aid of BCU inputters to enter basic information.

All PPOs are trained in the use of ViSOR, and further training is to be arranged through the PIP programme for new staff being recruited into the departments. All necessary staff have access to ViSOR, including the force incident manager working from the communication room at force HQ who has access out of hours should the PNC indicate a cross-reference in need of action.

Clearly defined mechanisms are in place to identify and review risk and to ensure that, once risk is identified, assessed and agreed, an appropriate and timely response is put in place and action is regularly reviewed. All specialist officers working in PPOs are trained in the use of Risk Matrix 2000. Training has been provided jointly with the probation service who

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use the risk assessment tool OASys.

Information is received on a regular basis from the probation service and the prison service, and cross-agency, relevant intelligence is discussed and assessed, and decisions recorded in MAPPA meeting minutes. All actions are recorded in full on an action list and activities expected are detailed. Where differences are evident between risk management tools, ie Risk Matrix 2000 and OASys, discussions are arranged with the relevant agencies and sensible decisions are made using all intelligence available.

The force identifies offenders falling outside MAPPA criteria who present a risk of harm, through the gathering of intelligence via key partners and through LPTs. The management of such offenders is principally conducted through MAPPA meetings, although the senior management team in each BCU will take an active interest in progress.

The force public protection policy indicates that, on receipt of further information, PPOs should review the current risk assessment, amend risk-management strategy and liaise with relevant agencies (eg MAPPA). The constabulary has also created a system to review all category 2 and 3 ViSOR nominals via a management oversight plan, which requires the PPU manager to review all such cases on a regular basis dependent on risk level, ie very high – every two months, high – every four months, medium – every six months.

A home visits regime for registered sex offenders is in place which specifies the level of risk and the frequency of visits required according to the level of risk allocated. A system is in place to monitor compliance which shows the current level of performance for visits within specified time frames and is used to inform BCU senior management of any problem areas where visits are not on time (so that remedial action can be taken). There have been problems with the retrieval of data in recent times.

PPOs currently undertake all initial home visits to registered sex offenders regardless of level of risk and then subsequent visits to those assessed as very high, high and medium risk. Low-risk offenders are visited by LPT officers, who receive training by the PPO which contains minimum standards required for the completion of risk-assessment forms and additional triggers. Visiting officers report back to the PPOs, who are responsible for reviewing risk and updating ViSOR. Where standards are not met, feedback is provided to relevant supervisors with a view to making improvements.

Specific intelligence relating to offender changes, eg vehicle, address, criminal relationships, are submitted via the 5x5x5 intelligence form for inclusion on the force intelligence system.

The introduction of the new force policy on public protection makes changes to arrangements for home visits and dictates that all registered sex offenders will be visited by PPOs. Each BCU will, when recruiting and trained, have two PPOs. Currently, with the exception of one BCU which has two PPOs, there is one PPO in each BCU.

There is a robust approach in relation to the crime reporting and recording policy, volume crime policy and child abuse and the safeguarding children policy, all of which are accessible on the force intranet site and detail levels of accountability.

Although the constabulary has a limited dedicated surveillance capacity, the constabulary has the capability and skills to undertake surveillance (at level 1) and these have been utilised to undertake relevant surveillance in BCUs on offenders.

There is very clear recognition of the risks associated with the approved premises located in North Cumbria.

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In line with the constabulary's proactive stance to address serious and organised crime, it has recognised the importance of developing an appropriate response strategy to deal with dangerous offenders who present a very high and high risk arriving into the county to take up residence in the approved premises with links to organised crime groups. This will be undertaken in conjunction with relevant partners to ensure an intelligence-led, risk-based management approach to appropriately deal with such dangerous people.

PPO posts are not multi-functional and the staff are not routinely abstracted. Job descriptions for PPOs and supervisors, and associated roles such as MAPPA co-ordinator, accurately reflect the role. Specialist officers have clear terms of reference under the principles of ICF and the roles of managers and supervisors are clearly defined within the new MAPPA guidance and are integral to the PDR process.

The detective sergeant monitors workload in respect of relevant PPU activity such as arrests, strategy meetings, referrals, suspect interviews, Narey files, etc. Currently focus is on the efforts of the PPU team, as performance management does not drill down to individual level.

