

Best Value Review of Police Training

Force: Derbyshire Constabulary

Date of Inspection: 3 June 2004



A Report by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary

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Context and Force performance

Context

Population served by the Force	962,502	
Number of police officers	2,083	
Number of police staff	1,130	
Number of special constables	301	
Budget for training for the financial year:	Financial Value	Percentage of Overall Force Budget
2003/04	not asked	2.4%
2004/05	£3.6m	2.6%

Performance

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

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

www.homeoffice.gov.uk/hmic/derbbaseline0604.pdf

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

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

Findings

Area Examined	Findings
TRAINING STRATEGY	<p>HM Inspector found that although the training strategy contains the majority of the sections recommended in HOC 53/2003 the content of some sections is vague.</p> <p>The strategy also refers to a large number of other documents that are intended to support it. It would be helpful to clarifying the strategy if the other documents could be more explicitly referenced within the latter.</p> <p>The principal area of concern is in relation to responsibilities where the guidance is not followed. It is essential that clear responsibilities be allocated as recommended if the strategic direction of training is to be located where it rightly belongs – in the hands of the client side of the training function.</p> <p>HM Inspector encourage the Force to redraft the strategy so that it is wholly compliant with the HOC and that it is generally more explicit.</p>

Area Examined	Findings
<p>QUALITY OF COSTED TRAINING PLAN</p>	<p>The Force does not have a full CTP based on the NCM for the current financial year.</p> <p>The training plan is constructed annually through consultation with BCUs and departments, but a delivery schedule is only published on a quarterly basis. This effectively means that there is no single, readily accessible training plan to show the full year commitments.</p> <p>The training plan that was examined at the time of the inspection consisted of broad category headings only. There was an absence of detail regarding specific types of courses, the numbers of them or the total numbers of students who would be attending. All of this information would be present had the Force adopted the NCM.</p> <p>The Head of Learning and Development acknowledged that the planning process for training suffers from inconsistency in terms of the speediness and accuracy of BCU and departmental training plans which go to inform the wider corporate plan.</p> <p>HM Inspector was unable to identify clear links within the training plan to Force or BCU objectives. The Force is encouraged to ensure that this is addressed as a priority.</p>
<p>MONITORING COSTED TRAINING PLAN THROUGHOUT THE YEAR</p>	<p>HM Inspector considers that, in its present format, the Force training plan is not capable of any meaningful monitoring. This applies in particular to costs.</p> <p>The Training Plan is monitored through the medium of senior officer meetings and HR management meetings. HM Inspector considers that the process described during the inspection gives insufficient focus on the plan overall and a more robust one needs to be introduced.</p> <p>HM Inspector notes that the PA has no formal mechanism to monitor the training plan on an ongoing basis. This is a matter that should be addressed by them.</p> <p>HM Inspector acknowledges the comments of the Head of Learning and Development in relation to the perceived flexibility of current arrangements, ie those internal planning and weekly 'tactical meetings' where variations to the plan can be made. However, such an approach must not be seen as alternative to a more formalised, predictive and transparent process that is overseen by the PA.</p>

Area Examined	Findings
<p>TRAINING NOT INCLUDED IN THE COSTED TRAINING PLAN</p>	<p>A number of specialist areas of training were identified as not being included in the training plan. These include firearms, dogs, HOLMES, forensic, community safety, information services and ACPO training.</p> <p>HM Inspector can see no reason for these areas not being included in the training plan and urges the Force to ensure that they are, and that they are fully costed in line with the NCM.</p> <p>Due to the operation of devolved budgeting within the Force, there have been occasions where the Learning and Development Department is unaware of training taking place until after it has been completed. HM Inspector encourages the Force to ensure that such instances do not occur, and reinforces the need to strengthen the planning process in this regard.</p>
<p>CLIENT/CONTRACTOR ARRANGEMENTS</p>	<p>The Force operates a ‘dynamic’ process in respect of training. Field training officers and divisional training managers undertake this. These personnel act as liaison between the Learning and Development Department and BCUs and are able to respond to needs identified.</p> <p>Although HM Inspector acknowledges the utility of such an approach, the fact is that the Learning and Development Department drive this process. HM Inspector was informed that there are occasions where training issues are perceived to be given a lower than desirable level of importance and the PA are encouraged to ensure that the Force strengthens this area. This effectively means that if the Learning and Development Department reduce their drive and determination, the entire training process could suffer.</p> <p>HM Inspector was informed that the BVR of training had recommended the formation of a dedicated Training Strategy Group, but that this was rejected in favour of the more ‘dynamic’ arrangements described below. Such groups, whereby the client side of training drives and oversees the contractor, are commonplace across the service. They enable accountability, objective focus and enhance the status of training as a key operational enabler. The Force is urged to reconsider this decision.</p>

