



HAMPSHIRE POLICE

10 – 13 OCTOBER 2005

POLICE NATIONAL COMPUTER

COMPLIANCE REPORT

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1. Executive Summary

1.1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary (HMIC) conducted a Police National Computer (PNC) Compliance Inspection of Hampshire Police between 10th and 13th October 2005.
- 1.1.2 Hampshire Police was subject to a PNC Compliance Audit using the July 2005 Protocols on PNC compliance. Her Majesty's Inspector would like to acknowledge the Force for its services and also to place on record his thanks to all members of staff who contributed to this report and provided assistance during the inspection.
- 1.1.3 This report is based on views and comments obtained from Strategic, PNC and customer level management and users at Force Headquarters and at two of the ten Basic Command Units (BCUs). These views have been supported by reality checks conducted by HMIC PNC Compliance Auditors.

1.2 Background

- 1.2.1 Hampshire Police covers an area of approximately 1,614 square miles in the south east of England. The force is responsible for policing the counties of Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. The resident population of the force area is approximately two million. Other than the two major BCUs of Southampton and Portsmouth, the force is primarily a rural force, with areas such as the Isle of Wight relying heavily on the tourist industry for its local economy. In addition, there is a busy motorway and an international airport to add challenges to the policing of the county.
- 1.2.2 The Force is headed by the ACPO team based at the headquarters in Winchester. The ACPO team is led by the Chief Constable, supported by the Deputy Chief Constable (DCC), two Assistant Chief Constables (ACCs), with individual responsibilities for Territorial Operations and Specialist Operations. There are also two Directors responsible for Personnel and Finance. The Force strength comprises approximately 3,856 full-time equivalent police officers, 2,659 police staff, 374 Special Constables and 26 Police Community Support Officers (PCSO).
- 1.2.3 The PNC function falls within the portfolio of the ACC Specialist Operations who has overall responsibility for the function. However, day to day management of the function is devolved to a Superintendent as the Director of Intelligence and the manager of the force PNC Bureau (PNCB).

- 1.2.4 The PNCB, based within a building that houses all intelligence functionality for the force operates on a 24 hour/7 day basis. Staff within the unit work a shift pattern that comprises twelve hours shifts, working two days, two nights then four days off. The PNCB Bureau is responsible for carrying out all operational updates to the PNC, for example, Vehicle Reports, Wanted/Missing entries and Property Updates. The PNCB is also responsible for carrying out routine enquiries for operational officers and providing round the clock cover VODS and QUEST searches. The bureau is also responsible for monitoring the force interface to PNC to ensure that any rejections or failures are dealt with as soon as practicable.
- 1.2.5 Arrest/Summons reports originating from Hampshire are created following electronic transfer via the interface from the force custody system, known as the Prisoner Management System (PMS). When a person is brought into custody and the record created, the PMS can send up to 57 data items to PNC to create a record. Supplementary information is provided by the officer in the case who completes a manual form known as the PNC2a and submits the information to a local Criminal Justice Unit (CJU). Staff in the CJU are responsible for monitoring the quality of the PNC2a and applying the supplementary information to PNC.
- 1.2.6 The CJUs also have responsibility for updating court results on the PNC. Court registers are printed in each CJU when the data has been validated at the courts and the results are input directly onto the PNC. There is one CJU on each BCU, however, the force is currently restructuring this function to a regional basis which will see the number of CJUs reduced to three. The new structure will be managed centrally by the force Criminal Justice Department.

1.3 Methodology

- 1.3.1 A full inspection was carried out covering the sections of; Leadership; Policy & Strategy; People; Partnerships & Resources; Processes and Results.
- 1.3.2 The inspection was conducted over three stages with a final assessment being provided in line with the current HMIC Baseline Assessment grading structure of;
- **Excellent** - Comprehensive evidence of effective activity against all protocol areas.
 - **Good** – Evidence of effective activity covering many areas, but not comprehensive.
 - **Fair** - Evidence of effective activity covering some areas, but concerns in others.
 - **Poor** - No or limited evidence of effective activity against all the protocol areas, or serious concerns in one or more areas of activity.