Staff working in the role of PPO receive general, in-force public protection training, an introduction to MAPPA training, training in respect of home visits to registered sex offenders, a National Criminal Intelligence Service foundation course and training in the use of Risk Matrix 2000 and ViSOR. PPOs can also access specialist courses provided by the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre. PPOs also have access to any appropriate training delivered by the probation service via SMB agreements, for example access to a new risk of harm manual.

Joint training has taken place between the police and the probation service in respect of risk assessment, use of Risk Matrix 2000 and a risk of harm training pack for the police.

Informal awareness training has been provided to LPT staff by the PPO in each BCU to help ensure that non-specialist staff are clear on the purpose and requirements of home visits and on signs of changing risk. A risk-assessment template provides a quick and ready reference to follow. Staff have sufficient understanding and awareness of diversity issues within the context of child protection.

A joint audit, prompted by the SMB, has been undertaken locally on the MAPPA process in late 2006 based on the HMIC thematic inspection. The audit examined BCU processes, including the application of ViSOR and OASys. Findings indicated that MAPPA guidance was being followed, although a number of recommendations for improvement were highlighted. The report influenced the new MAPPA policy, was instrumental in driving joint refresher training on MAPPA with all partners, and findings were integrated into the SMB business plan.

Some management information is available through the production of a six-monthly information report by the MAPPA registrar on behalf of the SMB. The report outlines offender details, supervision details and management details, and levels of risk and compliance with orders are assessed as well as other issues. The report focuses on all level 2 and 3 cases and registered sex offenders over the reporting period as well as the level of support for MAPPA meetings from partners. Through these reports the SMB can influence and challenge the performance of each agency and as such drive improvement.

Work in progress

The level of staff resilience in some BCUs in the function of PPO is considered to be at a critical point. There is an acceptance by chief officers that the constabulary is vulnerable in

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this regard. The constabulary has recognised the urgency of addressing the situation and, through the RESOLVE and latterly the change management programme and accompanying strategy, has identified additional resources to double the number of PPOs staffing the function. This will result in two trained PPOs in two BCUs and three in one BCU.

The PIP training programme has been a key driver for performance improvement. This programme, delivered through ICIDP, will deliver training for all new staff working in the function of protecting vulnerable people, particularly in PPU. Two courses are due to be delivered later in 2007 to cater for the new structure in order to support BCUs. In addition, force trainers are due to be trained later in the year to deliver new and refresher Risk Matrix 2000 and ViSOR training for new staff.

The constabulary's new and developing performance management framework includes MAPPA arrangements and associated disciplines within the remit of the newly formed PSCU. Although good progress has been made, at the present time the indicators in parts of the performance framework have not yet been consulted on with relevant partners.

Areas for improvement

At present public protection does not feature as a specific part of the force control strategy and no tactical assessment has been undertaken for the newly formed PSCU or problem profile in respect of public protection.

The ACC (operations) should ensure that there is appropriate engagement at ACPO level with the MAPPA SMB.

The constabulary only recently commenced operations within the new PPU structure and has introduced an associated new policy that relates to management of dangerous offenders within those structures. The policy makes reference to the new structure and outlines the various roles and responsibilities, but many of new posts are not yet filled which has resulted in this policy currently being unworkable and impossible to adhere to. The new policy has superseded the previous policies which have now been withdrawn. The constabulary, as a matter of urgency, should make clear the position to relevant staff and be working to a policy that is implementable. At present there is confusion and a lack of corporacy.

RECOMMENDATION 1

The constabulary should introduce a policy surrounding the management of dangerous offenders which reflects the current structures and capabilities of the organisation.

There is a lack of clarity about the roles and responsibilities of senior management in BCUs following the announcement of the restructuring and movement of resources within the field of public protection. The discussion is yet to be had as to the working practices around accountability and underpinning performance framework.

Not all of the responsible and relevant managers in BCUs have seen the new public protection guidelines and there is a lack of awareness of the role in this respect. This is an important issue and leaves the constabulary vulnerable. The constabulary should ensure that key managers are effectively and meaningfully involved in the consultation process and are aware of their role in the management of offenders.

Although staffing levels have been agreed that will provide increased resilience, new staff are in the process of being recruited and those staff will then need specialist training. The constabulary should drive and prioritise the recruiting process and ensure that staff are

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trained to the required level as soon as possible.