Area Examined	Findings
<p>MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS FOR TRAINING</p>	<p>HM Inspector was encouraged to find that the Head of Learning and Development has overall management responsibility for those trainers based on BCUs. This practice ensures that corporate standards are maintained. It is unfortunate that accountability for corporate standards does not similarly rest in respect of those other internal training providers already referred to above. The Force should introduce a mechanism to formalise such an approach.</p> <p>HMI repeats the observation regarding the absence of a dedicated client group in respect of training. The inspection revealed a process whereby a plethora of Management Groups and Learning and Development Department personnel attend Project Boards in order to discuss and advise on training issues. It was also learned that various senior managers occasionally take strategic decisions on training issues dependent on the level of decision-making authority required. A dedicated group would streamline this process, as well as ensuring that all key stakeholders, including the PA, were able to oversee the management of the training function.</p>
<p>IMPLEMENTATION OF:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing Learning • Training Matters • Diversity Matters • Foundations for Change 	<p>HM Inspector is satisfied that the issues raised in <i>Managing Learning</i> were considered in the BVR and that the FfC programme is being implemented through the Regional Practitioner Group.</p> <p>In relation to <i>Diversity Matters</i> and <i>Training Matters</i>, HM Inspector could find no evidence of implementation plans that are capable of monitoring through to completion. The Force should introduce these as soon as possible.</p>

Area Examined	Findings
<p>CURRENT IMPROVEMENT PLAN</p>	<p>The current IP was borne out of the BVR and contains 22 recommendations. HM Inspector is satisfied that the Plan is challenging and is likely to lead to improvement. Some of the planning issues identified in the inspection are included in the IP and clearly remain relevant.</p> <p>It is unfortunate that the recommendation in relation to forming an independent strategic group was rejected. This recommendation, had it been adopted, would have enhanced the plan further.</p> <p>In addition to the BVR IP, the Learning and Development Department also works to its own business plan and a strategic document entitled 'Evolving the structure'. These documents contain activities and objectives, which could usefully be incorporated into a single IP rather than separate documents. In this way, Best Value would be the overt driver for improvements and the IP could be seen as a genuinely continuous process.</p> <p>HM Inspector encourages the Force to ensure that the Learning and Development Department works to a single, overarching IP.</p>
<p>MONITORING THE IMPROVEMENT PLAN</p>	<p>HM Inspector is aware that a process existed for monitoring the IP which resulted from the BVR. However, this has largely been completed. The PA has no formal mechanism for monitoring ongoing improvements and this is a failing that should be addressed by them.</p>
<p>QUALITY ASSURANCE PROCESSES</p>	<p>HM Inspector was encouraged to find that the Force has recently introduced a structured QA process for training programmes. The process is undertaken by the Force evaluation officer(s) and involves checking materials against a structured checklist.</p> <p>A number of programmes have been scheduled for submission to the process and these have been identified within the Learning and Development Department. HM Inspector encourages such an approach, but suggests that a schedule is drawn up that seeks to apply it to all training events in the Force. In this way, the Learning and Development Department will be more able to demonstrate that it has undertaken a QA review of all training, and thereby satisfy the main stakeholders in this regard.</p>