- 1.3.3 The first stage of the inspection involved the force providing HMIC PNC Compliance Auditors with documentation to support their adherence to the protocols. This was followed by a visit to the force with HMIC PNC Compliance Auditors conducting interviews with key staff. The visit to the force also incorporated the final stage of the inspection that was based upon reality checks. The reality checks focused on reviewing PNC arrest/summons data against source documentation.
- 1.3.4 Using the evidence gathered during each stage of the inspection, this report has been produced based upon the European Foundation of Quality Management (EFQM) format.

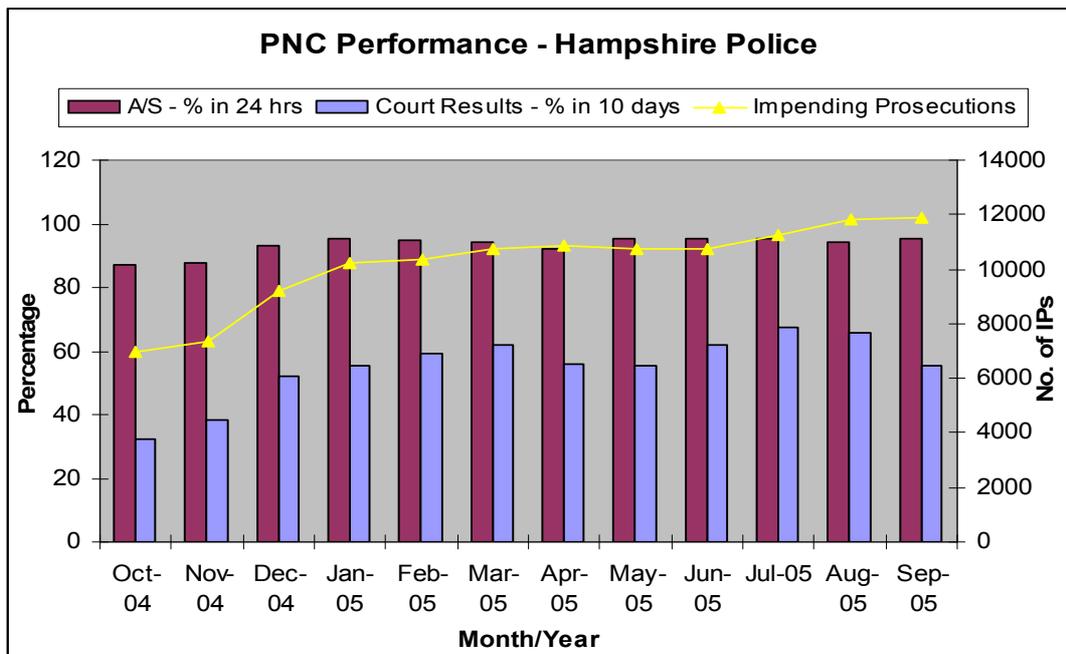
1.4 Current Performance

- 1.4.1 On 27th April 2000, ACPO Council accepted the ACPO PNC Compliance Strategy. The strategy is based upon the following four aspects of data handling;
- Accuracy
 - Timeliness
 - Completeness
 - Relevancy
- 1.4.2 The strategy is owned by ACPO but is also reliant on other partners taking responsibility for key actions within the strategy. The partners include; Centrex; HMIC; Police Information Technology Organisation (PITO) and individual forces.
- 1.4.3 On 1st January 2005, the performance indicators of the ACPO Compliance Strategy were replaced by the timeliness standards contained within the newly published Code of Practice for PNC. The PNC Code of Practice, developed by the National Centre for Policing Excellence and endorsed by ACPO, is a statutory code made under s.39a of the Police Act 1896 (inserted by section 2 of the Police Reform Act 2002). It provides scope for the Home Secretary to invoke statutory intervention for forces failing to comply. With regards to individual forces, a number of performance indicators (PIs) specifically for PNC data standards were set. Each force has a responsibility to achieve the standards set within the Code of Practice. The timeliness standards within the code are as follows;
- 90% of recordable offences entered onto PNC within 24 hours of the commencement of proceedings. The commencement of proceedings being defined as when a person is arrested, reported or summonsed.
 - 50% of all finalisations being entered onto PNC within 7 days of the information being received by the police. This target was increased to 75% on 1st July 2005, six months after the commencement of the code. (Courts have their own target of 3 days for delivery of the data to the police. Therefore, the police are currently measured against an overall target of 10 days).
- 1.4.4 In the 12 months to September 2005, Hampshire Police have consistently achieved the target for the creation of A/S reports. The force fell slightly below the target in October and November 2004 recording performance of 87.1% and 87.6% respectively. However, since then the force has achieved the target in every month reaching a high of 95.6% in May, July and September 2005. With regards to the number of days taken to enter the quickest 90% of records, a similar trend as occurred with performance showing 7 days in October 2004 improving to 1 day in December 2004 and remaining as 1 day for every subsequent month. Against both indicators, the force is performing better than the England & Wales averages of 80.8% and 13 days.