In order to inform all staff and partners of new arrangements regarding the management of dangerous offenders, the constabulary would benefit from the inclusion of a structure chart. There is some confusion as to changes already in place and those planned.

The recent structural changes will enhance the PSCU's capability to undertake detailed audits on processes and decisions. The constabulary should, as a matter of urgency, instigate arrangements to undertake such audits and put in place formal mechanisms to share learning from audits and inspections across the constabulary.

Decisions as to the initial level of risk awarded to some offenders are made, in the main, by the PPO in the relevant BCU. There is no agreed corporate or systematic approach to making this decision, or effective oversight and approval of specialist supervisors in PPU's. The constabulary should ensure that such decisions are made within a corporate framework, by supervisors or managers with the appropriate level of training, in full consultation with PPOs, and properly recorded.

RECOMMENDATION 2

The constabulary should ensure that the categorisation and associated decisions regarding levels of risk are taken at an appropriate level.

The constabulary should ensure that MAPPA meetings are attended by officers of appropriate rank in line with the MAPPA guidance in order to facilitate decision making at the appropriate level. Currently attendance by the police at such meetings does not reflect the requirements of the guidance. The new force guidance on the management of dangerous offenders should be more specific and detail which rank, under what circumstances and at which level of meeting or case conference managers and supervisors should attend. In this respect data collection could be enhanced to include this information.

At the time of the inspection some key managers within the process had not seen the new policy on the management of dangerous offenders and had not received any new staff into BCUs under the new PPU structure. In addition, some decision makers in the process intend to use detective sergeants in varying ways, with some intending them to be multi-functional as opposed to dedicated, as the policy suggests. There is uncertainty as to which rank and role should be attending MAPPA meetings. The constabulary should, for the purposes of clarity and maintaining corporacy, clearly outline minimum expectations.

Although the constabulary has had early discussion with partners in respect of the new policy, it has not formally consulted them on the draft policy to seek their views. The constabulary should ensure that full and proper consultation takes place with relevant partners and that their views are sought prior to the next version of the force public protection policy, which should take account of guidance from ACPO and the National Policing Improvement Agency when published.

Although performance indicators are being developed for protective services, which includes public protection, the constabulary has not consulted on the draft indicators with MAPPA partners. The constabulary should consult in order to ensure that indicators are of value and to avoid the risk of duplication of effort.

Home visits in respect of very high-risk, high-risk and medium-risk registered sex offenders are undertaken by PPOs and, where necessary, jointly with the probation service. In respect of low-risk offenders, home visits are currently being undertaken by LPT staff. Home visit procedures are relatively up to date, with reminder and checking mechanisms in place by all PPOs. This approach should be reviewed in line with the new structure for PPU's, and the

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constabulary should ensure that PPOs have the capacity to undertake all home visits in accordance with the policy.

LPT officers undertaking home visits have access to a Word document which provides additional information about the nominal, primarily based on personal details contained on ViSOR. Chief officers should ensure that the risks associated with this practice, although operationally valuable, are fully assessed and that the potential for a breakdown in confidentiality protocols is risk-assessed, discussed and agreed within an appropriate decision-making forum.

The constabulary should ensure that intelligence obtained during home visits or gathered through other proactive means is fed into the NIM process.

The constabulary should undertake a problem profile or undertake additional analytical work in relation to public protection across the force in order to fully understand, at both strategic and tactical levels, the threats, risks and opportunities with particular regard to resident and tourist communities and approved premises.

Although all home visits prior to being undertaken are discussed between the PPO and visiting officer, when all relevant information and intelligence are exchanged, there is no formal procedure in place for this practice. Additionally, the constabulary should develop a formal risk-assessment process to ensure that the health and safety of officers carrying out home visits is considered. This approach should be developed in conjunction with the probation service.

Should the constabulary pursue the policy of having LPT officers undertake home visits, it should ensure that adequate training is provided, particularly in respect of risk assessments and intelligence gathering. LPT staff should be selected for this role according to agreed criteria such as level of training and/or experience.

The constabulary should ensure that a senior officer or manager working at a strategic level in the appropriate BCU formally meets with the manager of the approved premises on a regular and scheduled basis, to review practices and protocols in respect of police interaction with the premises and police response, both planned and spontaneous, to incidents and intelligence. Although there is excellent liaison at a tactical level, evidence indicates that the previous meeting to review arrangements at a strategic level was some time ago and formal arrangements should now be renewed.

