

Best Value Review of Police Training

Force: Durham

Date of Inspection: 28–29 July 2004



A Report by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary

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Context and Force performance

Context

Population served by the Force	590,201	
Number of police officers	1,700	
Number of police staff	599	
Number of special constables	81	
Budget for training for the financial year:	Financial Value	Percentage of Overall Force budget
2003/04	not asked	2.48%
2004/05	£2,572,496	2.55%

Performance

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

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

www.homeoffice.gov.uk/hmic/durhbaseline0604.pdf

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

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

Findings

Area Examined	Findings
TRAINING STRATEGY	<p>HM Inspector was encouraged to see that the Force have a training strategy directly linked to the HR strategy and Force corporate plan. However, this strategy does not comply fully with the guidance contained within HOC 53/2003.</p> <p>HM Inspector encourages the Force to ensure the training strategy complies fully with the relevant HOC.</p>
QUALITY OF COSTED TRAINING PLAN	<p>HM Inspector found that the NCM had been utilised to provide information and this is contained within the CTP.</p> <p>HM Inspector was encouraged to see clear links between the plan and operational objectives. However, limited work has been undertaken since 2003 to update all of this information and this should be undertaken as a matter of urgency.</p> <p>Some confusion was found between the Finance and Training Departments with regard to the ownership of the NCM. This needs to be clarified.</p> <p>The Training Department is still treated as a cost centre, contrary to guidance contained within the HMIC report <i>Managing Learning</i>.</p> <p>HM Inspector encourages the Force to challenge the budget setting process for the Training Department, to better reflect the true cost of training, as contained within an updated CTP.</p>

Area Examined	Findings
<p>MONITORING THE COSTED TRAINING PLAN THROUGHOUT THE YEAR</p>	<p>A Training User Group (TUG) monitors the plan during the year. This group meets on a six-weekly cycle, and a standing item on its agenda refers to issues around the CTP.</p> <p>Weekly departmental business meetings also include a standing agenda item regarding the CTP.</p> <p>However, HM Inspector found that the only financial considerations by TUG relate to the cost of external training requirements. This is in respect of a budget of £442,800, from a total training budget of £2,572,496 for 2004/05.</p> <p>HM Inspector encourages the PA to ensure the Force incorporate detailed costing as part of the monitoring arrangements for all training via the TUG process.</p> <p>Whilst acknowledging the role of the PA Human Resource Panel, HM Inspector encourages the PA to develop a mechanism to monitor specifically the CTP, and to include PA representation on the TUG.</p>
<p>TRAINING NOT INCLUDED IN THE COSTED TRAINING PLAN</p>	<p>Some elements of Force training are not captured by the CTP. These include firearms, communications, forensic, vehicle maintenance, vehicle examinations, search advisor, and BCU training.</p> <p>The PA needs to ensure that the Force challenges these arrangements, in particular to ensure that all training is subject to the NCM, and included within the CTP.</p>
<p>CLIENT/CONTRACTOR ARRANGEMENTS</p>	<p>A well-established client/contractor culture was found within the Force. The TUG is acknowledged as a client led group, and is described as a robust tool, by the manner in which it does business.</p> <p>HM Inspector was encouraged by recent evidence of challenge to the role and remit of TUG, via the Deputy Chief Constable. Early adoption of the new draft terms of reference proposed for this group is supported. These terms of reference should include the method by which TUG will carry out its financial monitoring of the training plan.</p> <p>In order to preserve its independence from the contractor side of the training function, HM Inspector encourages the Force to reconsider the appointment of vice chair of TUG currently held by the Training Development Manager. HM Inspector encourages the PA to ensure the Force includes PA membership within this group.</p>

Area Examined	Findings
<p>MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS FOR TRAINING</p>	<p>The Head of Training does not have overall control of training within the Force. A number of departments within the Force carry out their own training function, for example firearms, communications, and CID.</p> <p>The Force is urged to introduce a mechanism, whereby training in the Force is functionally accountable to the Training Manager in relation to standards, costs, planning and processes.</p> <p>There is an apparent lack of clarity with staff over the current management arrangements for training. HM Inspector is aware of significant and recent Force re-organisation, which may partly explain this present situation. This needs to be addressed as a priority.</p> <p>HM Inspector was encouraged to see that plans for BCU training have been developed, that area training officers (ATOs) are under the supervisory control of the Training Manager, and are appropriately qualified.</p>
<p>IMPLEMENTATION OF:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing Learning • Training Matters • Diversity Matters • Foundations for Change 	<p>The Force has adopted tools within <i>Managing Learning</i> particularly in the concept of its six-stage training model.</p> <p>In respect of <i>Diversity Matters</i>, the Force has incorporated actions in response to its recommendations within documentation for the Race and Diversity Programme Board.</p> <p>HM Inspector encourages the Force to monitor the underpinning actions robustly.</p> <p>The Force has responded to the recommendations contained within <i>Training Matters</i> by migrating these into the IDLDP project.</p> <p>HM Inspector encourages the Force to produce a clear monitoring process within this project, able to check action against recommendation.</p> <p>The Force, in collaboration with other forces in the region, has adopted the FfC. This collaborative approach has resulted in the prioritisation of seven of the FfC for early work. It is important that the other 12 are not left in abeyance.</p> <p>Whilst recognising that the approach taken has been one of prioritisation, HM Inspector encourages the Force to review this arrangement with its regional partners, and demonstrate co-ordinated activity against all of the recommendations.</p>

