

**HM Inspectorate of Constabulary
South of England Region**

**Inspection of South and West Devon BCU
Devon & Cornwall Constabulary
June 2005**



Executive Summary

The inspection of the South and West Devon Basic Command Unit (BCU) was conducted on behalf of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary by Chief Superintendents Peter Driver and Frank Sullivan and Chief Inspectors Bill Halsey and Nicole Coppinger between 20th and 24th June 2005.

The potential for the Service as a whole to deliver better results in crime reduction and detection cannot conceal an inescapable fact - that performance between BCUs operating in similar policing environments and with comparable resources varies to a degree that is at times remarkable.

Leadership by BCU commanders is probably the single most important determinant of BCU effectiveness. The inspection seeks examples of leadership at all levels, and does not confine expectations to those holding certain roles. The inspection process is intended to help enhance performance whilst identifying and spreading potential good practice. The process of the inspection is tightly focused on leadership and performance, coupled with a pre-inspection analysis of key data and documents.

The South and West Devon BCU covers an area of 1,049 square miles and serves a population of approximately 381,356 - a third of which live in Torbay. The BCU covers the local authorities of South Hams, Teignbridge and West Devon, as well as Torbay Unitary Authority. The BCU covers a very large geographic area from the outskirts of Exeter in the east to the borders of Plymouth in the west, including Dartmoor National Park and the south Devon coastal resorts of Torquay, Paignton and Brixham. Much of the area is sparsely populated, but the holiday resorts can see their population swell by 50% during the summer, with associated policing challenges.

The BCU is led by a chief superintendent who has been in post since March 2005, having served previously as the deputy commander on the BCU for a year. The senior management team is made up of experienced police officers, many of whom have been on the BCU for some time and senior police staff who are relatively new. As the SMT in any BCU is normally the powerhouse for delivering performance, it is important that the team works well together and focuses on the best use of the BCU's resources to maximise performance.

The South and West Devon BCU is a relatively low crime area. Overall, total crime is stable, although domestic burglary and violent crime have increased over the last year. There has been a significant reduction in vehicle crime, but the detection rate has also fallen sharply. As detailed elsewhere in this report, there are areas for improvement in terms of how the BCU identifies and tackles key issues affecting performance which, whilst by no means poor, will require continued focus. The inspection team were impressed with many aspects of the BCU's work and believes that the recommendations found below will assist the senior management team to achieve a sustained improvement in performance.

Recommendations

1. The BCU commander undertakes an urgent review to satisfy himself that his police districts are fulfilling their obligations under the Crime and Disorder Act (para.46).
2. The BCU restricts membership of the SMT to those with corporate responsibility and accountability; and fully develops the role of DCI into one with corporate responsibility and accountability (para. 65).
3. The BCU reviews and improves its arrangements for the allocation, action and monitoring of DNA and fingerprint hits to ensure offenders are arrested and dealt with promptly (para. 102).
4. The BCU achieves better integration between detectives and uniform officers, and should consider CID attachments and the re-housing of some, if not all, of the detectives currently in separate accommodation at Torquay (para. 114).
5. The BCU review its intelligence-led model, particularly in regard to the TCG process, its Briefing model, and the working arrangements of the IIMU (para.146).
6. The SMT issue clearly defined terms of reference for NBMs and ensure that they are provided with timely and relevant intelligence and analytical support to focus efforts on priorities (para. 179).
7. The SMT review and evaluate the work conducted by the CIC and crime reduction teams with a view to reducing the numbers of police officers in both departments and merging them into a BCU wide resource (para. 201).
8. The BCU examine its arrangements for dealing with persons in custody and introduces a PHT to ensure adequate resources are available to deal with them expeditiously and effectively (para. 209).

Introduction

1. Between 20th and 24th June 2005, Chief Superintendents Peter Driver and Frank Sullivan and Chief Inspectors Bill Halsey and Nicole Coppinger carried out an inspection of South and West Devon Basic Command Unit on behalf of Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary (HMIC). They were accompanied by Miss Fiona Moore, regional analyst from the HMIC's Woking office.
2. There are approximately 300 Basic Command Units (BCUs) in England and Wales and no two are alike. They vary in size from a little over 100 officers to a little over 1,000; some serve densely populated, ethnically diverse inner cities, while others cover vast tracts of sparsely populated countryside. What they do share are some key aims and objectives, specifically to work with partner agencies on reducing crime in their areas, and to do so with integrity. Scrutiny of police performance has moved from aggregate force outcomes to the performance of individual BCUs, with the recognition that policing is essentially a locally delivered service. But BCUs are not islands; they operate within a framework of policy and support determined by headquarters-based chief officer teams. The precise configuration of policing units and the balance of resources between HQ and BCUs varies across the 43 forces in England and Wales.
3. The focus on performance in reducing crime is relentless. Forces and police authorities, working with local authorities and other community safety partners, need to raise performance outcomes year upon year. Indeed, the statutory regime of Best Value demands "continuous improvement" and an array of sanctions exist if authorities fail to deliver. The potential for the Service as a whole to deliver better results in crime reduction and detection cannot conceal an inescapable fact - that performance between BCUs operating in similar policing environments and with comparable resources varies to a degree that is, at times, remarkable.
4. Leadership by BCU commanders is undoubtedly pivotal in determining the effectiveness of a BCU. Without exception, staff across the country want their management teams to be visible and accessible. "Leadership" is an intangible concept but we know that the majority of good leaders are made, not born, and so one outcome from BCU inspections should be a better understanding of the practical manifestations of effective leadership.
5. The HMIC report *Getting Down to Basics - The emerging findings from BCU inspections in 2001* highlights the fact that there is no single way of leading. An effective approach is contingent upon the situation and the individuals being led. The inspection seeks examples of leadership at all levels, and does not confine expectations to those holding certain roles. The more senior the role, the more outward-focused the post-holder needs to be. This has become increasingly evident in partnership settings, and inspections to date have identified a strong correlation between high-performing BCUs and effective partnerships.
6. The best performers focus the effort of all their staff through timely, dynamic local briefings that are supported by a well-managed intelligence system. They set targets and make sure that staff are aware of them, they communicate results and celebrate success, and they hold individuals to account for how they have

used their time and resources. The inspection process is intended to help enhance performance whilst identifying and spreading potential good practice.

Aims of BCU Inspections

Promoting effective leadership.

Disseminating potential good practice.

Identifying inefficiencies.

Providing pointers to enhance performance.

Strengthening the capacity for self-assessment and improvement.

Leaving behind a BCU management team that has learnt about itself and is even more committed to self-improvement.

7. The inspection methodology is tightly focused on leadership and performance, coupled with a pre-inspection analysis of key data and documents. The documents, data and other BCU issues are explored through an initial meeting with the BCU Commander, and then a series of interviews, meetings and focus groups during the week of the inspection. The process is brought to an end with a verbal debrief and outline of the key findings to the BCU commander and his or her senior management team (SMT).
8. A total of 36 structured interviews and focus groups were conducted. Apart from time spent at the BCU headquarters, visits were made to the custody suite and the CID office at Torquay and to outlying stations. The inspection team attended 2 patrol briefings, 2 fortnightly tactical tasking and co-ordinating meetings and a daily tasking meeting. The inspection team interviewed a total of 75 members of staff, 6 members of the Special Constabulary and 10 representatives from partnership agencies.
9. This inspection took place as part of the five-year HMIC BCU inspection programme and the inspection team wishes to place on record its thanks for the co-operation and assistance provided by the BCU Commander and all his staff during the course of the inspection.

Force Overview

10. Devon & Cornwall Constabulary serves the counties of Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly and is the largest territorial police force in England. Situated in the south west of England, the counties cover an area of 3,960 square miles and have a coastline of over 550 miles. The challenges of policing such an area are diverse and complex. In an area where one might expect to find an affluent population, there are areas of significant social deprivation, especially in the west of Cornwall where unemployment is significant.
11. The counties include areas of significant population such as Torbay, Exeter, Truro and Plymouth. The Force also polices rural areas with low population and

important heritage sites, such as Dartmoor, Bodmin Moor, the Isles of Scilly and the coastline. The total population of the force area is approximately 1.5 million and there is a minority ethnic population of approximately 18,400, representing 1.2% of the total population.

12. The command team consists of the Chief Constable, a deputy chief constable responsible for BCUs and territorial policing, and three assistant chief constables holding the portfolios of operations, personnel and job evaluation, and criminal justice and partnerships. A director of finance and administration completes the team. The force revenue budget for 2005/06 is £243.7million. Staffing levels at 31 March 2005 were 3,405 police officers, 2,130 police staff, 582 special constables and 74 police community support officers (PCSOs).
13. The Force has undergone significant structural change over the past few years, reducing the number of BCUs from 16 to 4 and splitting some headquarters functions following the most recent HMIC Formal Inspection in 2002. Territorially the Force now comprises the 4 BCUs of: Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly, Plymouth, North and East Devon, and South and West Devon. Each is commanded by a chief superintendent with a superintendent who acts as a deputy, a superintendent partnership and a superintendent who is responsible for operations. Senior staff are supported by chief inspectors who have specialist or geographical areas of responsibility. Suitably qualified police staff support each area management team, with responsibility for human resources and business management. Whilst geography may be a complicating factor, this model, with the number of senior police staff, remains unusual when compared to similar forces.
14. The cultural changes still underway in the Force are being promoted by the relatively new command team and are based around the concept of geographical ownership from BCUs down to sector and neighbourhood level. The vision of the force command team is articulated through the 'Principles of Policing', which includes a commitment to provide each of the neighbourhoods in the two counties with a dedicated constable and, importantly, that these officers will not be abstracted unless absolutely necessary.

South and West Devon BCU

15. South & West Devon BCU covers an unusually large area of 1,049 square miles, including the local authorities of South Hams, Teignbridge and West Devon, as well as Torbay Unitary Authority. The BCU stretches from the borders of Exeter in the east to Plymouth in the west and includes Dartmoor National Park and the coastal resorts of Dawlish, Teignmouth, Torquay, Brixham and Paignton in South Devon.
16. The BCU has a resident population of 381,356 people; around one third of whom live in Torbay, with a 1% minority ethnic population. The population of the area is growing, especially in the A380 corridor North of Newton Abbot and the more popular coastal resorts see population increases of 50% in the summer. The BCU

also covers the market towns of Totnes, Tavistock and Okehampton.

17. The BCU is divided into 3 geographical areas, known as districts which are co-terminous with one or more local and unitary authorities. The population of the BCU is split approximately equally between the three districts with South Hams and West Devon having 130,692 residents, Teignbridge 120,958 and Torbay 129,706.
18. The BCU's SMT is led by the BCU Commander, who is a chief superintendent, with a superintendent responsible for operations and a superintendent operations support who also acts as deputy commander. A third superintendent is shared with an adjacent BCU (North and East Devon) who has responsibility for the strategic management of partnerships in both areas. The SMT includes three chief inspectors, each of whom manages a geographical district and a detective chief inspector who is the crime manager. Three members of police staff sit on the SMT, namely the heads of finance and personnel and the business analyst. It was noted by the inspection team that the number of superintendents on the BCU, whilst providing resilience to senior management, is unusual in a BCU of this size.
19. Within the BCU's districts there are a total of nine sectors each managed by an inspector and covering a total of sixteen police stations. The nine sectors are broken down into 53 neighbourhoods each managed by one or more constables, known as neighbourhood beat managers (NBMs).
20. The BCU revenue budget for 2005/06 is £26.5M. The full time equivalent funded post profile (FPP) as at 31 March 2005 was 607.5 police officers, 144.5 police staff, 9 PCSOs and 113 special constables.
21. The current control strategy focuses on:
 - Dwelling burglaries
 - Supply of class "A" drugs
 - Violent crime
 - Vehicle crime
 - Criminal damage and anti-social behaviour

Performance

Overview of Operational Performance

22. The National Crime Recording Standard (NCRS) was first introduced in April 2002 by the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) and the Home Office. The aim of the Standard is to promote greater consistency between police forces in the recording of crime and to take a more victim-oriented approach. It was also intended that it would ensure a more realistic picture of crime in communities.

The NCRS has been attributed with causing rises in some key crime categories, which since the years April 2002 - 04 have created a new baseline from which comparative performance can now be examined. The Audit Commission undertakes a yearly assessment of adherence to the standard, by all forces. Each year since 2003 forces are provided with an overall grading as well as grades across a range of categories.

23. For the period May 2004 - April 2005 total crimes recorded by the Force were 132,044 and the BCU 29,091 representing 22.03% of the force total. When compared with the previous year, the Force showed a decrease in total recorded crime of 0.02%, the BCU an increase of 0.16%.
24. For the same period the overall force detection rate increased from 29.12% to 30.16% with the BCU also witnessing a slight rise from 29.90% to 30.38%.
25. The table below indicates performance comparisons for South and West Devon BCU between the periods May 2003 to April 2004 and May 2004 to April 2005.