The constabulary should put in place clear contact arrangements in the event of an incident involving residents of the approved premises. Currently arrangements are ad hoc and depend on informal arrangements. Clear instructions need to be put in place to ensure that a proper course of action is undertaken from the outset when information is forthcoming.

Some supervisors and managers involved in the management of the PPU function are not trained or experienced to the point where they can add value to the process. There is a lack of awareness of the specialist business they are supervising, particularly in respect of MAPPA, and many are unsure as to their role. The constabulary should ensure that specialist training is provided to the level required and that supervisors and managers are clear about their role and responsibilities.

At the time of the inspection, in some BCUs the workload ratio for the management of registered sex offenders to the number of PPOs was considered excessive. At the time of the inspection the workload of staff was broken down as follows.

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- North BCU with two permanent PPOs: 15 very high-risk offenders, 45 high-risk offenders, 52 medium-risk offenders and 22 low-risk offenders. There is a high level of residents with mental health service involvement.
- West BCU with one permanent PPO: 0 very high-risk offenders, 29 high-risk offenders, 40 medium-risk offenders and 25 low-risk offenders.
- South BCU with one permanent PPO: 1 very high-risk offender, 22 high-risk offenders, 21 medium-risk offenders and 39 low-risk offenders.

The constabulary should be continually mindful of the dangers, particularly in respect of the vulnerability to the constabulary and to the welfare of staff. Individual workloads should be proactively monitored and regular meetings should continue to take place between detective constables or police constables and detective sergeants to discuss.

The constabulary does not have in place a ViSOR registrar to conduct a central monitoring role. Under previous structures the PNC bureau and MAPPA registrar (co-ordinator) had responsibility for creating new records on ViSOR, and individuals at each BCU were identified as the local point of contact for ViSOR. The new force structure has created a post of detective sergeant within the PSCU responsible for audit, dissemination of best practice and supporting the PSCU detective chief inspector, in addition to being the ViSOR first point of contact (FPOC). The role of the FPOC in ensuring a consistent and corporate approach to the use of ViSOR is essential. The capacity of the individual to complete this work must be ensured in order that the potential of ViSOR can be maximised and that appropriate oversight is kept of all nominals resident in or transferring to the force area. The constabulary should review the capacity of the currently identified ViSOR FPOC, who is now identified but not yet in post, to ensure that they can fulfil that role effectively in both the short and long term.

At present the constabulary has very limited specialist audit capability to undertake regular scheduled audits of systems and processes associated with MAPPA and ViSOR. An audit capability, in the form of a dedicated detective sergeant working from HQ, is part of the enhanced staffing arrangements, but as yet this post has not been filled. The constabulary should ensure that a suitable audit regime is strictly followed.

Protecting Vulnerable People – Missing Persons

GRADE	GOOD
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National grade distribution

Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
1	21	21	0

National contextual factors

Each year, thousands of people are reported to police as missing. Many have done so voluntarily and are safe from harm, whether or not they return home. But a number are vulnerable, because of age or health concerns, and the police service has developed well-honed systems to respond swiftly and effectively to such cases. For obvious reasons, missing children arouse particular concern, and many forces deploy 'Child Rescue Alert' to engage the media in publicising such cases. Key good practice in this framework are early recognition of critical incident potential, effective supervision of enquiries, the use of NIM problem profiles and other intelligence techniques to analyse repeat locations (eg, children's homes), and the use of an IT-based investigation tracking system such as COMPACT.

Contextual factors

Each BCU commander has operational responsibility for the management of individual missing persons enquiries, while the superintendent (public protection) maintains a strategic oversight and develops force policy on behalf of the ACC (operations).

The constabulary has invested in a new IT system to manage missing persons enquiries which will be in use throughout the force by April 2008.

Strengths

The force policy statement, recorded on the force's intranet system, is that "Cumbria Constabulary will record and investigate missing persons reports in accordance with the ACPO/NCPE guidance on the management, recording and investigation of missing persons." A detailed action plan was developed and implemented to manage the constabulary's progress towards compliance with the national standards, and this resulted in the implementation of a detailed force policy.

The superintendent (public protection) is an active member of the county-wide strategic boards addressing domestic violence and child protection and reports to the ACC (operations) on these areas of activity. Strategic links with key partners are retained. Joint protocols have been developed between Cumbria social services in respect of looked-after children and key partners involved in the care of people with mental illness.