Area Examined	Findings
<p>CURRENT IMPROVEMENT PLAN</p>	<p>HM Inspector was encouraged to find a comprehensive IP, which had been produced in close co-operation with the PA, and which has clear links to corporate goals. The majority of the recommendations have been signed off by the PA as implemented either fully, or in part.</p> <p>In addition to the IP, the Force's ongoing annual corporate plan initiatives include improvement actions in relation to the training function.</p>
<p>MONITORING THE IMPROVEMENT PLAN</p>	<p>The PA Best Value Panel monitors progress in respect of the recommendations within the IP at six monthly intervals.</p> <p>There was evidence of a robust process being undertaken by the PA in respect of these recommendations, as found in appropriate minutes.</p> <p>However, a number of live areas for improvement, addressed within this report, are not reflected within the IP, or the corporate plan initiatives.</p> <p>HM Inspector encourages the PA to ensure that the Force produces a single updated IP, to include all existing and new recommendations, and that the responsibility for ensuring robust monitoring of this new plan is managed by a single source.</p>
<p>QUALITY ASSURANCE PROCESSES</p>	<p>The Force has a Quality Assurance policy, however, little further evidence was found to demonstrate a culture of QA within the training function.</p> <p>There are diverse structures relating to training management within the Force and HM Inspector encourages the PA to ensure that the Force gives management responsibility for all QA processes to the Training Manager.</p> <p>Concern was expressed regarding the arrangements and resourcing of QA within the Training Department. The Training Manager is fully aware of this area for improvement, and robustly expressed her vision of a quality led department. A number of forthcoming events are planned to improve the situation.</p> <p>HM Inspector is aware of recent additions to the staffing levels within the department, and encourages the Force to develop strong overarching QA systems and ensure that the TDO process operates appropriately for all trainers.</p>

Area Examined	Findings
<p>EVALUATION OF TRAINING</p>	<p>The Force has an evaluation officer, who originally was employed as a training evaluator. As a result of an expansion of responsibility for the role, the evaluation function for the Force generally has developed, whilst the scope for evaluation within the training function has been restricted. HM Inspector is therefore encouraged to note that a full time training evaluators' post has recently been advertised.</p> <p>Level 1 and 2 evaluations are carried out by trainers. The Evaluation Officer undertakes Level 3 and 4 evaluations.</p> <p>HM Inspector encourages the Force further to develop the use, and sophistication, of the manner by which evaluation data is used.</p> <p>The Force evaluator is commissioned via TUG, however, HM Inspector was informed that the 'de facto' line manager for the evaluator had been the Training Manager.</p> <p>HMI therefore encourages the Force to create clear independence of the Training Manager post and the training evaluator post in order to ensure the integrity of the evaluation function.</p>
<p>COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN TRAINING</p>	<p>HM Inspector found limited community involvement in training. The Force felt that this involvement would be achieved through the development of the IPLDP. However, HM Inspector acknowledges the efforts made by the Force to involve the local Race Equality Council and welcomes a reinvigation of this initiative.</p> <p>Some examples of community involvement were evidenced, in particular the involvement of young people within the 'Achieving Best Evidence' course run by the Training Department.</p> <p>HM Inspector encourages the Force to adopt a systematic and more challenging approach to the way in which community involvement can be interwoven into training.</p>
<p>COLLABORATION – EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS</p>	<p>The Force is actively pursuing opportunities for collaboration with external organisations. Useful links have been developed with New College Durham collaboratively to tackle some elements of dog training, vehicle examinations, and front-counter training.</p> <p>HM Inspector encourages the Force further to develop external collaborative ventures, where greater efficiency and effectiveness can be shown.</p>