Crime Levels and Detections	May 2003 to April 2004	May 2004 to April 2005	% Change
Total recorded crime	29,138	29,091	-0.16%
Number of crimes detected	8,712	8,838	1.45%
% Crimes detected	29.90%	30.38%	1.61%
Total recorded crime per 1,000 population	75.64	75.52	-0.16%
Total residential burglary	1464	1532	4.64%
Number of residential burglaries detected	220	231	5.00%
% Residential burglaries detected	15.03%	15.08%	0.34%
Total residential burglaries per 1,000 households	8.78	9.19	4.67%
Total vehicle crime	3400	3119	-8.26%
Number of vehicle crimes detected	478	389	-18.62%
% Vehicle crimes detected	14.06%	12.47%	-11.29%
Total vehicle crime per 1,000 population	8.83	8.1	-8.27%
Total violent crime	6341	6780	6.92%
Number of violent crimes detected	3203	3524	10.02%
% Violent crimes detected	50.51%	51.98%	2.90%
Total violent crime per 1,000 population	16.46	17.6	6.93%
Total robbery	134	92	-31.34%
Number of robberies detected	37	25	-32.43%
% Robberies detected	27.61%	27.17%	-1.59%
Total robbery per 1,000 population	0.35	0.24	-31.43%

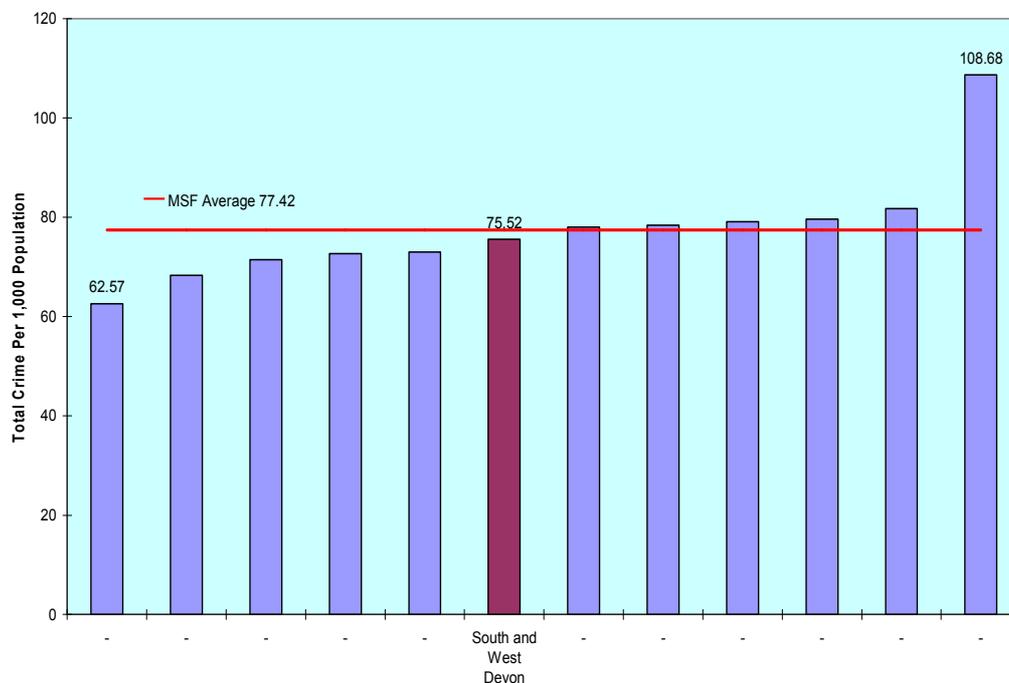
Total Crime

26. For the period May 2004 to April 2005 total recorded crime decreased by 0.16% when compared with the previous year. The BCU ranked 6th out of 12 for total

crime per 1,000 population in their MSBCU group. The BCU is inline with the MSBCU average for total crime per 1,000 population. Projections based on the last 3 and 6 months data show the level of crime decreasing. Projections based on the last 12 months data show the level of crime remaining static.

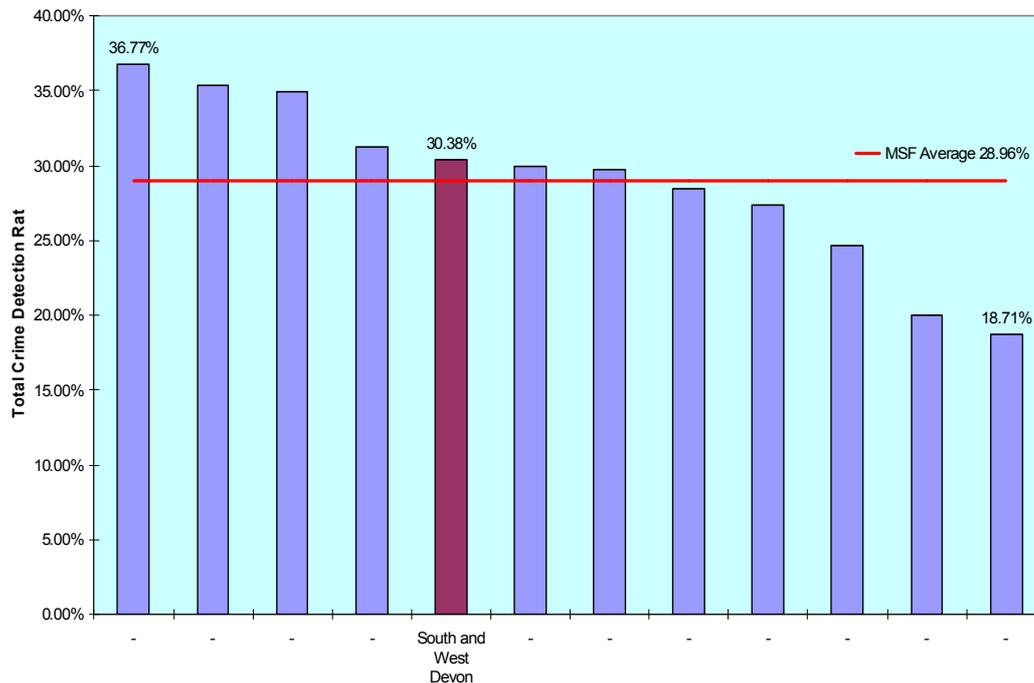
27. For the period May 2004 to April 2005 the number of crimes detected increased by 1.45% when compared to the previous year. For the same period the overall detection rate for the BCU is 30.38% compared with 29.90% the previous year. The BCU is ranked 5th out of 12 in the MSBCU group. The BCU is just above the MSBCU average detection rate. Projections based on the last 6 months show the detection rate increasing, projections based on the last 3 and 12 months data show the detection rate remaining at the current level.

Total Crime per 1,000 Population May 2004 to April 2005



Source: HMIC South of England Region – RDS Crux Matrix 2005
(Only South and West Devon BCU have been identified as the 2004/05 – 2005/06 data has not been validated or published, this is in accordance with HMIC data release guidelines)

Total Crime Detection Rate May 2004 to April 2005



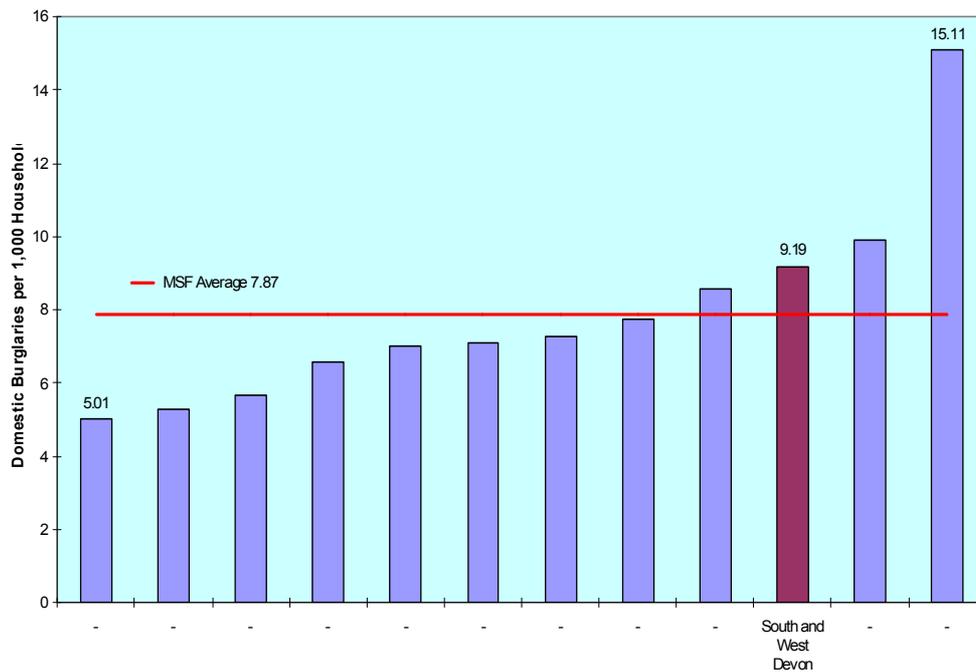
Source: HMIC South of England Region – RDS Crux Matrix 2005
(Only South and West Devon BCU have been identified as the 2004/05 – 2005/06 data has not been validated or published, this is in accordance with HMIC data release guidelines)

Domestic Burglary

28. For the period May 2004 to April 2005 total recorded domestic burglaries increased by 4.64% when compared with the previous year. The BCU ranked 10th out of 12 for domestic burglary per 1,000 households in its MSBCU group. The BCU is currently above MSBCU average for domestic burglary per 1,000 households. Projections based on the last 12 months data show the level of crime increasing.

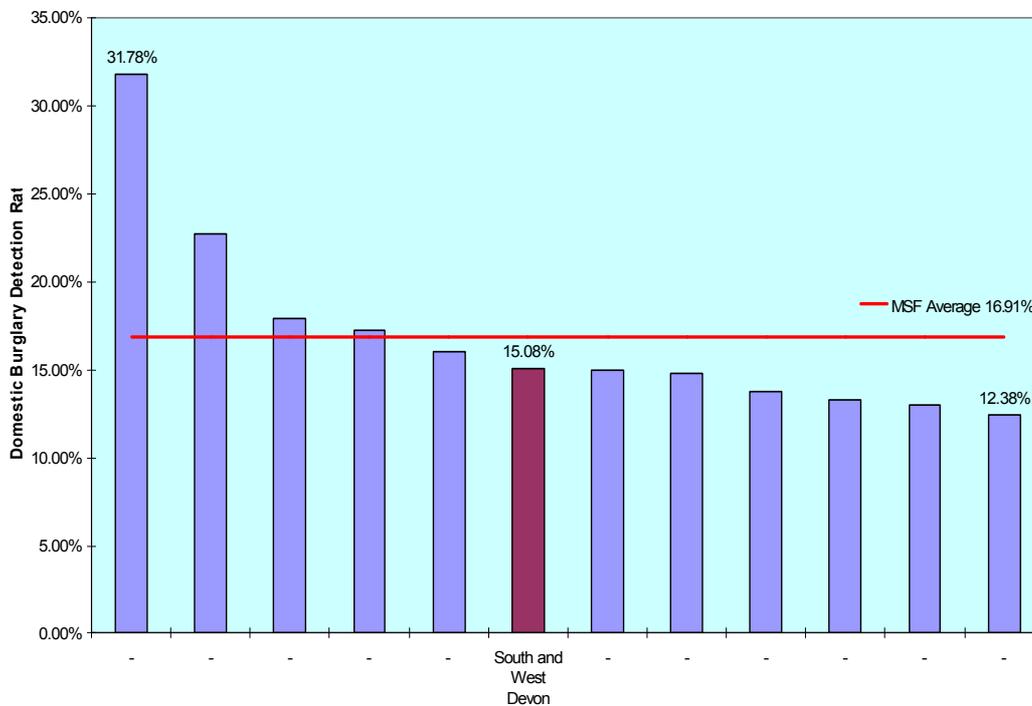
29. For the period May 2004 to April 2005 the actual number of domestic burglaries detected increased by 5.00% when compared to the previous year. For the same period the overall detection rate for the BCU is 15.08% compared with 15.03% the previous year. The BCU is ranked 6th out of 12 in the MSBCU group and is below the MSBCU average. Projections based on the last 6 and 12 months data show the detection rate increasing. Projections based on the last 3 months data show the detection rate decreasing.