Area Examined	Findings
<p>EVALUATION OF TRAINING</p>	<p>The Force has a Learning Evaluation Officer and an Assistant Learning Evaluation Officer.</p> <p>Both these posts are located within the Learning and Development Department and line managed by the Learning Strategy Manager, who in turn reports to the Head of Learning and Development. HM Inspector strongly urges the Force to change these management arrangements as they do not provide sufficient independence from the provider of the service. A more appropriate reporting structure would be to a senior position responsible for operations.</p> <p>The Force has adopted an evaluation prioritisation matrix developed within the East Midlands region. This matrix has eight criteria, which results in an overall weighted score and ultimately a prioritised schedule for evaluations to be undertaken. HM Inspector considers this to be noteworthy practice, but is concerned that the Learning and Development Department drive this process. It is a process that ought to be owned and driven by the client side of the training function.</p> <p>The Force has adopted the Kirkpatrick model of evaluation in line with national guidance. Trainers at the point of delivery primarily undertake Levels 1 and 2 (reaction to the learning and attainment of learning). HM Inspector found that there is a degree of uncertainty regarding how robustly these levels are undertaken and what happens to the results on the part of the Learning Evaluation Officer. This is a clear example of why such personnel should be independent of the training provider.</p> <p>The Force also undertakes Level 3 evaluations. This is the responsibility of the Learning Evaluation Officer and HM Inspector considered that the approach described was both technically sound and practical. It is unfortunate, however, that the uncertainty regarding what happened with regard to recommendations remained.</p> <p>Level 4 evaluations (impact of learning) remain largely aspirational for the Force, although some attempts have been made to collect data that might support greater insight. The PA is encouraged to ensure the Force continues to develop approaches to this area.</p>

Area Examined	Findings
<p>COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN TRAINING</p>	<p>The Learning and Development Department have close working relationships with the Force Diversity Manager and through this post to the IAG. Guidance is sought on the appropriateness of guest speakers and how Learning and Development Department can support various initiatives.</p> <p>Whilst HM Inspector supports such a relationship, the PA are encouraged to ensure that the Force extends the amount of community involvement beyond these arrangements. The Force has already undertaken a significant initiative in relation to engaging with the gypsy community, and the lessons learned there ought to provide a great opportunity to extend the principles to other sectors.</p>
<p>COLLABORATION – EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS</p>	<p>The Force has developed links with local universities. HM Inspector notes that some of the proposals are still under discussion, and encourages the Force to ensure they continue.</p> <p>The Force has also established partnerships with a number of fora representing the gypsy community as already referred to above. Similarly, the Force is encouraged to extend the principles to other sectors.</p>
<p>COLLABORATION – OTHER POLICE ORGANISATIONS</p>	<p>The Force has collaborated with a number of police organisations, including Centrex, on gypsy and traveller issues.</p> <p>In addition, HM Inspector is encouraged that the Force is working with regional partners to develop greater collaboration on training such as Management Of Disaster And Civil Emergency (MODACE), and crime.</p>
<p>ADOPTION OF NATIONAL GUIDANCE</p>	<p>The Force has adopted the national <i>Models for Learning and Development</i>.</p>

Area Examined	Findings
<p>MAIN AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE FORCE</p>	<p>Key areas for improvement identified by the Force revolve around the desire to move learning closer to the work place and increase the amount of collaboration within the region.</p> <p>In addition the desire to make explicit links to the PDR system and training as well as develop robust approaches to work based assessment were articulated.</p> <p>The main challenges to achieving these aspirations are perceived to be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> cultural understanding; setting an agreed joint agenda: and adequate resources. <p>HM Inspector considers that these challenges are indicative of the Learning and Development Department being the main strategic driver of improvements to learning and development in the Force. Such challenges are real. If they are to be overcome, the principal driver must be the client side of the training service. As has already been pointed out this is an area which the Force does not have properly structured.</p>
<p>APPLICATION OF THE 4Cs SINCE THE REVIEW</p>	<p>HM Inspector was unable to validate the claims that the principles of Best Value are applied in respect of newly commissioned training events. HM Inspector encourages the Force to design a more robustly documented process to evidence the application of the 4Cs than presently exists.</p>
<p>IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INTEGRATED COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK</p>	<p>The Force has matched all roles against the ICF. Although training staff were aware that this has been undertaken HM Inspector is concerned that there does not appear to be a formal integration of the competencies into training programmes, together with a mechanism for checking this. The Force should ensure that this is done.</p>