Area Examined	Findings
COLLABORATION – OTHER POLICE ORGANISATIONS	<p>The Force, in conjunction with its regional partners, considers collaborative opportunities for all new training needs, and information is being produced to reflect the progress that has been made to date.</p> <p>HM Inspector was also informed of ‘intra’ force collaboration between both BCUs, in relation to the management of sporting events training.</p> <p>HM Inspector encourages the Force further to develop these initiatives.</p>
ADOPTION OF NATIONAL GUIDANCE	<p>Limited knowledge of the document <i>Models for Learning and Development in the Police Service</i> was found within the Force.</p> <p>HM Inspector urges the Force to adopt the models for all training providers within the Force.</p>
MAIN AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE FORCE	<p>The Force has identified the following areas for improvement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● QA processes ● evaluation activity ● collaboration ● making full use of the NCM ● better community engagement.
APPLICATION OF THE 4Cs SINCE THE REVIEW	<p>The Force has attempted continuously to apply the principles of Best Value, through the use of the 4C model. This includes a series of questions within the validation document required for each new piece of training proposed. HM Inspector is encouraged by this approach.</p>
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INTEGRATED COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK	<p>Work in respect of the ICF is underway. It is expected that a new PDR system, in line with ICF, will be operational by April 2005.</p> <p>HM Inspector encourages the Force immediately to begin work to map course content to NOS, and to review its progress in relation to mapping NOS to police staff roles.</p>

Area Examined	Findings
<p>MONITORING PROCESS AND COMPLETION OF PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT REVIEWS FOR POLICE OFFICERS AND POLICE STAFF</p>	<p>The Personnel Department monitors PDRs (with regard to timeliness and quality). Management information from this process is used in regular department/BCU reviews.</p> <p>HM Inspector was encouraged to note that superintendents have been given specific targets within their own PDR documents in relation to staff PDR issues.</p>
<p>BUSINESS PLANNING FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF TRAINING</p>	<p>Typically the business planning process for training takes place at the same time as the corporate cycle. It would be of benefit to training managers to be aware of Force and divisional/department plans, and their training implications, prior to finalising their own plans. This may require a time frame alteration of only four weeks.</p> <p>In this way, the Training Department plan can properly support corporate needs, rather than having to anticipate what these might be. HM Inspector therefore encourages the Force to consider introducing an amended timeframe to improve development of the training department planning process.</p>
<p>PRIORITISATION MODEL FOR TRAINING</p>	<p>A detailed prioritisation methodology for managing competing training requirements exists, which is included as part of the curriculum development plan, when submitted to TUG. This model takes into account:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> is the training critical for the business? does it link to organisational need? does it refer to any recommendations within a Best Value IP? is there any alternative means of providing the training? what efficiency savings/gains will the event generate? <p>However HM Inspector is of the view that demand appears to have outstripped capacity, and has therefore led to QA systems being given a lesser priority.</p> <p>HM Inspector therefore encourages the Force to re-visit this prioritisation model, to satisfy itself it is still fit for purpose.</p>

Recommendations

Recommendation 1

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

Recommendation 2

HM Inspector recommends that the Force applies the National Costing Model to all training

Recommendation 3

HM Inspector recommends that the Force reviews the current 'cost centre' arrangements for the Training Centre, and agrees a budget arising from identified need within the costed training plan

Recommendation 4

HM Inspector recommends that the Force clarifies ownership of the National Costing Model within the Force

Recommendation 5

HM Inspector recommends that the Police Authority ensures that the Force incorporates Police Authority membership on the Training User Group, and that it reviews the vice chair position to preserve its independence from the contractor

Recommendation 6

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

Recommendation 7

HM Inspector recommends that the Force relocates the post of Development Manager into the personnel side of the Department

Recommendation 8

HM Inspector recommends that the Force pursues a structured implementation plan in respect of all 19 Foundations for Change and this is regularly monitored through to completion

Recommendation 9

HM Inspector recommends that the Force develops a comprehensive Quality Assurance process for all training, irrespective of where or by whom it is provided. The Quality Assurance process should be regularly monitored

Recommendation 10

HM Inspector recommends that the Force ensures that all relevant personnel are conversant with, and are utilising, national guidance in the form of the Centrex Models for Learning and Development and that this is monitored by the Head of Training

Recommendation 11

HM Inspector recommends that the Force develops a robust strategy for effectively engaging communities in all aspects of the training cycle

Recommendation 12

HM Inspector recommends that the Police Authority ensures that the Force continues to develop collaborative arrangements with other forces and that the principles applied so far are extended to external organisations wherever possible and practical

Recommendation 13

HM Inspector recommends that the Force allocates sufficient resources to allow existing and new course content to be mapped against the National Occupational Standards

Judgements

Judgement 1:

There is a significant amount of change underway nationally within training and HM Inspector acknowledges the work undertaken by the Force and Police Authority to react to these changes. The Force has a training strategy, that whilst not fully compliant with Home Office guidance, is well linked to operational priorities, and a costed training plan, which, where it has used the National Costing Model, is the basis of a robust management tool. HM Inspector recognises that the Force has recently undertaken a major change programme, and accepts that from this will fall an initial settling period. Some of the issues raised by HM Inspector within this report, particularly in relation to the management arrangements for training, reflect this.