Domestic Burglary per 1,000 Households May 2004 to April 2005



Source: HMIC South of England Region – RDS Crux Matrix 2005
(Only South and West Devon BCU have been identified as the 2004/05 – 2005/06 data has not been validated or published, this is in accordance with HMIC data release guidelines)

Domestic Burglary Detection Rate May 2004 to April 2005

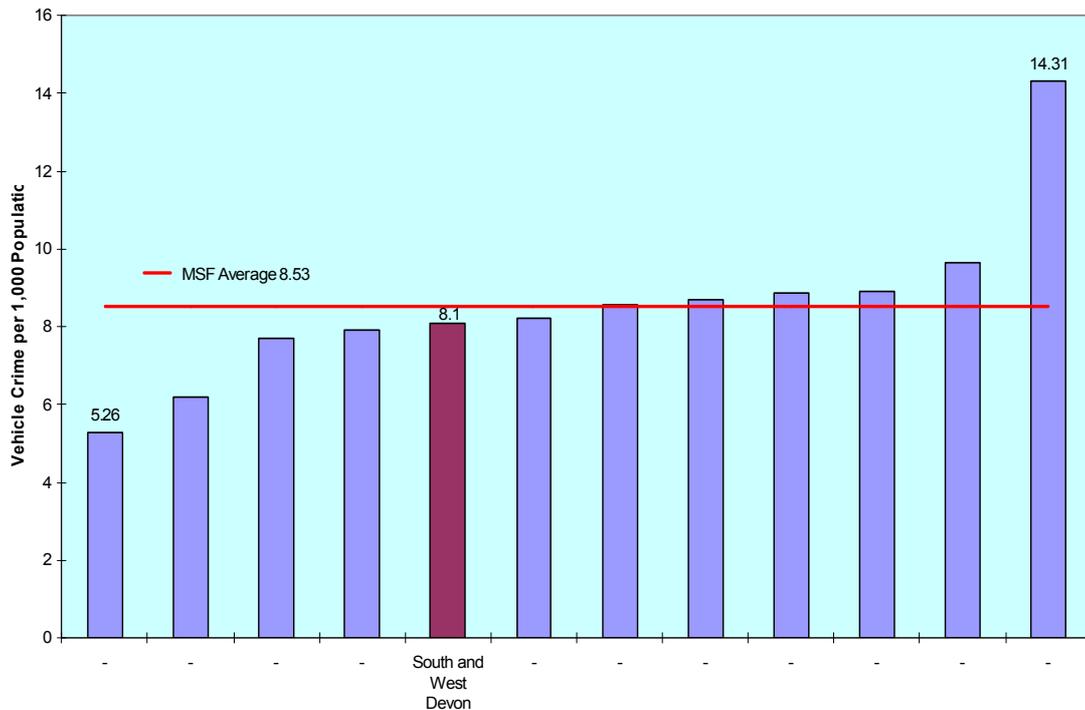


Source: HMIC South of England Region – RDS Crux Matrix 2005
(Only South and West Devon BCU have been identified as the 2004/05 – 2005/06 data has not been validated or published, this is in accordance with HMIC data release guidelines)

Vehicle Crime

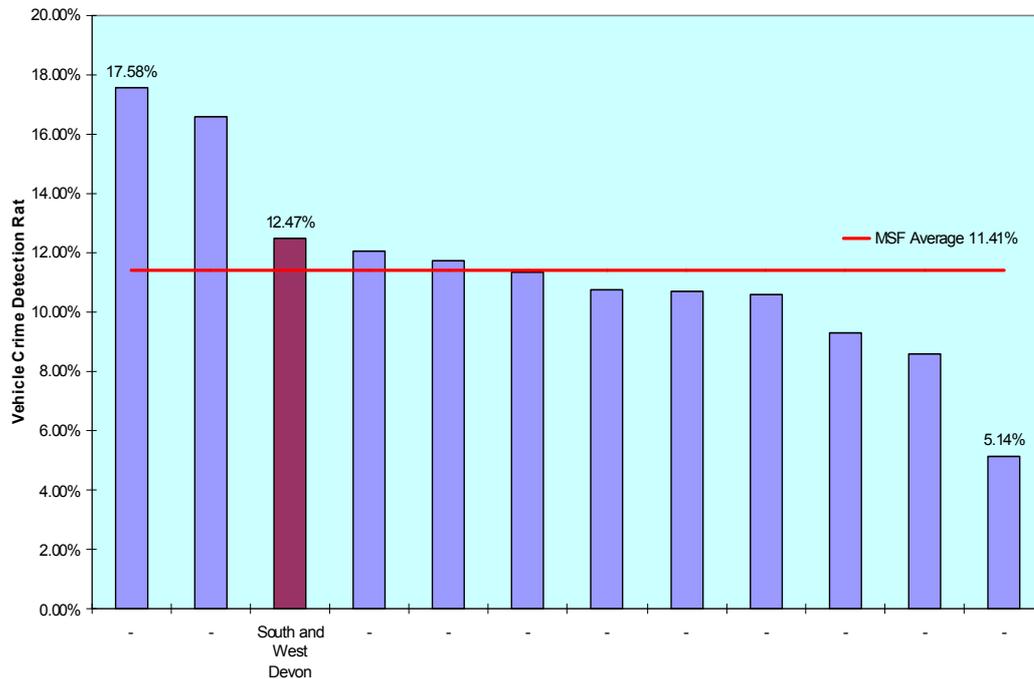
30. For the period May 2004 to April 2005 total recorded vehicle crime decreased by 8.26% when compared with the previous year. The BCU ranked 5th out of 12 for vehicle crime in its MSBCU group. The BCU is just below the MSBCU average for vehicle crime per 1,000 population. All projections show the level of vehicle crime decreasing.
31. For the period May 2004 to April 2005 the actual number of crimes detected decreased by 18.62% when compared to the previous year. For the same period the overall detection rate for the BCU is 12.47% compared with 14.06% the previous year. The BCU is ranked 3rd out of 12 in the MSBCU group. Currently the detection rate is above the MSBCU average. Projections based on the last 12 months data show the detection rate decreasing, but projections based on the last 3 and 6 months data show the detection rate increasing.

Vehicle Crime per 1,000 Population May 2004 to April 2005



Source: HMIC South of England Region – RDS Crux Matrix 2005
(Only South and West Devon BCU has been identified as the 2004/05 data has not been validated or published, this is in accordance with HMIC data release guidelines)

Vehicle Crime Detection Rate May 2004 to April 2005



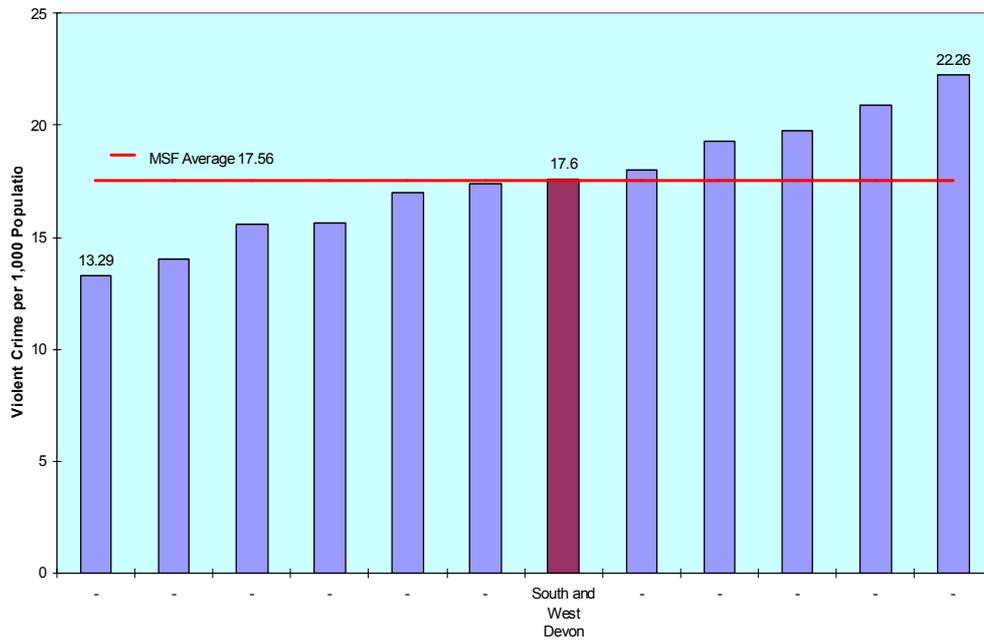
Source: HMIC South of England Region – RDS Crux Matrix 2005

(Only South and West Devon BCU has been identified as the 2004/05 data has not been validated or published, this is in accordance with HMIC data release guidelines)

Violent Crime

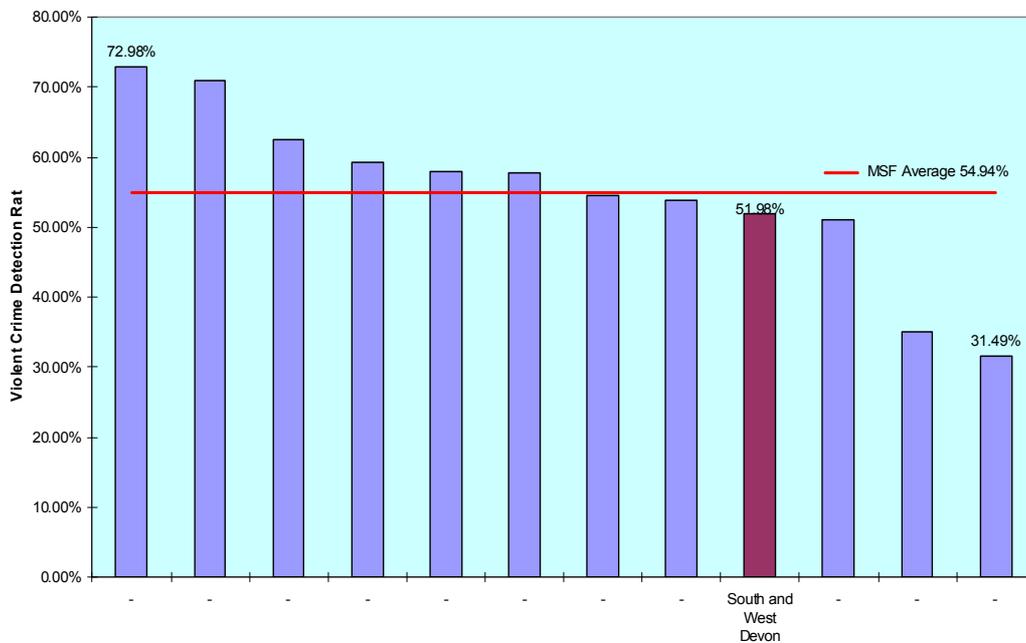
32. For the period May 2004 to April 2005 total recorded violent crime increased by 6.92% when compared with the previous year. The BCU ranked 7th out of 12 for violent crime in its MSBCU group. The BCU is currently in line with the MSBCU average for violent crime per 1,000 population. Projections based on the last 12 months data show the level of crime increasing, but projections based on the last 3 and 6 months data show the level of crime decreasing.
33. For the period May 2004 to April 2005 the actual number of crimes detected increased by 10.02% when compared to the previous year. For the same period the overall detection rate for the BCU is 51.98% compared with 50.51% the previous year. The BCU is ranked 9th out of 12 in the MSBCU group. The detection rate is below the MSBCU average. Projections based on the last 3 and 12 months data show the detection rate remaining at the current level, but projections based on the last 6 months data show the detection rate increasing.

Violent Crime per 1,000 Population May 2004 to April 2005



Source: HMIC South of England Region – RDS Crux Matrix 2005
 (Only South and West Devon BCU have been identified as the 2004/05 – 2005/06 data has not been validated or published, this is in accordance with HMIC data release guidelines)

Violent Crime Detection Rate May 2004 to April 2005



Source: HMIC South of England Region – RDS Crux Matrix 2005
 (Only South and West Devon BCU have been identified as the 2004/05 – 2005/06 data has not been validated or published, this is in accordance with HMIC data release guidelines)

Conclusion

34. Commendable reduction in vehicle crime over the past 12 months is overshadowed by increases in dwelling burglaries and violent crime. Although the BCU's overall detection rate is above average, detections for house burglaries and violent crime in particular should be targeted by the SMT as areas for improvement. With the Crown Prosecution Service statutory charging scheme now in place the SMT needs to maintain an even closer scrutiny of charging decisions, detained person hand-over arrangements and the processes by which sanction detections are obtained. Thames Valley Police and Brighton BCU have been particularly proactive in this area with process benchmarking worthy of further consideration by the SMT.

Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships

35. The 1998 Crime and Disorder Act placed a requirement on the police, local authorities and other partners to develop strategies for the reduction of crime and disorder. These strategies are formulated and driven by Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRPs). In particular, statutory partnerships for each district of England and Wales must carry out and publish an audit of crime and disorder in their locality, taking into account the views of those living and working in the area. The CDRP must then identify a series of priorities for action and consult widely regarding the strategy for dealing with them. Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships not only have a number of agencies included in their membership but also have to work closely with other agencies or groups, such as Drug Action Teams (DATs), Youth Offending Teams (YOTs), Health and Education.
36. As stated earlier, South & West Devon BCU is sub-divided into three geographical Districts, containing sixteen police stations. Each District is commanded by a chief inspector and is co-terminus with one or more local or unitary authorities. They are:
1. South Hams & West Devon (South Hams District Council, West Devon Borough Council)
 2. Teignbridge (Teignbridge District Council)
 3. Torbay (Torbay Unitary Authority)

Safer South Hams Community Safety Partnership (CSP)

37. South Hams stretches from the boundaries of Plymouth to the west of Torbay in the east and inland to the hills of Dartmoor and the districts of West Devon and Teignbridge. The Safer South Hams Community Safety Partnership (CSP) has a strategic group, which meets quarterly, and is chaired by the chief executive of South Hams District Council.

38. The South Hams Community Safety Strategy 2005 – 2008 identifies six main areas which will be treated as priorities and these are:
1. Alcohol and drug misuse
 2. Anti-social behaviour
 3. Domestic violence and abuse
 4. Action against race, religion and faith prejudice
 5. Action against homophobia and transphobia
 6. Action against disabilities prejudice
39. The strategy document is readable and accessible, identifying action leaders and how success against the priorities will be measured. It is interesting to note that South Hams is a low crime area, with approximately half the crime per 1000 population that is recorded nationally, and the biggest concern of local residents is speeding traffic (47% of respondents) closely followed by dangerous parking (38% of respondents), but neither are reflected in the priorities.