2.6.1 Performance with regard to the input of court results has been less consistent. When the Code of Practice for PNC was introduced in January 2005, the force met the target of 50% in each month up to the end of June 2005. However, since the target was revised to 75% at the beginning of July, the force has failed to meet the target, achieving a high of 67.3% in July 2005. The current performance is below the national average for England and Wales of 64.6%. Whilst this remains outside of the revised target of 75%, the force has identified potential areas for improvement and is already taking remedial action that will contribute to an overall improvement in performance. With regard to the number of days taken to meet the respective targets within the Code of Practice, 50% between January and June and 75% from July 1st, the Force has shown a decline in performance with the number of days taken to enter 75% rising from 12 days in July 2005 to 19 days in September 2005.

1.4.6 In terms of Impending Prosecutions (IPs), the overall number of outstanding IPs has increased from 6,956 to 11,861 between October 2004 and September 2005, an increase of approximately 70.5%. However, there is a direct correlation between the increase in the number of IPs and the implementation of the 2003 Criminal Justice Act which has resulted in the number of cases being added to the PNC increase from an average of approximately 3000 per month in September 2004 to 4,300 in September 2005. However, despite the large increase, the force has continued to ensure that the number of old Impending Cases is kept to a minimum. At the end of September 2005, the number of cases over 12 months old was only 12.9% of the total number.

1.4.7 A graph illustrating Hampshire Police’s performance in the 12 months to September 2005 is shown below.



1.5 Conclusions

1.5.1 HMIC's assessment of PNC compliance within the Force has been assessed as:

Fair - Evidence of effective activity covering some areas, but concerns in others.

1.5.2 This assessment is based on the detailed findings of the report. However, the key areas can be summarised as follows:

- The level of accountability on individual officers needs to be increased concerning the timeliness and quality of information being submitted for update to PNC. This is a cultural issue that the force needs to address.
- Inefficiencies in the management of PNC exist, causing delays for essential users of the system. Some users who are receiving training are not using the system once the training has been delivered.
- Levels of awareness amongst staff are varied and the overall assessment is that general knowledge can be improved, particularly amongst staff who are young in service.
- There are a number of basic weaknesses in detailed processes that are affecting the forces ability to experience sustained improvement.
- Data Protection auditing and transaction monitoring are areas of strength.
- The force has a strong leadership in terms of PNC and HMIC auditors are encouraged that the mechanisms are in place to drive changes that will contribute towards improvements.