The Training Manager has a clear and challenging vision for the future of training in the Force, and although new in post, has already begun a planning process to address issues identified within this report.

HM Inspector considers however, that the absence of corporate Quality Assurance processes, limited evaluation at Level 2 and beyond, together with a lack of over arching control of the whole training estate, are areas that need to be strengthened.

A further area for development is in relation to the financing of training. HM Inspector believes the Force, at present, cannot know the real cost of training, and therefore the budget setting process can be little more than based upon professional judgement, and historical experience.

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

Judgement 2:

HM Inspector considers that the Best Value Review process was appropriately undertaken, and was regularly monitored by the Police Authority.

Although the Best Value Review improvement plan is not yet complete, HM Inspector was encouraged to find a number of planned improvement activities in existence. HM Inspector is concerned however that the Force may not be in a position through the existing improvement plan to address the issues contained in this document, and the Force would therefore benefit from producing a single overarching plan.

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

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

BEST VALUE AND PLANNING GUIDANCE FOR POLICE AUTHORITIES AND FORCES

Additional Comment:

HM Inspector carried out a review of the Durham Force training function in 2001, partly as an exercise to test out a new methodology for training inspection, and is grateful to the Force for assisting in this work. During the Best Value Review inspection the opportunity was taken to consider how the Force has responded in relation to the recommendations made in 2001.

HM Inspector found that all recommendations had been addressed, other than to note the following points:

- 15.2.3 Evaluation at level 4 of the Kirkpatrick scale remains very limited, and progress towards this aim has been slow. Generally the Force has accepted that further evaluation work needs to be undertaken, and HM Inspector is encouraged for future improvements, upon the appointment of a Training Evaluator.
- 15.2.4 Staff spoken to during this most recent inspection felt only limited empowerment, but also remarked that they felt this was improving.
- 15.2.1 At the 2001 review HM Inspector noted that there had been quick staff turnover in relation to the Training Delivery Manager role, and the post was, at that time, vacant. This was described as leading to departmental dissonance. The most recent re structure of the Force has led to further change within the Training Department, and HM Inspector found levels of confusion regarding roles, responsibilities, and leadership.

HM Inspector recommends that the Police Authority ensure that the Force takes note of the above points and addresses them in any new improvement plan produced.

Adult Learning Inspectorate

Summary of Findings

The Adult Learning Inspectorate undertook an assessment of several training sessions prior to the HMIC (P&T) inspection. A summary of their findings is shown below:

Achievement and Standards

- Learners develop good knowledge and skills in sessions. Trainers have very clear objectives for learning sessions and learners' knowledge is continuously checked. Learners demonstrate a good understanding of knowledge gained and use it with confidence to analyse real life situations. Where pass rates are available they are high.

Quality of Education and Training

- The majority of teaching is good or better. Trainers are clear about the aims and objectives of sessions and communicate information well with continuous checking of learners' knowledge. All trainers made use of a variety of appropriate techniques including group work to involve students in learning. Trainers are usually very knowledgeable about their subject, but sometimes are too quick to answer questions for learners. Many of the longer programmes were flexible in terms of timing. Trainers tailored courses well to learners' needs by spending more or less time on a topic as required. Better sessions were characterised by good timing and pacing of the class; a variety of activities to keep learners engaged and were well supported by tutor. They generally made good use of realistic scenarios and case studies to make learning relevant. In some aspects of sessions too much information was imparted with an over reliance on overhead transparencies or PowerPoint.
- Teaching staff are well qualified. All trainers are Centrex trained with the majority progressing onto a certificate in education. Staff are well supported in their professional development. All new trainers shadow an experienced trainer as part of their induction. Classrooms and other teaching facilities are good. Classrooms have sufficient space and flexibility to accommodate a range of different learning activities.
- Initial assessment is not systematically carried out and there is little acknowledgement of learners' prior experience or learning in training. The Force does not have a clear policy or set of practices on initial assessment. The responsibility for ensuring that individual needs are met rest solely with the learner. Learners' progress in lessons is effectively monitored with good use of questions and answers to check understanding. Most learners are informed well in advance if the course has an assessed component.

- The programmes are responsive to local circumstances. The Force has a training plan, which reflects its corporate goals. It also has an established curriculum development process, which takes account of needs analysis, best delivery format and evaluation criteria. Between March and August 2003, 15 new courses were commissioned.
- Support arrangements are satisfactory. Most trainers offer support for learners in the classroom if a learning need is identified. However there is no system for informing tutors of the individual needs of learners and there are no examples of the use of specialist equipment to support learning. The Force has recently offered officers the opportunity of free access to an online officer support programme for those taking OSPRE courses. The take up has been good.



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