Area Examined	Findings
<p>MONITORING PROCESS AND COMPLETION OF PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT REVIEWS FOR POLICE OFFICERS AND POLICE STAFF</p>	<p>At the time of the inspection the process for monitoring completion of PDRs was in the final stages of development with some software issues causing delay. HM Inspector encourages the Force to ensure that the system introduced is robustly applied and that it is regularly monitored.</p>
<p>BUSINESS PLANNING FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF TRAINING</p>	<p>The Force holds a corporate planning seminar each year. BCU and departmental plans evolve from this process, including that for the Learning and Development Department.</p> <p>The Force training plan is derived from analysis of the other plans by the Learning and Development Department who then consult on the issues identified.</p> <p>HM Inspector emphasises that whilst this approach is technically credible, it is one that is clearly driven by the training provider. The Force should introduce a process whereby the planning process for training is driven by the client side of the training function.</p>
<p>PRIORITISATION MODEL FOR TRAINING</p>	<p>The prioritisation process described is a subjective process. HM Inspector encourages the Force to develop a more objective and structured approach. This has already been achieved in relation to evaluation, and such an instrument might usefully be developed and applied in this area too.</p>

Recommendations

Recommendation 1

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

Recommendation 2

HM Inspector recommends that the Force develops a single costed training plan for the whole year and that it has clear links to Force and Basic Command Unit objectives. The Police Authority is encouraged to ensure that this is addressed as a priority

Recommendation 3

HM Inspector recommends that the Force fully adopts the National Costing Model as a matter of priority

Recommendation 4

HM Inspector recommends that the Force and the Police Authority establish a formal mechanism to monitor the costed training plan on an ongoing basis. This should include the development of performance measures in relation to the delivery of the plan

Recommendation 5

HM Inspector recommends that the Force ensures that the costed training plan captures all training provision, including that provided under devolved arrangements

Recommendation 6

HM Inspector recommends that the Force develops a more distinct client/contractor arrangement that ensures that the client has a clear role in the commissioning and evaluation of training and the contractor is held accountable for delivery

Recommendation 7

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

Recommendation 8

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

Recommendation 9

HM Inspector recommends that the Force ensures that the Learning and Development Department works to a single improvement plan and that this is monitored by them

Recommendation 10

HM Inspector recommends that the Force Learning and Development Department draws up a comprehensive Quality Assurance schedule in respect of all training events and that the established Quality Assurance process is applied

Recommendation 11

HM Inspector recommends that the Force ensures the Learning Evaluation Officer reports to a post independent of the Learning and Development Department

Recommendation 12

HM Inspector recommends that the Force extends the scope of its current levels of community involvement, drawing on the lessons learned from work with the gypsy and traveller communities

Recommendation 13

HM Inspector recommends that the Force develops a mechanism which ensures that the principles of Best Value are applied to all new training initiatives and that these are capable of audit

Recommendation 14

HM Inspector recommends that the Force ensures that all training programmes are mapped against the Integrated Competency Framework

Recommendation 15

HM Inspector recommends that the Police Authority ensures the system for monitoring completion of Personal Development Reviews is introduced as soon as possible and that it is regularly monitored

Recommendation 16

HM Inspector recommends that the Force develops and applies a more structured and objective process for prioritisation of training

Judgements

Judgement 1:

The Force training strategy is in need of strengthening, crucially in respect of responsibilities. There is no single training plan clearly linked to Force and Basic Command Unit objectives. In addition, the Force has yet to adopt the National Costing Model.

The Learning and Development Department are clearly the primary drivers of the strategic direction of training, and due account has been taken of their work on needs analysis, design and evaluation. However, the absence of an Independent Client Group and independent evaluation function are particular concerns.

Similar concerns exist in respect of the monitoring of the training plan by the Police Authority, together with the ad hoc engagement with the Force on training issues throughout the year. There is some noteworthy practice in respect of community engagement and collaboration, but scope for doing more.