Each BCU commander has operational responsibility for the management of individual missing persons enquiries, but the superintendent (public protection) maintains a strategic oversight and requires from the BCU detective chief inspector updates in respect of any long-term missing persons.

The force operations board agreed the force policy concerning the management, recording

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and investigation of missing persons in April 2006. This clearly sets out the recording process, risk assessment, tactical options, supervisory responsibilities and review requirements for the management and investigation of missing persons and is available to all staff via the force intranet. This document has been formulated with due regard to the ACPO and NCPE guidance in this area and refers readers to that extensive guidance document for further more detailed information in certain specialist areas. This document is required to be reviewed every year and was due for review at the time of this inspection.

Paper-based recording procedures are in place that facilitate the active supervision and review of missing persons investigations. All reports of missing persons generate a command and control log which records the initial report and subsequent police activity. A formal risk assessment forms part of the missing persons report form completed by the initial officer attending. Once the paper-based missing persons report is completed, the command and control log is closed as a matter of routine.

A robust checking process is in place which entails risk assessments being reviewed at the earliest opportunity by the duty sergeant or inspector, who records reviews on the missing persons report. A subsequent check is undertaken by the staff of the PPU and the forms are produced to the daily management meeting where they are discussed with other related disciplines and the risk assessment is formally reviewed. A record is made in the minutes of the meeting and tasks are allocated in respect of each missing person. In addition, there is evidence that missing persons are routinely considered within appropriate NIM business processes, ie at fortnightly TCG meetings.

The constabulary uses the risk-assessment process identified in the ACPO and NCPE guidance on the management and recording of missing persons and there is clear recognition among staff of the potential for a report of a missing person to lead to a critical incident, and accordingly staff endeavour to undertake realistic risk assessments and respond accordingly.

In the case of high-profile or high-risk cases, the inspection team noted that one BCU commander held a gold group meeting to examine resources allocated to the enquiry and action to date, set appropriate priorities and re-examine risk. This should be considered as good practice. There was good evidence of risk levels being properly assessed and reviewed, evidence of prompt engagement with partners and other emergency services, and clear tasking and optimisation of resources.

The constabulary has clearly defined procedures for the review of outstanding missing persons investigations. Force policy places responsibility with the PPUs for monitoring missing persons investigations and compliance. The PSCU audits the PNC for outstanding long-term missing persons enquiries on a monthly basis and requires updates from BCUs on ongoing activity. All high-risk cases are reviewed as soon as possible and all cases, regardless of risk, within 48 hours by a detective chief inspector. Every missing persons enquiry is reviewed at least every 28 days for the first 3 months and then at the 6-month and 12-month marks, continuing every 6 months thereafter.

There is some evidence of case review to identify opportunities for organisational learning, preventative work and multi-agency responses and there is evidence of partnership working

In North BCU, an LPT constable is the nominated liaison officer between the police and an approved premise, a residential mental health establishment. In South BCU, a joint problem-solving approach is being developed between the police and a children's home to look at developing prevention activity in the area of missing persons.

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Work in progress

The constabulary is developing an approach to performance management for the functions of the PPU's, but the performance framework does not include missing persons. The constabulary should include in its developing performance framework for PPU's performance management information for missing persons

A new IT system (SLEUTH) is being introduced to the constabulary to replace a number of legacy systems. In the first phase of roll-out, the constabulary will be introducing the missing persons element of SLEUTH. Following relevant training, the constabulary will have an IT-based missing persons enquiries management system in use by April 2008.

The local safeguarding children board is reviewing the Runaway Policy which relates to looked-after children and those missing from educational establishments. Following a change in staff within children's services, quarterly meetings are again to commence between children's homes, the police and health services.

Areas for improvement

The new structure for PPU's brings together domestic violence, child abuse, public protection and missing persons. The current force policy provides guidance on the role and responsibilities in respect of operational management, recording and investigation of missing persons enquiries under the previous force structure. The constabulary should now review the force policy to take account of the new structure and lines of accountability, and ensure that staff are aware of the new arrangements.

Uniform staff spoken to had a clear understanding of their role within missing persons enquiries but had received no formal training when a new recording form and risk-assessment process was introduced. They had been no training provided as to what to consider when conducting visits to returned missing persons. In line with reviewing the policy, the constabulary should take the opportunity to identify and resolve any training needs.