West Devon

40. West Devon is the largest district in the county, but with a population of only 50,000 and is bordered by the districts of Torridge, Mid Devon, Teignbridge and South Hams, the Plymouth Unitary Authority and the county of Cornwall.
41. The districts 2002 – 2005 Community Safety Strategy document has the following priorities:
- 1 Traffic Issues
 - Tackle speeding
 - Make roads safer for all road users
 - 2 Burglary & Vehicle Crime
 - Reduce house burglary
 - Provide targeted crime prevention support and advice
 - Reduce criminal damage to and thefts from motor vehicles
 - Raise public awareness of distraction burglaries
 - 3 Youth Issues
 - Involving young people in planning and decision-making
 - Provide more facilities for young people
 - Reduce youth crime
 - 4 Domestic Violence
 - Ensure continuation and development of current services
 - Increase awareness of domestic violence
 - Encourage reporting with the long-term aim of reducing domestic violence

- 5 Drugs & Alcohol
 - Reduce availability of drugs
 - Reduce illegal supply and consumption of alcohol
 - Improve education and support services for drugs and alcohol
 - Reflect overall objectives of the Devon Drug Action Team with local emphasis
6. Violence & Disorder
 - Reduce disorder and criminal damage in public places
 - Reduce violence in public places
 - Increase racial and homophobic reporting

A new strategy document is currently being developed.

Teignbridge Community Safety Partnership

42. The Teignbridge Community Safety Strategy identified the following priorities:

1. Volume Crime (Vehicle Crime, Burglary, Violent Crime)
2. Drug Misuse
3. Domestic violence
4. Youth problems and youth issues
5. CCTV development
6. Racially Motivated incidents/Equality for Minority Groups
7. Neighbourhood Watch
8. Homophobic Incidents

43. Priority Action Teams were established to carry forward work and activities. Although certain claims were published as to the success of these action teams (for example, that property marking reduced burglary), it was not possible for the inspection team to verify these claims.

Torbay

44. The Torbay Community Safety strategy 2002 – 2005 identified the following priorities:

1. Anti-Social Behaviour
 - Litter, Noise, Criminal Damage, Abandoned Vehicles, Harassment
2. Burglary
3. Drugs - Alcohol & Substance Abuse
4. Vehicle Crime
5. Violent Crime including Domestic Violence
6. Hate Crime - Racial and Homophobic

45. Obtaining information from the BCU on the various CDRP plans, which are a legal requirement under the Crime and Disorder Act, proved difficult and the inspection team were initially informed that they did not exist. Further inquiries

by the inspection team at BCU and District level resulted in one CDRP plan being produced and a number of community strategies, as required by the Local Government Act 2000. This legislation requires local authorities to produce 'community strategies' for promoting or improving the economic, social and environmental well-being of their areas. It would appear that two of the police districts in North West Devon are working to these strategies as opposed to the legal requirement to work to CDRP plans. As a result it was impossible to ascertain how effective the CDRP plans had been in reducing crime and improving public reassurance.

46. There have been a proliferation of partnership strategies required in recent years and it is perfectly understandable that there would be an element of confusion. However, this confusion is an illustration of the disparate ways in which the districts are currently working. The inspection team are of the view that the BCU commander should satisfy himself that his police districts are fulfilling their obligations under the Crime and Disorder Act. This should be undertaken in the form of an urgent review of meetings and the plans to which the districts are working.

RECOMMENDATION 1

That the BCU commander undertakes an urgent review to satisfy himself that his police districts are fulfilling their obligations under the Crime and Disorder Act.

47. Each CSP is required to contribute towards the Home Office national Public Service Agreement (PSA) target of reducing total crime by 15% (PSA1). The actual percentage reduction that individual partnerships will be required to contribute to this national target depends on the amount of crime in that particular area. South Hams, for example, is a relatively low crime area and will be required to reduce crime as recorded by the British Crime Survey comparator crime over the period 2005/06 – 2007/08 by 12½%, with the 2003/04 crime statistics being used as a baseline. The BCU has aligned its own targets to assist the CDRPs to meet their PSA1 targets.

Funding

48. The partnerships have created the Safer and Stronger Communities Fund (SSCF) which has merged several funding streams from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) and the Home Office. The intention behind the SSCF is to reduce the bureaucracy relating to multiple funding streams and increase flexibility for partnerships to use funding to deliver agreed local and national outcomes. **Where possible, such rationalisation of funding streams is considered potential good practice by HMIC.**

Local Area Agreements

49. In 2005/06 the Government is piloting the introduction of local area agreements (LAAs) in 21 local authority areas. Devon is one of these pilots, which encompass all the local authorities in Devon, with the exception of the unitary authorities of Plymouth and Torbay. The pilots have focused on three themes;
1. Children and younger people
 2. Safer and stronger communities
 3. Healthier communities and older people
50. In Devon, the Drug and Alcohol Action Team (DAAT) and Community Safety Partnerships have formed the Safer Devon Partnership, which will provide co-ordination between the County and District Partnerships and between the Crime Reduction and Drug Strategies. The Safer Devon Partnership is also intended to take the lead for the Safer and Stronger Communities sections of the LAA which prioritises the reduction of:
1. Alcohol and drug related crime
 2. Domestic violence and abuse
 3. Volume crime and prolific offending
 4. Anti-social behaviour
 5. Prejudice and hate crime

The Prolific and other Priority Offender Scheme

51. The Prolific and other Priority Offender Scheme (PPS) is a new Government-led initiative aimed at reducing anti-social and criminal behaviour. The scheme has three complementary parts:
- Prevent and Deter – to stop people (overwhelmingly young people) engaging in offending behaviours and graduating into prolific offenders;
 - Catch and Convict - actively tackling those who are already prolific offenders; and
 - Rehabilitate and Resettle – working with identified prolific offenders to stop their offending by offering a range of supportive interventions. Offenders will be offered the opportunity for rehabilitation or face a very swift return to the courts.
52. The new strategy is intended to build on the existing persistent offender scheme and will replace it. The new strategy allows local areas to identify and select offenders using the following criteria:
- the nature and volume of the crimes they are committing;
 - the nature and volume of other harm they are causing (e.g. by virtue of their gang leadership or anti-social behaviour);
 - other local criteria based on the impact of the individuals concerned on their local communities.

53. The scheme provides a new definition for a persistent offender, which enhances the existing concept but is more generic. This should identify those individuals who are the most prolific offenders, the most persistently anti-social in their behaviour and those who pose the greatest threat to the safety and confidence of their local communities.
54. The new strategy is CDRP led, with schemes set up to cover every CDRP in the country. The emphasis is on a partnership approach, with Police, Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), Prisons and Probation working together, under the co-ordination of Local Criminal Justice Boards (LCJB), to effectively catch, convict, monitor and manage such offenders either within the community or custody setting and work towards rehabilitating them.
55. The basic proposition for the 'Catch and Convict and Rehabilitate and Resettle' strands is to develop a joined up approach, with all partners focused on the same group. This is to be achieved through the setting up of a 'Prolific and other Priority Offenders (PPO) Scheme' in every CDRP area. Each local scheme will, based on intelligence, select the individuals who are causing the most harm to their communities and will ensure all agencies prioritise their resources on these offenders, with the explicit aim of putting an end to the harm they are causing. The Community Safety Partnerships of South Hams, Teignbridge and West Devon have combined to create a PPS Forum in order to manage the scheme.

Summary

56. Notwithstanding the confusion of police districts about their understanding of CDRP strategy as described in paragraph 45, partnership working is a positive element on the BCU. Interviews with partners demonstrated a positive culture of shared understanding, and a determination to improve the lives of the people of South West Devon. It was particularly pleasing for the inspection team to note the contribution made by the partners from health, who were clearly making a difference; a contribution that is rare on other BCUs because of difficulties normally experienced in engaging with health services.

Accountability and Performance Management

57. At force level, the constabulary holds monthly performance meetings and uses a variety of performance data to inform its analysis. The Force has recently introduced the Trends and Performance System (TAPS) which provides information to BCU and Sector level. The BCU holds monthly Performance meetings using performance products from TAPS and also data prepared by the performance analyst.
58. The Force has undertaken a series of internal inspections known as Performance Management Reviews (PMRs) as part of its performance improvement strategy. In 2004, PMRs were targeted at BCU level and South and West Devon BCU was

inspected in June 2004. In 2005, PMRs focus on Sector level and have been selected according to the sector's influence on force performance. Three have been undertaken, one of which was Torbay. The inspection team has been impressed by the quality of the PMR and the incisiveness of its observations. It is an excellent assessment which should be of immense value to the SMT as a template for improvement.

59. The BCU performance management process reflects that at force level. At the BCU performance meetings, data is available which shows performance at sector level. The Business analyst provides an assessment of performance, presenting data on targets and trends. The BCU therefore has a clear picture of whether it is meeting its targets and, if not, where its vulnerabilities lie. At performance meetings the Sector commanders are required to explain performance. During the inspection, inspectors and chief inspectors demonstrated a clear knowledge of performance targets.
60. A performance culture is characterised by an unremitting focus on performance and a sense of personal accountability. There is evidence that a performance culture is beginning to establish itself on the BCU. All Sector inspectors and District chief inspectors readily accepted responsibility for performance, as they did for all other policing matters on their area. They were managers to whom questions of performance could be directed, and who could be expected to explain levels of performance and what was being done about it. However, accountability is more than a process of reporting back or part of a basket of responsibilities and HMIC were encouraged to see the renewed focus on performance evident at Torbay under the recently appointed chief inspector. Across the BCU, sergeants and constables were aware of control strategy crimes and recognised what was a priority for their Sector. Most however were unfamiliar with the sector or BCU's performance targets or how they were expected to contribute to it.
61. The BCU has not yet defined specific roles for its NBMs. Elsewhere in this report, HMIC recommends that it do so. The BCU will find it difficult to demonstrate a focus on performance whilst a large proportion of its resources lack direction as to what is expected of them.
62. Performance accountability is shared amongst those with geographic responsibility. Data is supplied to District and Sector level. This enables detailed scrutiny of performance and includes all managers in the process. At the same time, this tended to diffuse the focus of performance and the inspection team found an absence of BCU- level accountability. For instance, accountability for crime detection is spread amongst nine inspectors and three chief inspectors, not to mention the superintending ranks. No individual is accountable for the BCU's performance in detection. No one is accountable to the BCU commander for the BCU's 15% detection rate.
63. The inspection team noted that the effect of spreading responsibility for

performance across several individuals and geographical areas was to compartmentalise performance. Managers were exclusively concerned with performance management in their area of responsibility. This in turn had a detrimental effect on the BCU's corporacy and sense of identity; a situation not helped by the composition of the SMT.

64. The SMT is comprised of the BCU Commander, both superintendents, the crime manager, personnel manager and finance manager. In addition, all three District commanders (and the business analyst) are members of the SMT. Although this arrangement gives a sense of inclusiveness, it creates a structure in which effectively three 'sub-divisions' are represented at the SMT's decision-making body. Communication and accountability are direct between the BCU Commander and the three District commanders which makes the position of two superintendents questionable as they are unable to exercise corporate responsibility and accountability; or exercise the corporate authority of their rank. Organisationally, the three District commanders come under the responsibility of the superintending operations. The BCU should review the role of the superintending ranks on the BCU and either reduce the number required or concentrate membership of the SMT on those with corporate responsibility. The inspection team recommends the latter course because it creates a structure for corporate responsibility, a more robust accountability regime and a platform from which to change the organisational culture.
65. The Business analyst presents an impressive array of data at the BCU's performance management meetings. He provides detailed analysis of performance and trends along with signposts about the areas to tackle. His work is impressive and makes him the key representative for performance at performance meetings. His central role in leading performance is underlined by his membership of the Senior Management Team. However, the inspection found that because he is a member of SMT, the line between analyst and performance manager had been crossed; consequently the role of senior police managers as drivers of performance was compromised and their capacity to take ownership of performance was inhibited. The business analyst reports to the superintendent Support who also sits on the SMT. No other member of the superintendent's staff sit as a member of the BCU's decision-making body. HMIC recommends that the BCU reviews its membership of SMT and confines it to those with corporate accountability. Exclusion of the business analyst and chief inspectors has nothing to do with the quality of the individuals and everything to do with developing corporate responsibility and accountability. HMIC further recommends that the role of the DCI on the SMT should be reviewed and enhanced, as detailed in paragraphs 115 & 116.

RECOMMENDATION 2

That the BCU restricts membership of the SMT to those with corporate responsibility and accountability; and fully develops the role of DCI into one with corporate responsibility and accountability.

Management of Staff

Staff Appraisal

66. Effective staff appraisal is a key element in improving police performance. The Force has recently undertaken a project to convert all roles to the national integrated competency framework (ICF), in parallel with a job evaluation exercise. The ICF is now linked to the performance development review (PDR) and all police promotion assessment and selection processes are linked to ICF criteria.
67. The BCU has recently adopted an electronic ICF based PDR system and is achieving a completion and return rate of 90%, compared with 49% a year ago under the previous system. The BCU's personnel unit should be able to view the forms and audit them for quality and monitor completion rates, but at the time of the inspection, staff were unable to access the system and had not received training from headquarters. As a result, the BCU could not effectively monitor the completion and quality of PDRs and the inspection team were unable to audit a sample. It is important that this matter is resolved, to maintain the credibility of the ICF PDR system, particularly as doubts were expressed to the inspection team in focus groups regarding the relevance of PDRs and that personal objectives were not always linked to performance. The BCU should continue to work with force headquarters to resolve the inhibitors to effective management.