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

Judgement 2:

Although the Force undertook its Best Value Review of training before the national project, HM Inspector is satisfied that a robust approach was taken. This has resulted in a challenging improvement plan. Since that time however, other issues have arisen as part of the ongoing business planning process. HM Inspector considers that a single overarching Improvement Plan offers greater clarity of direction and ability to monitor progress towards completion. Taken as a whole, the direction of the Learning and Development Department is encouraging.

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

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

BEST VALUE AND PLANNING GUIDANCE FOR POLICE AUTHORITIES AND FORCES.

Adult Learning Inspectorate

Summary of Findings

The Adult Learning Inspectorate undertook an assessment of several training sessions during the course of their inspection. A summary of their findings is shown below. This inspection visit was carried out prior to HMIC (P&T) inspection of the force.

Achievement and Standards

- There is little data available about pass rates on courses and learner's success rates are not routinely monitored. However, there are good pass rates on the driver training courses and 85 per cent of learners pass the standard driver course at their first attempt. Pass rates for Probationer Training are not monitored but currently 95 per cent of those in training are meeting the required standards. There is little formal assessment of learners' attainment on other courses.

Quality of Education and Training

- All of the practical training observed during the inspection was good. Trainers are well qualified, competent and experienced. Good use is made of demonstrations before learners have the chance to practise new skills. The ratio of trainers to learners is good and all learners receive constructive individual feedback during the sessions. Sessions are well managed and follow a logical plan, which allows learners to develop complex skills easily and progressively.
- Good use is made of productive links with external agencies and specialist police departments. Most courses include visits from guest speakers who have specialist knowledge and use their experiences to broaden the learner's knowledge.
- In the best sessions trainers use activities which improve team work and encourage open debate and discussion.
- In theory sessions trainers use a narrow range of teaching methods. Often these sessions are too slow and repetitive and do not meet the individual needs of learners. There is little checking of knowledge and understanding and when trainers do ask questions they provide the answers without waiting for the learners to contribute.

- There is poor use of learning materials in many sessions. Overhead projector acetates are of a poor quality and are difficult to read. Some contain mistakes or do not illustrate current practice. Many courses include a requirement for learners to read information before attending certain sessions. However poor use is made of this exercise, as trainers do not check whether learners have completed the task set and do not make use of the knowledge during the session.
- Although guest speakers make a significant contribution to many courses trainers do not facilitate these sessions well. Often speakers are inadequately briefed and the learning outcomes are too dependent on the questions that learners ask.
- There is insufficient integration of equality and diversity with all training sessions. Too often trainers consider equality and diversity to be a separate topic rather than raising learners' awareness during other sessions.
- There is good development of e-learning packages which are available to all learners on an intranet. The site is easy to access and use and contains a good mix of both bought in and in-house designed learning packages. They cover a wide range of useful topics including ICT training. Both these and a range of discussion groups can be accessed by all staff through the force's on line learning portal. Two full time members of staff are responsible for designing, monitoring and up-dating the learning materials on offer. The force has a comprehensive policy for the use of e-learning including the provision of duty time for learning. However there is no formal way to book this time.
- Insufficient use is made of assessment to monitor progress or to identify individual learning needs. Poor use of initial assessment at divisional level means that some learners are sent on inappropriate courses. Although there is very good individual feedback on driving courses this is not a feature on most other courses. Learners do not have individual action plans when they return to their divisions between block release probationer training. Although some courses such as driving and firearms, are assessed by practical performance for most other courses there is an over reliance on written tests which test knowledge rather than the application of skills. Lack of skill is then only identified by poor performance at work.
- There is poor planning of training. This is exacerbated by the poor communication between the divisions and the training centre. A new role of divisional training manager has been recently introduced to try to resolve this. Some courses run with low numbers below their capacity, for example, one personal safety refresher course observed during the inspection had 8 participants instead of the 16 it could have catered for. This compounds problems with meeting the requirements for mandatory refresher courses. There is poor prioritising of training at divisional level and no time limit between a training need being identified and met. This results in urgent training needs not being met as allocation is not based on need. There is insufficient advance planning to ensure that the needs of the force are met and insufficient succession planning.
- Tutors provide satisfactory support but there are insufficient individual tutorials or opportunities for learners to receive feedback on their performance.



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