1.5.3 The findings of this report should be read in conjunction with the previous reports and recommendations relating to PNC. The previous reports are;

- Police Research Group Report – 'Phoenix Data Quality', *published 1998*.
- HMIC Thematic Inspection Report – 'On The Record', *published 2000*
- HMIC Report – PNC Data Quality and Timeliness, 1st Report, *published 2001*
- HMIC Report – 'PNC Data Quality and Timeliness, 2nd Report', *published 2002*

1.5.4 A summary of good practice points, along with recommendations for improvement can be seen in Appendix A of this report.

2. Detailed Findings and Recommendations

2.1 Leadership

- 2.1.1 The overall leadership for PNC issues rests with the ACC Specialist Operations within Hampshire Police. HMIC PNC Compliance Auditors found that the current ACC, although only recently in post, has a good level of knowledge and understanding of issues relating to PNC, with a clear interest in ensuring that the force improves to a position in which compliance is being achieved.
- 2.1.2 The force has a well established PNC Steering Group (PSG) which has strategic ownership of PNC issues for the force. The PSG is chaired by the ACC and the frequency of meetings is approximately every six weeks.
- 2.1.3 HMIC Auditors reviewed the structure and membership of the group and also the strategic direction that the PSG had employed to enhance Hampshire's position with regard to PNC performance. They found that membership was broad and that all relevant staff from across the force were involved in the management of PNC. In addition, HMIC auditors were pleased to find measurable objectives contained within a PSG Strategy Document¹. They were also pleased to note that items of the agenda were appropriate for strategic level discussions without the risk of diluting the impact of the group.
- 2.1.4 The PSG takes ownership of any matters that relate to PNC, including all recommendations from internal or external audit activity. This ensures that all actions that result from audit or inspection activity are monitored and come under the ultimate responsibility of the ACC. This is considered to be good practice. Overall, the PSG is well constructed and providing the force with a suitable forum for the management of PNC issues.
- 2.1.5 HMIC PNC Compliance Auditors also reviewed the level of accountability placed upon officers concerning the submission of data for update to PNC and the use of management information to support this process. HMIC Auditors found that although some management information is produced for the attention of BCU commanders, it does not contain issues surrounding the timeliness or quality of the submission of data on source input documents.

¹ The Strategy Document sets out the terms of reference for the PNC Steering Group

- 2.1.6 Individual officers are not being held accountable for the submission of data and the result is that in most cases, the source input document that is submitted to supplement the electronic transfer of data from the custody system, is blank. No records are being kept by the force concerning the quality of forms and since the introduction of the Records Management System (RMS), some CJU staff who are responsible for making the updates to PNC do not return the forms if blanks exist, they simply interrogate RMS. Whilst this removes the administrative burden of returning forms, it can also contribute to the breeding of complacency amongst officers when submitting the source input documents. During interviews and focus groups with operational staff, this impression was articulated to HMIC Auditors.
- 2.1.7 HMIC Auditors are of the opinion that the force should give urgent consideration to the development of a strict regime concerning the data that is submitted by operational officers for update to PNC. The RMS product that has been implemented recently remains the subject of a project to integrate all systems within Hampshire. Phase two of the project, which is planned to introduce new applications on 1st March 2006, will see the replacement of the existing custody application with a new application within RMS. The new application will place more onus upon officers to submit quality data at source because more information will be sent electronically to PNC without intervention from CJU staff.
- 2.1.8 In view of the new application, it is important that the current culture amongst officers is changed in order that the risks of poor quality data being updated by Hampshire Police are reduced. A new regime based upon performance and including responsibilities of local supervision, who should take an active role in the process, will provide the force with a real opportunity to tackle this issue prior to phase two of the project being completed.

Recommendation 1

Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary recommends that the force urgently considers the introduction of a performance culture surrounding the submission of source input documents for update to PNC. The performance should measure the timeliness and quality of submission and result in management information being produced for BCU Commanders in order that officers are held accountable.