Supervision

68. The BCU has invested in the continued development of its front-line supervisors and recognises that this group is a key element in its success. A one-day seminar had recently been held to familiarise officers with performance management and identified supervisory issues. The SMT recognises that staff are young in service and that there are a proportion of acting ranks. Sergeants work hard to deliver a good service both to their staff and the communities they serve but a combination of inexperience and desk-bound duties continues to hamper their effort. The SMT are advised to give priority to case preparation and the intrusive supervision which must oversee it. This should deliver improvements in bail management, file preparation and effective interviewing.
69. Presently, apart from inspectors with specific geographic responsibilities, the BCU holds six Critical Incident Inspector posts. The post acts as Reviewing Officer for the custody office and all six posts are based in the Torbay sector. This resolves any custody office needs but means that the inspectors are unavailable for direct supervision of any incident at a distance. Given the size of the BCU, Critical Incidents are generally managed by sergeants with telephone supervision by inspectors. The BCU are advised to revisit this arrangement.

Complaints

70. Between April 2004 and March 2005 the BCU received a total of 286 complaints

per 1,000 officers (174 complaints), a significant increase on the previous year (146 complaints).

Complaints	2003/04	2004/05	% Change
Complaints per 1,000 Officers	240	286	19.16%

At the time of the inspection the BCU had recorded 38 complaints in April and May 2005, indicating that the trend towards increased complaints is continuing. The BCU would benefit from routinely carrying out detailed analysis of the complaints by location and type.

Attendance Management and Sickness Statistics

71. A detailed force attendance management policy exists, providing advice and guidelines for staff to follow. The policy was last updated in September 2004. The force annual sickness targets are based on those within the HR Departmental Plan for 2004/5. The HR target is to ensure that the average number of working days lost to sickness does not exceed 8.9 days for police officers and 12.1 days for police staff. Sickness on the BCU is monitored by use of the Bradford scoring formula.
72. The BCU's sickness levels for police officers are improving, with 8.18 days lost per officer for 2004/05 compared to 10.47 days lost per officer for 2003/04 a reduction of 22%. Police staff figures for 2004/05 show 10.33 days lost per staff member, compared with 10.15 the previous year, an increase of 2%.

Sickness

Days Lost	2003/04	2004/05	% Change	MSBCU Average 2004/05
Police officers	10.47	8.18	-22%	Not available
Police support staff	10.15	10.33	2%	Not available

73. Although updates on staff sickness are given to SMT meetings, in addition the personnel manager, a personnel officer and the relevant line manager sit on sickness management panels. Any member of staff absent through sickness for more than 28 days is automatically referred to the occupational health unit at headquarters. At the time of inspection it was evident that sickness management information was not being promptly received by the personnel unit on the BCU, making it difficult to effectively monitor short term sickness. This was explained by the fact that the Force requires staff to complete a paper form which can take some time to pass between individuals and line managers before reaching BCU

headquarters. The problem should be rectified with the forthcoming introduction of the Force Information Management System. The BCU is advised to consider introducing an electronic return to work form if there is any delay in introducing the proposed system.

HR & Diversity

74. The BCU's personnel manager has been in post for over 2 years and is appropriately qualified with a degree in Personnel Management. She is line managed by the BCU Commander and her portfolio includes responsibility for all personnel issues within the BCU, training and probationer development.
75. Although the Force has devolved responsibility for personnel functions to BCUs there is a perceived lack of support from headquarters on a number of personnel issues, not least problems around the recent recruitment of police officers by the Force which have been left to the BCU to resolve.
76. In several focus groups the Force's job evaluation programme (JE) was referred to and it is evident that amongst the BCU's police staff, uncertainty about their future is leading several of them to actively look for alternative employment. Many police staff within the BCU remain on temporary contracts whilst new recruits are given permanent appointments. Reasons for resignation amongst the BCU's police staff recently show JE to have been a contributory factor. The Force should not underestimate the powerful influence that JE continues to have on morale within the BCU.

Diversity

77. The BCU has created its own diversity vision statement and strategy, which compliments the diversity strategy of Devon and Cornwall Constabulary. It incorporates the BCU's vision for its customers and also its staff.
78. In relation to ethnic background, the BCU has a workforce which is representative of the community it serves, at less than 2%. A positive approach to the needs of the individual staff is taken where requests for part-time or flexible working are received.
79. Force diversity training is delivered to recruits during their initial training. However, the BCU is only now taking measures to deliver diversity training to all staff at a local level. This training is being devised and delivered by the Diversity Manager, in addition to her defined role and responsibilities. During the inspection it was clear that the need for diversity training was not at all understood by staff - to a degree where the success of a Diversity training programme could not be guaranteed. The BCU is advised to review its current training programme and incorporate discussion and development of diversity issues.

Diversity Team

80. The BCU Diversity Team was set up two years ago in order to forge links with minority communities and increase reporting of crime by victims who have historically been hard to reach by the police.
81. Currently, the team consists of a sergeant (based at Ashburton), two Paignton-based police constables (who job-share) and one full time police constable who covers the districts of Teignbridge, South Hams and West Devon.
82. A request has been submitted to the Senior Management Team for a further officer to cover the Teignbridge area, due to the size and responsibility of the geographical area being covered currently by one member of staff. The request is a persuasive one, however the value of a member of police staff should not be underestimated as the role is one that could be undertaken by either a police officer or a member of police staff.
83. The Diversity team's role has been to increase confidence in recording homophobic incidents and the BCU has recorded some considerable success over the past twelve months. Reported cases of violence against the person have risen from 14 in 2003-4 to 39 in 2004-5, an increase in 178.5%. This compares with a force increase of 19.5%. Similarly, the BCU has seen an increase in reported homophobic incidents from 49 in 2003-4 to 67 in 2004-5, a 36.7% increase. There is no evidence to suggest that this represents a significant increase in the number of offences being committed. This increase in recorded incidents can be ascribed to the success of the Diversity team in forging trust within the community.
84. Diversity surgeries are currently held on a fortnightly basis in a location other than a police station. This has encouraged reporting of serious offences, such as attempted male rape and same sex domestic violence, which may have otherwise remained undisclosed. The inspection team recognises this as good practice and recommends that this is extended to third party reporting sites at non-police venues, where crime can be reported in confidence and safety. HMIC encourages the BCU to extend its good practice to include third party reporting in its diversity strategy.
85. The Diversity Manager has set up public sex area working groups for each local authority area, with core membership of each group including community safety coordinators, local authority staff, representatives of the gay community and NBMs. Information is collated where members of the public have expressed concern; joint visits to the identified area then take place involving police and gay community members.
86. In partnership with the local authority, the team has developed positive links with LGBT support networks in Torquay, the HIV prevention agency, the REC and a support network for victims of racial abuse. The team is also currently working

on a pilot scheme for the Force, introducing a guide on assisting the reporting of crime by members of the community who are victims of crime due to learning disabilities or mental illness. A recent conference at Newton Abbott racecourse on this theme attracted over 100 delegates.

87. The team is also currently engaged in raising the awareness profile of same sex domestic violence. This will formalise co-operation between the diversity team and domestic violence officers. Training sessions are planned in September, to raise awareness amongst domestic violence officers about issues of same sex abusive relationships.
88. The BCU does not currently have a nominated LGBT liaison officer to whom staff can go for advice and support; the Diversity Manager fulfils this role on an informal basis. The inspection team urges the BCU to give this role formal status and set about publicising the support available.
89. All hate crime logs are brought to the attention of the Diversity Manager. Authority to close a log must be sought through this channel. In all incidents where there is deemed to be a community impact, a diversity officer will offer advice and support to the investigating officer and act as a victim and community liaison officer. The inspection team is confident that good work is taking place to build up confidence between the police service and all minority groups.
90. There is currently no mechanism within the crime reporting system for 'no crime' recording of hate crime which relates to age, disability or transgender incidents. In one recent example, a complaint of transgender harassment was recorded as a homophobic incident, as there was no other way of logging it. The implications for this are wide ranging and the BCU will want to work with the Force to resolve it.
91. The BCU currently has a detection rate of 36.3% for racially aggravated crime, up from 32.1% in 2004. The BCU recorded 229 racist incidents and 67 homophobic incidents in the period March 2004 to April 2005. The BCU has set a minimum reduction target of 5% in hate crime repeat victimisation. It is currently showing a reduction of 2.4%. Torbay and South Hams and West Devon Districts are currently performing particularly well in relation to hate crime showing 20% and 22.2% decreases respectively. However, Teignbridge District is currently showing a 31% increase and an upward trend.

Health & Safety

92. Health and safety is an important issue, which has gained prominence since statutory exemption was lifted from the police service. The BCU has a dedicated and qualified health and safety officer who is a member of police staff and line managed by the finance manager. The post is part of an effective network across the Force which has recently introduced a health, safety and environmental management system which clarifies responsibilities allocated by the Chief Constable to managers and supervisors at all levels.

93. The concept of dynamic risk assessments is actively promoted on the BCU through training and no health and safety problems were reported to or identified by the inspection team.

Training

94. The BCU's training co-ordinator is a member of police staff who has been in post for 14 months, having previously worked for the Metropolitan Police. He has responsibility for identifying training needs, planning the BCU's training programme and evaluating success. The BCU training budget for the financial year 2004/05 is £105,000 and is managed by the training co-ordinator who is line managed by the personnel manager. The budget covers costs of external training courses, subsistence, travel and accommodation. The superintendent, support, retains overall responsibility for training within the BCU, which employs an administrator to support the training co-ordinator. Training is delivered by 3 constables with appropriate qualifications. During the inspection the BCU was recruiting a fourth constable for the training unit.
95. The BCU's training programme is largely determined by headquarters with BCU staff spending 80% of their time delivering mandatory training. Areas for non-mandatory training are identified through meetings between the training co-ordinator and line managers, usually inspectors. The PDR system identifies training needs and officers request training using a Training Needs Analysis form which must be supported through line managers.
96. Demands on the training unit to deliver mandatory training do not leave much flexibility to meet demands at a local level. However, the inspection team were impressed with a recent training course on the BCU which had been arranged after consultation with the SMT to improve performance. The course was attended by sergeants with a focus on guidance and direction on improving detections and meeting targets. The feedback from supervisors received by the unit confirmed that the course had been well received and the Force has rightly identified this work as good practice.

Probationer Development

97. The BCU operates a core skills unit (previously known as a Tutor Unit)) with staff based at Torbay, Newton Abbot and Ivybridge under a core skills supervisor who is managed by the personnel manager. The unit has close contact with the BCU commander who takes a keen interest in the running of the unit, frequently supporting his staff.
98. At the time of the inspection there were 7 tutor constables on the unit, although there are normally 9, with plans to increase to 10 later in the year. The Force has recently increased recruitment and the BCU's tutor unit now receives 7 probationers every 6 weeks. The tutor unit does not take on a response call sign and therefore has discretion over duties appropriate to the development needs of the probationer. Towards the end of a tutorship, the probationer is tutored more closely with their intended section so as to aid their transition to independent

patrol.

99. The BCU has recently made significant improvements to the Core Skills Development Unit by funding a dedicated core skills supervisor, increasing the number of full-time tutors and providing improved office accommodation and IT facilities. In common with other forces in the region, probationers presently complete a development profile which lasts throughout the first two years of service and provides for intrusive supervision, 360-degree appraisal and routine self-assessment.
100. The inspection team were interested to note that the BCU has had a significant number of probationers (8 since April 2004) leaving the Force after it has invoked Regulation 13 notices arising from their unsuitability for the role. The BCU commander has taken a firm, but carefully-considered stance towards probationary competence. The inspection team notes that the BCU has no control over the recruitment process which is carried out solely by headquarters.

Crime Management

Use of Forensic, DNA and other Scientific Techniques

101. Crime scene investigators are BCU staff and the team consists of a detective sergeant, four crime scene investigators and 4 crime scene technicians. The team provide cover from 0800hrs - 2200hrs daily, but there is no on-call system for CSI staff to respond to out of hours emergencies.
102. The BCU does not have a specific forensic strategy, but the forensic priorities are defined by the BCU control strategy and actioned through the tactical tasking process. DNA hits and fingerprints are monitored through the tactical tasking process and the crime manager is responsible for monitoring results. However, at the time of the inspection the BCU had 39 outstanding DNA hits and 33 outstanding fingerprint identifications. These were not discussed at the tasking and co-ordinating group's fortnightly meetings attended by the inspection team. Given the impact that this work can have on detecting and reducing crime, the inspection team was surprised to find that the BCU does not prioritise action on positive forensic hits more effectively. The inspection team recently found good practice in this area at Weston-Super-Mare where there is a dedicated NAFIS/DNA unit.

RECOMMENDATION 3

That the BCU reviews and improves arrangements for the allocation, actioning and monitoring of DNA and fingerprint hits to ensure offenders are arrested and dealt with promptly.

103. At the time of inspection, performance indicators and management information on attendance rates and forensic success rates did not exist and were not collected by the BCU. The inspection team understands that this is being addressed at

force level and welcomes improved management information in this vital area.