In one BCU, an IT system had been developed, and was being evaluated at the time of inspection, to provide a BCU-based record of all missing persons enquiries, ensure that a back-up to the paper-based system is in place, and aid in the management and collation of missing persons enquiries. The constabulary should evaluate this interim IT solution and, subject to it proving adequate, introduce the system across all BCUs. In the short term, the constabulary should consider retaining the command and control log as an 'open incident' only being finalised following the incident entering the tasking framework.

Although all incidents involving vulnerable persons are graded by call takers to receive a deployment within one hour, reports of missing persons do not have formal specific call-grading criteria. The constabulary should consider including missing persons in the grading criteria.

The constabulary should strengthen its supervision of calls to the call centre involving missing persons. Currently there is some confusion among communications staff over the force policy requirement to flag all high-risk missing persons to a communications or patrol supervisor. Some staff are exercising their own judgement on what should or should not be referred, while supervisors believe that all missing persons are systematically flagged to allow the force incident manager to identify potential critical incidents. The constabulary should reiterate to communications staff what is required of them.

The constabulary has not carried out formal problem profiles or analytical work in relation to missing persons. The constabulary should review instances of repeat missing persons and missing persons from repeat locations to establish if detailed analysis is relevant in respect of any one or group of individuals to reduce the likelihood of repeat incidents.

Currently there is no joint protocol with health services concerning mental health patients who go missing while residing in their care. The constabulary should build on current arrangements with health service providers to develop a protocol specifically addressing responses to persons missing from residential mental health establishments and other residential facilities, be they mainstream hospitals or residential care homes. This will allow roles and responsibilities in respect of prevention and response actions, together with information-sharing protocols, to be developed.

The inspection team saw no systematic approach to assessing missing from home issues and processes on a regular basis or to using findings to inform training, partnership activity and other needs. The constabulary should introduce a systematic approach to examining missing persons enquiries at both local and force levels, with lessons learnt being used to drive improvements across the force.

The force NCPE action plan highlights that multi-agency reviews are not routinely used. Although the missing persons policy highlights that there should be multi-agency reviews, it is not explicit about the benefits of multi-agency learning to prevent further instances of persons going missing and reviewing how effective the police response was. The constabulary should reconsider the value of such reviews in complex and protracted cases, eg those involving wide-scale use of mountain rescue and military assets and in respect of any identified repeat missing persons or missing persons hotspots, such as children's homes and mental health establishments.

Recommendations

Protecting vulnerable people

Recommendation 1

The constabulary should introduce a policy surrounding the management of dangerous offenders which reflects the current structures and capabilities of the organisation.

Recommendation 2

The constabulary should ensure that the categorisation and associated decisions regarding levels of risk are taken at an appropriate level.

Appendix: Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations

A

ACC	assistant chief constable
ACPO	Association of Chief Police Officers
APA	Association of Police Authorities

B

BCU	basic command unit
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C

CAPU	child and adult protection unit
CATS	case administration tracking system
CDRP	crime and disorder reduction partnership
Centrex	formerly the national police training organisation
CIDO	community intelligence development officer
CPS	Crown Prosecution Service
CuPS	Cumbria partnership support department

E

ECM	effective contact management
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F

FPOC	first point of contact
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H

HMIC	Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary
HR	human resources

I

IAG	independent advisory group
ICF	integrated competency framework
ICIDP	Initial Crime Investigators' Development Programme
ICT	information and communications technology

K

KIN	key individual network
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L

LAA	local area agreement
LPT	Local Policing Team

M

MAPPA	multi-agency public protection arrangements
MARAC	multi-agency risk assessment conference
MSF	most similar force(s)

N

NCPE	National Centre for Policing Excellence
NCRS	National Crime Recording Standard
NIM	National Intelligence Model

P

PAT	problem analysis triangle
PCSO	police community support officer
PDC	performance development conference
PIP	Professionalising the Investigative Process
PNC	Police National Computer
PPO	public protection officer

PPU public protection unit
PSCU protective services command unit

S

SARA scanning, analysis, response, assessment
SGC Specific Grading Criteria
SIO senior investigating officer
SMB strategic management board
SPI statutory performance indicator

T

TCG tasking and co-ordination group

V

ViSOR Violent and Sex Offenders Register