Crime Recording Practices

104. Devon and Cornwall Constabulary operates a central crime recording bureau that electronically manages reports of crime which are then switched to the BCU and allocated by sector. All forces are required to comply with the National Crime Recording Standard (NCRS) which is intended to ensure that forces record crimes ethically using common definitions for the various categories: this, in turn, enables true comparisons to be drawn between forces. NCRS is assessed against national criteria and for the past two years Devon and Cornwall has been graded as 'excellent', which is indicative of the thoroughness and high recording standards maintained by the Force.
105. For this reason and due to some localised difficulties, the inspection team did not undertake an audit of crime reports on South & West Devon BCU.

Crime Investigation

106. The BCU crime manager is of detective chief inspector rank (currently an officer acting in that role) and is a member of the BCU senior management team. The criminal investigation department of the BCU is modelled on the three geographic chief inspector commands but is line managed by the crime manager, via the district commander:
- South Hams & West Devon
 - Teignbridge
 - Torbay
107. The DCI is supported by four detective inspectors who carry the following functions, which reflect the mix of urban and rural factors which are so central to the operation of the South and West Devon BCU;
1. Crime Manager (Urban)
 2. Crime Manager (Rural)
 3. Victim Centred Crime
 4. Offender Centred Crime
108. There are a total of 70 detective posts within CID and are distributed between urban and rural as follows;

CID Rural – Total 32		
Newton Abbot	1	7
Teignmouth	1	4
Chudleigh	-	2
Totnes	1	3
Ivybridge	1	4
Kingsbridge	-	2
Okehampton	-	1
Tavistock	1	3

CID Urban – Total 38			
DSs	DCs	Trainee DCs	Auto Crime
4	27	4	2

109. The inspection team found that the BCU actively practises workload management among its detectives, with workloads being reviewed regularly. Numerical limits are not set but detective sergeants monitor workloads to ensure appropriate distribution.
110. The focus groups of detectives revealed officers who were trained and committed to giving the BCU the best possible service, but the divide between urban and rural was evident, with a sense of a disparity in workloads. Detective constables in particular expressed concerns about the level of abstraction to major crime.
111. The general view of all CID ranks was that their efforts were not appreciated and this lack of appreciation was not embodied in any individual or the SMT, but was more general. Uniform colleagues were considered to have little understanding of what they did, and there was no comprehensive system which allowed uniform officers to have meaningful attachments with CID. The officers' other main concern was the apparent blockage that occurred in custody when attempting to process a prisoner. The BCU does not operate a prisoner handling unit.
112. The establishment of force major incident teams has caused a thinning of detective experience at BCU level, but the crime manager felt this was not a critical issue as the BCU is managing this matter through staff development and by harnessing the high motivation levels amongst staff.
113. Taking BCUs as a whole, it is not uncommon to encounter friction between uniform and detective officers due to the differences in role and duties undertaken. This can vary between professional jealousy to outright hostility. There are a number of ways managers have tackled these issues before they begin to impact on operational performance and the solutions are often dependant upon the makeup and geography of a BCU. One practice that can often reap rewards regardless of the makeup of a BCU is a two to four week attachment to CID by uniform officers close to or just after the end of their probation. The officer then

gains a better understanding of the roles and responsibilities of a detective and rapport is established.

114. One unusual factor encountered on the Torbay sector is that CID and the Torbay proactive team are housed in a separate building across the road from the police station at Torquay. In many respects this arrangement is the visible manifestation of the diverse manner in which teams operate on South & West Devon BCU. Accommodation is a real issue with ageing buildings in the police service nationally, but Torquay is a relatively new building and space is available. The BCU has looked at this issue. It has considered space at the top of the building used for major incident management and discounted it for reasons of cost. The inspection team recognises that the BCU faces challenges, but better integration of CID with uniform officers, and a breaking down of the evident barriers is a priority. The inspection team therefore recommend;

RECOMMENDATION 4

That the BCU achieves better integration between detectives and uniform officers, and should consider CID attachments and the re-housing of some, if not all, of the detectives currently in separate accommodation at Torquay.

115. The BCU has a post of Crime Manager. This post is filled by a detective chief inspector. The post however falls a long way short of being that of a crime manager. The DCI is not responsible for crime. That responsibility, as reported in the section 'Accountability and Performance Management', is carried by nine inspectors and three Chief Inspectors. The Crime Manager is not accountable for the BCU's performance in crime reduction or detection. The culture of the BCU, being centred on Districts which carry power and authority, makes it very difficult for the postholder to exercise an effective quality control influence on investigations by uniform officers. The position was further complicated by the strong involvement of superintendent operations, who held the daily briefing and tasked on occasions from that forum.
116. The DCI is responsible for the BCU's specialist CID resources and has an on-call responsibility as a Senior Investigating Officer (SIO). Management responsibility for detectives and responsibility for managing crime is not at all clear, not least to the acting DCI, who had to negotiate constantly with the district commanders. The BCU should remove all uncertainty surrounding the role of the Crime manager, defining what the postholder is responsible for and the people for whom the postholder is held responsible. In redefining the role, the BCU should exploit the opportunities for performance management afforded by the post of Crime Manager. **HMIC does not propose to make this the subject of a separate recommendation, but considers it as part of recommendation two concerning the BCU's corporate structure**

Domestic Violence (including child protection, vulnerable persons)

117. The BCU devolves responsibility for child protection and domestic violence to a detective inspector, who has responsibility for victim-centred crime in the BCU.
118. The unit currently has 17 members of staff, a mixture of both police officers and police staff. Prior to the inspection, the BCU agreed the unit's request for a detective sergeant, who will be responsible for overseeing domestic violence.
119. The unit deals only with the victims of domestic violence, not the perpetrators. Uniformed officers deal with the majority of offenders. In cases where a serious offence has occurred, e.g. threats to kill, grievous bodily harm, CID officers will be appointed to investigate.
120. The unit reviews all reported domestic violence incidents on a daily basis. All instances of a defined domestic nature are logged on the force computer system, whether as a crime or 'no crime' incident. All repeat victims have a safety plan devised by the police and other support agencies. However, the inspection team is concerned that the large number of incidents being reported, particularly in relation to repeat victims, means that the safety and reduction strategy for domestic violence is not working as effectively as it could.
121. The unit has a good working relationship with social services and use relevant child protection legislation where children are present at the scene of domestic abuse. In the first instance, social services will correspond with the parents of a child involved, making them aware of social services involvement. In the light of a second reported incident, social services will then start more intrusive procedures to support police action in dealing with both the victim and perpetrator. This policy of inter-agency co-operation has proved particularly effective in urban areas of the BCU, where in 14 out of 30 cases reported, there have been no further calls.
122. There are currently no mechanisms for third party reporting of domestic violence on the BCU.
123. The number of reported incidents of domestic violence on the BCU is increasing annually. During the period April 2003-March 2004, there were 3467 incidents of domestic violence reported, with a detection rate of 31.3%. From April 2004-March 2005, that figure increased to 4299, with a detection rate of 31.4%. However, where a power of arrest existed, it was only used in 27% of incidents. This does not meet the force and BCU policy of arresting perpetrators of domestic violence where a power of arrest exists.
124. In all cases, the BCU is not achieving its target of a 65% minimum detection rate for domestic violence crimes.
125. The Inspection team recommends that the BCU review its practice and

management of domestic violence and to incorporate in particular:

- a capacity to develop a perpetrator intervention programme;
- training for all operational staff, to ensure knowledge of relevant domestic violence legislation plus force and BCU policies;
- forge closer links with the BCU Diversity team, to establish protocols for same sex domestic abuse;
- and quality control all domestic violence incidents on a daily basis under the direction of the detective inspector

Hate Crime

126. Incidents of hate crime, whether of a racist or homophobic nature, are dealt with in the first instance by uniformed officers. There is currently no mechanism for recording incidents of an ageism, disability or transgender nature. Offences of a serious nature are referred to CID for investigation. In all instances, the Diversity Team would offer support, both to the officer dealing, and the victim. On an operational level, all logged incidents of hate crime must be supervised by the Diversity Manager prior to being closed.
127. Reported cases of violence against the person have risen from 14 in 2003-4 to 39 in 2004-5, an increase in 178.5%. This compares with a force increase of 19.5%. Similarly, the BCU has seen an increase in reported homophobic incidents from 49 in 2003-4 to 67 in 2004-5, a 36.7% increase. As described earlier under 'Diversity', there is no evidence to suggest that this represents a significant increase in the number of offences being committed. It can be ascribed to the success of the Diversity team in forging trust within the community.
128. The superintendent operations has overall responsibility for hate crime on the BCU. At a local level, managers were unclear of their own responsibilities for Hate crime, therefore accountability for performance and quality control could be improved. The BCU is encouraged to incorporate hate crime more centrally into its accountability mechanisms if it is to respond most effectively to this increased readiness to report.

Intelligence Led Policing

129. The BCU has adopted the National Intelligence Model (NIM) and has structured processes which reflect arrangements at headquarters. The BCU's analyst manager is responsible for overseeing intelligence produced by the Intelligence and Incident Management Unit (IIMU) and co-produces the BCU's strategic assessment with the business analyst. The strategic assessment informs the tactical assessment and both documents are of a high standard.
130. The BCU holds fortnightly tactical and co-ordinating group (TCG) meetings and daily tasking meetings, both of which are chaired by the superintendent operations. Two of the BCU's TCG meetings were attended by the inspection

team, who noted that the size and attendance of the meeting was appropriate. The three geographical chief inspectors were present, but given the size of the BCU and the travelling times involved the inspection team felt that the TCG would benefit from video conferencing facilities.

131. The TCG spent considerable time discussing updates from previous actions, and little time to tackling emerging trends or allocating resources to specific intelligence. At times the TCG discussed topics which the inspection team felt were more appropriate for an SMT meeting, such as the role of domestic violence officers.
132. The TCG should be more dynamic and focused. Performance on key crimes was discussed and the meeting was given useful updates from a new performance monitoring system, but there was a lack of accountability directed towards the geographical chief inspectors about control strategy crimes on their sectors.
133. The TCG meeting did not discuss the BCU's tactical capability or invite bids for resources to deal with problems. There was no evidence of multi-agency solutions and the BCU's reassurance priorities were not addressed. However, the inspection team noted effective tasking of the special constabulary on crime reduction operations. The TCG's effectiveness could be improved by allocating specific tasks to staff such as the proactive team and PCSOs, with a more thorough discussion of emerging trends, intelligence, outstanding forensic results and prison releases.
134. The inspection team attended a daily tasking meeting, and noted that this is maintained at weekends. The meeting efficiently operates on a conference phone system, following a structured agenda. The meeting was sufficiently dynamic and focused, but could have been more robust in the allocation of tasks and identification of resources.
135. It is acknowledged that the TCGs witnessed were in a new format, but the inspection team believes that there is a need **to revisit the BCU's tasking process to make it more dynamic, performance focused and relevant, with resources identified and tasked for specific priorities.** The SMT may wish to consider examples of good practice in this area at Brighton and Maidstone.
136. The inspection team attended evening shift briefings at Torquay and Paignton police stations and noted that sergeants briefed staff from paper bulletins produced by the IIMU because there were no IT facilities.
137. The briefing at Torquay was in a suitable room, which had three large whiteboards, however these were not used to display useful information such as bail conditions, offenders identified for arrest or current hotspots.
138. The briefing at Paignton made good use of notice boards, but it was curtailed when the shift were required to attend a minor road traffic accident. In most stations where there is an overlap between shifts, it is common practice for the preceding shift to remain mobile until the oncoming shift have briefed. As the

day shift had an hour before finishing, better use could have been made of the overlap.

139. At both briefings sergeants allocated outstanding logs to officers and it is difficult to see how staff can concentrate on BCU priorities and proactive work when faced with such a backlog. This problem is not unique to the BCU and not one that can be resolved without assistance from headquarters.
140. The inspection team noted that the briefing documents produced by the IIMU for Paignton were inadequate and unfocused. The documents gave a detailed breakdown of the burglaries across Torbay, but nothing in terms of suspects or activity on individual beats. The document contained inaccuracies and did not reflect the BCU's control strategy priorities.
141. The IIMU does not provide intelligence briefings for shifts at weekends, thus information available for officers working over the weekend is out of date and potentially irrelevant. **The BCU are advised to implement the National Briefing Model to ensure briefings reflect priorities and officers are intelligence led.**
142. The IIMU is headed by an inspector with a team of three crime analysts and three researchers managed by the analyst manager. A team of field intelligence officers and a detective sergeant come under the IIMU with the BCU's dedicated source unit (DSU) operating as a separate entity, thereby ensuring the integrity of the 'sterile corridor'.
143. The BCU operates an intelligence policy which requires officers to submit a minimum of two intelligence reports per month. This generic requirement may be appropriate for some specialist posts, but the inspection team encourage the BCU to increase the number of intelligence reports required from NBMs, patrol officers and CID staff.
144. The IIMU analysts work to material fed into the system and produce products to drive daily and fortnightly tasking, as well as the shift briefings. It was a common complaint from focus groups of operational officers that intelligence products were not produced in a timely way, and that officers merely got back from the IIMU information they had submitted, with no attempt to develop it.
145. The BCU's DSU is led by a detective inspector with one sergeant, three constables and a researcher. Whilst the inspection team recognises that maintaining the sterile corridor is essential, a close eye should be kept by the SMT on the number of actionable intelligence reports produced by this important intelligence resource.
146. Given the well resourced IIMU and DSU, the inspection team felt that the quantity and quality of intelligence products available to operational officers could be improved. The SMT should ensure that the BCU has the correct balance between the number of staff working in the intelligence function and having sufficient resources to act upon fresh intelligence. HMIC recommends that the

SMT review the working arrangements of the IIMU to improve the quality and timeliness of intelligence products provided to operational officers to ensure they are specific to sectors and drive activity.

RECOMMENDATION 5

That the BCU review its intelligence-led model, particularly in regard to the TCG process, its Briefing model, and the working arrangements of the IIMU.

Pro-activity

147. Throughout Devon & Cornwall Constabulary there are targeted policing teams (TPT) but their format and deployment varies in accordance with local need. On the South & West Devon BCU there are a variety of teams as described below.

TPT 'A'

148. This team consists of one detective sergeant and four constables based at Paignton police station. The remit of the unit was set in 2004/05 to progress the BCU control strategy for trafficking class 'A' drugs with a target of 5% increase in offenders brought to justice. The previous twelve months have seen considerable success for the team who has contributed to a 130% increase in convictions for dealing in class A drugs. In addition, the team undertook a test purchase operation in which 36 offenders were charged. No targets had been set for the unit's performance in the coming financial year.

Drugs Seizures

Heroin	Crack Cocaine	Cocaine	MDMA (Ecstasy)	Amphetamine	Cannabis
£54,100	£8,700	£10,000	£12,000	£22,000	£1,100
01.04.04 – 31.03.05 Total £109,900					

149. As the team had exceeded its target it was redirected towards vehicle crime in November 2004 and has had a number of successes.

150. The team was notable for its enthusiasm, levels of self-motivation and emphasis on performance. The unit deals with all its own case files, and therefore sees a 'job' through from start to finish. There was some concern amongst the team that there were insufficient resources at force level to take on Level 2/3 criminality which BCU activity had exposed.

151. All members of the team have received surveillance training; no other specific training is given. Most officers who serve in the unit have a previous CID

background and the minimum tenure for the role is currently two years.

152. They are a BCU resource, but are rarely tasked directly as a result of uniform officers putting in a bid to the tasking meeting, or as a result of the fortnightly tasking meeting. Concern was expressed that others are not aware of the work of the team and that the convention of releasing officers for short attachments to the team had largely ceased, due to lack of resilience at response team level.

TPT 'B'

153. This team consists of a sergeant and six constables who predominately operate in uniform but are trained for foot and urban surveillance. All the officers are trained to the national standard for mutual aid in public order events and operate from a separate building on the site at Paignton.

154. The officers are deployed from the daily briefing session held by superintendent operations and operate as a team in a two shift rota of 8 till 4 shifts, followed by 7pm till 3am. They are managed by the IIMU inspector and operate as a support team for the BCU, helping officers with house searches and door entry techniques. They are also the first officers called upon to supply mutual aid outside the BCU.

155. TPT 'A' and 'B' are intended to operate across the BCU but because of the nature of the tasks they undertake, particularly in relation to class 'A' drugs, the majority of their time is spent in the Torbay sector.

Torbay Proactive Unit

156. Torquay and Paignton are the two main towns in the BCU and make up the Torbay sector. The crime profile for this sector is quite different from the more rural sectors and as a result a 'proactive team' has been operating out of the CID building next to the main police station at Torquay for some time. The team consists of thirteen constables led by a detective sergeant. It has a field intelligence officer and a crime researcher attached and to all intents and purposes operates as a self sustaining unit in its own right. This unit is expected to have an oversight of all offences of burglary in the Torbay sector. There are also two constables attached to deal with low-level drug use on the sector, and two officers who deal with vehicle crime.

157. The inspection team had the opportunity to interview some members of the teams and rarely has a more committed and positive group been encountered. At the same time, the inspection team was not convinced that the proactive units on the BCU were operating as effectively as they could be, as there were unintended overlaps in activity and a heavy focus on the Torbay sector. From speaking to some of the staff on the rural sectors, it is apparent that they feel left out of the loop and rarely get specialist support, although this would be disputed by the supervisors of the TPTs with some justification (TPT 'B' keep logs of where they

operate). Nevertheless, strategic overlap and operational self- containment mean that their purpose is not clear to staff, nor is it clear that their activities have been directly instigated by the BCU. The BCU is advised to review its proactive capability and bring it fully into the NIM process.

Organisational Culture

158. Organisational culture can, perhaps, best be defined by understanding that the environment in which people work affects their overall outlook, views and values. It does not exist independently of the people who make up the organisation. People make up the culture, which can have both a positive and a negative effect. Effective leadership is one of the singularly most important influences on how a BCU works and its values.
159. The BCU is comprised of three distinct Districts, separate in their geography, their management, their operation and their accountability. Within a District there is a sense of community and team. Those who work in a District are focused on local issues and dedicated to them. Police managers are accessible to community leaders and responsive to local concerns. Partnership working is greatly enhanced. The picture of a BCU of three 'sub-divisions' however is not all good. Staff do not look beyond their own District and therefore view BCU decisions in the context of whether it benefits or disadvantages their sector.
160. On an operational level, there was an atmosphere of despondency at the shortage of uniformed constables to effectively investigate volume crime. There was a lack of knowledge or interest in how the BCU as a whole was performing in relation to crime reduction and detection. Staff who showed knowledge of performance data frequently expressed the view that, as long as their own team was performing adequately, they did not concern themselves with the performance of the BCU. Staff expressed the opinion that the BCU was divided between the rural sectors (who perceived themselves as the 'poor relation') and Torbay.
161. The inspection team found no evidence of a culture of 'South and West Devon BCU plc'. Sectors are separate in their geography and community composition; and not least in their management and accountability. The SMT is aware of the potential for the BCU to be 'Torbay-centric' and, given the concentration of crime in this sector, there is always going to be an emphasis on Torbay. Nevertheless, concentration of effort and a sense of corporacy are not incompatible. Achieving the correct balance will require greater co-operation, more internal communication, corporate accountability, and the dominance of NIM processes.
162. The SMT displayed a commendable instinct to act in concert with the Force. The inspection team also noted occasions when the BCU was waiting for advice from headquarters when none was necessary. For instance, the BCU expected to be

told what the role of the NBM should be, yet the Force had set down the parameters of the NBM's role. The BCU's flexibility to work within the guidelines was clear. Repeatedly during focus groups, staff saw the cause of a problem as being something the Force was not doing for them, often by not devoting staff to the BCU or abstracting staff for other commitments. Staff had not yet recognised themselves as the authors of their own success or failure. The SMT are urged to re-examine the boundaries to their own freedom of action and to develop a culture of self-determination within the BCU.

Communication

163. There was evidence to support good informal communication channels between the BCU commander and staff at all levels. All staff commented positively on the accessibility of the BCU commander should they wish to discuss an issue with him. The new BCU commander has relinquished a number of partnership meetings in order to release more time for internal focus. The inspection team supports this alteration since the commander's involvement will be key to developing BCU corporacy. Similarly, both the superintendent operations and the DCI were commented on as being visible on a daily basis and seeking effective communication with staff.
164. The channels of communication between uniform staff and detectives are currently problematical. This is due to a number of factors, not least a lack of clarity about responsibility for crime and the location of the CID office. There was uncertainty across the BCU as to who was responsible for investigating crime and whether NBMs could investigate crime. Procedures for investigating residential burglaries are different in different sectors; in Torbay, the Proactive unit deals with them; in rural areas, uniform officers investigate and this can include Neighbourhood Beat Managers.
165. The CID office at Torquay is currently based in a separate building on the opposite side of the road to the main police station. Staff ring on the front door bell to seek advice from a CID officer. Officers are unclear as to the important work which the CID do and there are currently no probationer attachments to CID. These factors have combined to create a culture of 'mystery' about the role.
166. There is currently no media or marketing officer on the BCU although the SMT has recently decided that a police staff Media Officer post will be created. The inspection team supports this move as a vital tool in creating South and West Devon BCU plc and developing a stronger performance culture on the BCU.
167. The BCU currently publishes an internal staff document, called 'Moor to Sea.' It clearly attempts to communicate with staff about what it believes to be BCU issues. The majority of staff were unable to identify who was responsible for production and had not contributed to its contents. There are opportunities therefore for the BCU to develop the inclusiveness and impact of 'Moor to Sea'.

168. The inspection team found little evidence that BCU performance was being communicated effectively to staff at all levels. Staff were unfamiliar with BCU or sector performance targets and visits to other stations confirmed that notice boards were not consistently used to communicate performance or good work.

Self Review and Learning

169. The BCU devotes particular attention to learning and has demonstrated its commitment by dedicated supervisory training and a successful process linking strategic demands to training need. The SMT devotes adequate resources to training and the presence of a training manager adds resilience to management's commitment to training. An important engine of self review and learning is the PDR. HMIC is pleased to see the improvement in return rates but does not underestimate the importance of full implementation of the new process. The credibility of personal development and the BCU's obligation to its staff depend on it. Staff highlighted a lack of refresher training or management skills development for experienced PCs. There is still some way to go therefore before the needs of individuals and the needs of the BCU are met.

Reassurance & Visibility

170. Anti-social behaviour blights local communities and damages community cohesion. It is important that this is recognised by the police and that they respond effectively, using a menu of options of which visibility is key.
171. The BCU is in the process of recruiting a media officer and the inspection team feels that there is great potential for the postholder to play a key role in improving reassurance by raising the BCU's profile and releasing positive news items.

Police Community Support Officers

172. The BCU has nine police community support officers (PCSOs) on two year contracts. At the time of the inspection, PCSOs had recently completed their training and had been on the BCU for six weeks. The PCSOs interviewed by the inspection team were positive and enthusiastic about their work, and felt that their training had been excellent. The inspection team noted that the PCSOs are rostered to cover peaks in demand and times when community problems dictate.
173. The PCSOs estimated that they spend 80% of their time on patrol and see their role as providing high visibility reassurance to reduce the fear of crime. The PCSOs play a valuable role in gathering evidence for anti social behaviour orders (ASBOs) and anti social behaviour contracts (ABCs).
174. PCSOs are tasked by neighbourhood beat managers (NBMs) and sergeants. Whilst this is appropriate for certain tasks, the inspection team felt that they were yet to be fully integrated into the BCU's reassurance work. There was no evidence that PCSOs were tasked by the TCG meetings, or by sector inspectors,

and they do not have a written remit which, amongst other things, would ensure that their activity supports the BCU's priorities. Effective implementation and integration is best achieved when the BCU stipulates the role and responsibilities of PCSOs. A member of the SMT is best placed to provide this leadership and oversight. HMIC strongly encourages the BCU to nominate a member of the SMT with strategic responsibility for PCSOs. The BCU is advised to consider the work done in GMP concerning the effective management and deployment of PCSOs.

Neighbourhood Beat Managers

175. As part of a force initiative, the BCU recently allocated 87 officers as NBMs, one for every ward. The Force envisaged that the NBMs would be dedicated to providing a focal point for local communities, resulting in increased accessibility and confidence in the police. The Force has published an NBMs' handbook which gives general guidance on their duties, but requires BCUs to give more specific directions on responsibilities and deployment. This has not yet been done, yet the gap was identified in the BCU's PMR of June 2004.
176. The inspection team found that there was confusion amongst NBMs over their roles and responsibilities, and this was reflected in the variety of ways that they were deployed across the BCU. However, the inspection team were pleased to find committed staff and good working relationships, for instance between an NBM and a PCSO in Teignbridge, where the two roles complement each other: the PCSO concentrating on reassurance and visibility, and the NBM on investigation and enforcement.
177. The inspection team found that NBMs in rural areas are abstracted frequently to cover response functions whilst the 18 NBMs in Torbay were ring fenced. Workloads varied considerably and NBMs complained that they received insufficient intelligence from the IIMU to focus their efforts on key areas and individuals, obliging them to compile intelligence and analysing crime patterns themselves. NBMs stated that they were not tasked by the TCG process and were unaware of its relevance to their role.
178. NBMs reported that training was piecemeal, with little available to officers when they commence the NBM role, or by way of refresher training.
179. Given the number of officers employed on the BCU as NBMs, the inspection team believe that the SMT should maximise their potential by ensuring that there is clarity over responsibilities, adequate intelligence and analytical information, supervision and training, and that their efforts directly contribute to priorities.

RECOMMENDATION 6

That the SMT issue clearly defined terms of reference for NBMs and ensure that they are provided with timely and relevant intelligence and analytical support to focus efforts on priorities.

Special Constables

180. At the time of the inspection, the BCU had 113 special police constables (SPCs). The SPCs interviewed by the inspection team enjoyed their work and felt valued by regular constables and sergeants. They reported that their ongoing training was good, and clearly appreciated having ICF PDRs.
181. The SPCs have been used effectively by the BCU in an anti-burglary operation, where they distributed leaflets and gave advice to the public. This was well received by the community, and is a good example of how SPCs should be deployed on crime reduction initiatives.
182. SPCs reported that although attempts have been made to get them to work with NBMs, they were reluctant to be drawn away from their preferred role of supporting regular officers on public order patrols at weekends. The inspection team acknowledges the good work and contributions made by the SPCs on such patrols, but supports the BCU in seeking to utilise them across a range of policing, particularly in support of reassurance objectives.
183. The SPCs interviewed were enthusiastic and dedicated and the inspection team felt that the SMT could be more vocal in recognising their contribution.

Anti Social Behaviour

184. As well as visible policing, the robust use of legislation is important. At the time of the inspection the BCU had 13 anti social behaviour contracts and 7 anti social behaviour orders.
185. Each of the three geographical Districts on the BCU has a dedicated crime reduction team which includes an ASBO co-ordinator, who is a police employee (see Managing Demand).
186. The inspection team acknowledges the difficulties of approaching local issues in such large geographical areas, and the important part played by the district chief inspectors in delivering policing services. However, the inspection team felt that the BCU should incorporate the NBMs, PCSOs and SPCs into neighbourhood teams and as part of a BCU reassurance strategy. This would help ensure that objectives are met in a consistent and manageable way. The inspection team suggests that the BCU incorporates best practice from the recently concluded national reassurance project.

Managing Demand

187. The force command and control system produces 'logs' to record details of incidents which require police action, but are not normally emergency response requests. These can involve any manner of incident where the public request assistance. If a log is not dealt with during an officer's tour of duty they are physically passed to the next shift at briefing. As mentioned above, a large part of the briefing process consists of the sergeant handing printouts from the

command and control system to officers for them to be actioned.

188. A great deal of supervisory time appears to be spent in front of computer terminals quality checking what officers have done with these logs, and this effort is then duplicated by the duty inspector. The inspector's involvement rarely leads to intervention therefore this time-consuming double-checking does not add value to the supervisory process. The BCU are invited to eliminate this practice or replace it with dip-sampling. It is apparent that some of these logs are quite old before an officer actually sees the informant, and the more stale an incident, the less appropriate the officer's attendance becomes. There is limited filtering of requests for assistance at the central point of contact, and the BCU has no alternative but attempt to resolve the matter. In South & West Devon it is apparent that some officers have become adept at simply passing outstanding logs to the next shift by marking them 'NUA' – no unit available. This merely exacerbates the situation and reinforces the mindset of officers that they are very busy, by multiple handling of the same log. Officers stated that they were unable to undertake any real proactive policing because they were always attempting to resolve outstanding logs.
189. There is a unit at Paignton called the Resource Allocation Unit that is intended to receive and allocate logs that are outstanding. The unit operates from 7am – 10pm and has 10 FTE posts and makes use of officers who are on light duties. It receives between seven and eight thousand routine logs per month and is able to resolve 63% of these, which is evidence of its worth. The unit generates 120 crime reports on average. Amongst its responsibilities are community messaging to the neighbourhood watch schemes, dealing with abandoned vehicles and video witness, checking NCRS compliance on crime reports, DNA chase ups and repeat victims.
190. There was a strong view that logs were being sent from the call-handling centre to BCUs, which did not require the attendance of a police officer, and could have been resolved at the first point of contact. The staff clearly take pride in their achievements in reducing the burden upon operational officers but it appears to be overwhelmed by the volume of work originating from the call-handling centre. As a result Torbay sector has set-up a similar unit described as the Torbay Support Team, which, as well as the tasks described above, will obtain statements for officers.
191. The BCU are complimented for its attempts to break free from the cycle of outstanding logs, and although to a large degree a force issue, the inspection team recommends that the SMT process map the handling of logs, identifying breakpoints where interventions would reduce the burden upon shift officers. This could involve expanding the resource allocation unit or combining it with the Torbay Support Team, and expanding its remit. On a strategic level the inspection team commend the Force to the HMIC thematic on call-handling (published October 2005) for examples of best practice, to overcome the interminable problem of outstanding logs.

Crime Reduction Teams and Community Impact Centre

192. The BCU has three crime reduction teams, one in each geographical district. The teams comprise of a sergeant, two constables, a researcher and an ASBO co-ordinator, who is a police employee.
193. The crime reduction teams produce the districts' CDRP plans and work closely with partners and NBMs on crime prevention initiatives with an emphasis on problem solving rather than enforcement. The teams are managed by the district chief inspectors, with whom they are in regular contact.
194. South and West Devon BCU has the Force's only community impact centre (CIC) which is based at Ashburton. The CIC consists of a sergeant, who holds the title of "Youth Issues Manager", and 2 constables who co-ordinate restorative justice (RJ) and problem solving policing (PSP). Within the office, there is a community mediator, who is funded by two CDRPs. The sergeant line manages 5 constables, who are known as youth intervention officers (YIOs) and have been in post since September 2004, located across the BCU.
195. The PSP co-ordinator is developing a directory of best practice in problem solving techniques, and concentrates on reducing the impact on policing that the high number of care homes for young people has on the BCU. A database of young people who frequently go missing is maintained, significantly reducing the time spent by front line officers obtaining details of associates and providing useful initial lines of enquiry to pursue to locate an individual.
196. The RJ co-ordinator fulfils a training function to educate NBMs on the benefits of RJ, and has developed a community problem solving model to tackle anti-social behaviour using RJ. A key role is the identification of opportunities for early intervention. Staff from the CIC have recently attended 11 Downing Street to deliver a presentation on the success of an RJ initiative in tackling anti-social behaviour on the Barton Estate in Torquay. The initiative has been held up as an example of good practice for other areas to adopt.
197. The 5 YIOs have developed from the school liaison officer role, and work closely with NBMs. The YIOs are the main point of contact between the BCU and schools, concentrating on intervention and problem solving rather than investigation and enforcement. The inspection team was given several examples of work undertaken by the YIOs to prevent bullying in schools.
198. It was clear to the inspection team that the CIC is working hard to improve the quality of life for residents in communities across the BCU by early intervention techniques and use of RJ which also have the potential to reduce demand on front line services. The inspection team views the work done by the CIC on missing persons and the maintenance of the database as an example of good practice.
199. The inspection team notes that in April and May 2004 the BCU recorded that 6.6% of its total crime was committed by youth offenders. The figures for the same period in 2005 are 6.3%, a slight reduction of 0.3%. Whilst acknowledging

the good work conducted by the CIC, it is difficult to assess the part played by the YIOs in reducing the numbers of crimes committed by young offenders and the inspection team felt that the BCU should review the role of the YIOs to ensure they are not carrying out work which is the responsibility of other agencies, and to evaluate their overall contribution to policing the BCU.

200. Although the CIC sergeant is line managed by the CDRP superintendent, there is little contact between them or involvement from the SMT. No targets are set for the CIC to achieve. The inspection team encourage the SMT to improve the management of the CIC and consider bringing them under the control of the forthcoming partnership inspector's post. The inspection team found that the work of the three crime reduction teams and the CIC at times overlapped and both departments would benefit by having a manager to maintain an overview of both strategic and day to day work.
201. The inspection team believes that the BCU could make considerable efficiency savings and return officers to core policing functions by merging the crime reduction teams and the CIC. This would result in a reduction in bureaucracy, a simplification of planning and auditing CDRP processes, and a more coherent approach to multi-agency work. Many of the roles currently performed by police officers within the CIC and the crime reduction teams could be amalgamated and performed by police staff.

RECOMMENDATION 7

That the SMT review and evaluate the work conducted by the CIC and crime reduction teams with a view to reducing the numbers of police officers in both departments and merging them into a BCU-wide resource.

Custody Facilities and Criminal Justice Unit

202. The provision of custody services is overseen by the Force's criminal justice unit (CJU). The BCU has one custody unit based at Torquay which has 36 cells, 7 of which are covered by CCTV, as are corridors, exit and entry points and the charge desk.
203. The custody unit is staffed by 15 full time and 2 part time sergeants, who work a shift pattern which ensures that there are always 3 sergeants on duty. They are supported by 25 civilian detention officers (CDOs), each shift having 5 on duty. Five CDOs are funded by the Home Office to assist with drug referral and drug testing programmes. At the time of inspection, the Home Office funded CDOs were only contracted until April 2006.
204. Approximately a year before the inspection, the Force carried out a review of staffing in custody units and rationalised shift patterns to improve cover at peak times, but minimise wasteful overlap periods. The inspection team were

impressed by the level of resourcing in the Torquay custody unit and the shift pattern appeared to work well. The inspection team noted that the Torquay custody centre had been recently refurbished, and provided an excellent facility with the exception of a lack of air conditioning. Staff raised this issue with the inspection team, and stated that conditions were uncomfortable at all times of the year. The BCU is encouraged to review with the Force its options for improving the office environment, for the benefit of staff and prisoner welfare.

205. The Force's CJU has a reputation for performance focus and several notable improvements have recently been made to departments within the unit. A major inhibitor remains, however, in the support offered by the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS). The CPS is unable to station lawyers on the BCU, the nearest being in Exeter. At the time of inspection this function was performed by two pre-charge review officers, based at Torquay custody unit. Although committed and competent, these police staff were unable to replicate all the functions of a CPS lawyers and the inspection team observed the impact which this was having on performance. The CPS should be able to meet its commitments by September 2005, but the SMT is urged to keep this issue under review. If significant delay appears, the SMT should consider interim measures.
206. Torquay custody unit is well equipped to carry out witness identification procedures. A bespoke room with a dedicated team, led by an inspector, ensures that efficiency is maintained by reducing time spent by both police officers and witnesses involved in video identification procedures. The inspection team view these arrangements as best practice.
207. The inspection team discovered problems with the management of prisoners by BCU staff at Torquay, which receives an average of 8,000 prisoners a year. Work was regularly not completed on cases where suspects had been granted 47/3 bail. Consequently the prisoners were being re-bailed, and custody sergeants were, by default, acting as BCU supervisors - advising on investigations. This is of concern considering that 40% of the Force's prisoners are given 47/3 bail and 40% of all prisoners are not charged with any offence.
208. The inspection team were surprised at the length of time taken to deal with some detained persons at Torquay. There is some evidence that this is because interviewing is left to certain key posts. This situation should be urgently reviewed.
209. The BCU does not currently have a prisoner handling team (PHT), but 3 detectives are employed as custody liaison officers (CLOs) at Torquay. Based in the custody unit, they offer advice and guidance to officers regarding interviews and investigations. The inspection team received favourable comments about the CLOs from operational and custody staff, but felt that the BCU would benefit from introducing a PHT. Experience of similar BCUs with PHTs has shown they are effective not only in improving performance within custody units but they also have beneficial consequences for demand management. HMIC encourages the BCU to examine its arrangements for dealing with prisoners and introduces a

PHT to ensure adequate resources are available to deal with prisoners expeditiously and effectively.

RECOMMENDATION 8

The BCU examine its arrangements for dealing with persons in custody and introduces a PHT to ensure adequate resources are available to deal with them expeditiously and effectively.

Prisoner Handling Unit

210. As described above, North Devon does not currently have a Prisoner Handling Unit (PHU). However, there is currently a pilot PHU within the Constabulary at Newquay. The inspection team had the opportunity to discuss the initiative with the chief inspector in charge, and examine documentation and guidance charts. These were comprehensive and easily accessible.
211. The two units at Newquay custody are made up of a case manager, an interview/investigator and a case owner. The managers and interviewers are a mix of police officers and police staff whilst the case owners are all unsworn staff. The case manager is the team leader and will make charging decisions in the absence of CPS pre-charge advice. The case owner is the clerical heart of the unit and is responsible for 99% of data input and file management processes. The unit creates its own files in an end-to-end process, rather than return them to arresting officers to complete, but additionally the unit will also manage every file created throughout the BCU by officers who deal with their own prisoners, such as detectives. This will ensure a consistency in file management.
212. The aim of the unit is to increase the quality and timeliness of files and in doing so increase the number of positive outcomes (sometimes referred to as the 'brought to justice' figures) whilst reducing the number of cracked and ineffective trials.
213. It is the experience of the inspection team that the most effective PHUs are those that operate a 'cradle to grave' approach on prisoner handling and, most importantly, file management. This approach is used in the pilot model. Two criticisms are leveled at PHUs and, again, these are addressed by the pilot site. The first is that files of poor quality are presented for handover and a quality control mechanism is in place. The second is that interview skills amongst patrol officers are lost. Mindful of this, the Cornwall PHU will be introducing probationer attachments in 2006. This is in addition to probationer familiarisation visits when a probationer first arrives on the BCU. The attachments will be for a period of five weeks and one week will be with the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) for officers to gain a better understanding of the requirements of the CPS, the court and the defence. This is an excellent

innovation which HMIC will be following with interest. South and West Devon BCU is urged to adopt this at the earliest opportunity.

Potential Good Practice

214. The inspection team have identified the following areas as potential good practice:

- The rationalisation of CDRP funding streams to reduce bureaucracy and increase flexibility to deliver agreed local and national outcomes.
- Training courses for operational supervisors to improve detections and performance, in consultation with the SMT .
- The introduction of the missing person database to reduce time spent by front line staff obtaining information and providing lines of enquiry.
- The use of restorative justice to tackle community problems on the Barton Estate, Torquay .

HMIC BCU reports represent a snapshot in time, ie when the inspection occurred. It is acknowledged that performance may have changed since the time of the inspection. Every effort is made to publish reports as soon as possible after inspection.