2.2 Policy and Strategy

- 2.2.1 With regard to policy and strategy, the inspection focused on a number of areas that warrant review. These can be described under four broad headings: PNC Policy & Strategy; Security and Data Protection. Each of these themes is discussed in further detail below.

2.2.2 PNC Policy & Strategy

2.2.2.1 Under this heading, HMIC PNC Compliance Auditors reviewed whether the force has strategic direction or whether it is in a situation where it can only react to internal changes or external influences, for example, the publication of the code of practice. In addition, the number and types of policies were reviewed and also whether relevant staff are aware of the existence of certain policies.

2.2.2.2 Strategic direction is provided through the Terms of Reference of the PSG. The terms of reference outline the role of the group with stated objectives of what the group aims to achieve. The PSG also has an action plan to ensure that all necessary activity is delegated accordingly and that progress is continually monitored.

2.2.2.3 With regards to force policies on PNC, HMIC PNC Compliance Auditors were pleased to note that the force has a wide range of policies covering the PNC functions. All policies are maintained and up to date and during interviews and focus groups, all staff were aware of the policies that directly affected them. It is also worthy of note that any policy in relation to PNC is signed off and approved by the PSG prior to publication.

2.2.3 Security

2.2.3.1 Under this section, HMIC PNC Compliance Auditors reviewed the processes surrounding the management of user access to PNC and also the security policies that support the use of the system.

2.2.3.2 Access to PNC within Hampshire is determined by the role that is being carried out by an individual and the successful completion of a training course. The force has a policy that defines which roles can have access to the system. For all other roles, access to the data that is held on the system that is required for operational purposes must be made via contact with the PNCB or the Control Room.

2.2.3.3 Administration of user access is carried out by the supervisors in the PNC Bureau. Upon successful completion of a training course, an e-mail is sent by the trainer to PNCB. The supervisors in PNCB update the relevant user group on PNC and issue a password for the new user. A hard copy of the e-mail is then retained as a record and for future audit purposes.

2.2.3.4 When people leave the force or change jobs internally, an electronic notification is generated within Human Resources (HR) and sent to relevant staff via e-mail to ensure that any records are updated accordingly. The list of relevant staff includes the IT department who control access to the force IT network and the pay section to ensure that appropriate changes are made to the payroll. The list also includes the supervisors in the PNCB in order that levels of access on PNC can either be removed or altered depending on the nature of the information provided by HR. HMIC auditors consider this to be good practice and a suitable control to ensure that user IDs for PNC are kept up to date.

- 2.2.3.5 In addition to the notification from HR, the supervisors in PNCB also carry out an audit of all PNC on an annual basis. The force has a culture of 'use it or lose it' to ensure that any person using the system has retained the skills they developed during their training. If users do not use the system, their access to PNC is removed. The most recent audit resulted in the removal of over 100 user IDs from the system. Although there is no significant concern from HMIC auditors, they are of the opinion that the force may benefit from a dip sample of some of the user IDs that are removed. Analysis of the reasons why the system is not being used by certain users could be carried out. The findings of the analysis could then contribute to efficiency savings in the administration of users and training. It may also identify whether there are any gaps in existing processes and enable the force to tighten controls further.

Recommendation 2

Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary recommends that the force should consider analysing the reasons why some staff do not use the system once they have been trained. The results of the analysis could provide efficiency savings for the force in terms of the selection of staff who are receiving training.

- 2.2.3.6 General System Security is managed by the Information Security Officer, however, at the time of the inspection this post was vacant. Nevertheless, the force has maintained an up to date Security Policy which complies with the ACPO Community Security Policy and therefore, the relevant parts of BS7799. In addition, all staff are mandated to complete an online learning package on Information Protection. This training package outlines the responsibilities of staff in relation to Information Security and Data Protection. HMIC Auditors consider this to be good practice to ensure that all staff are aware of the risks associated with information management.

2.2.4 Data Protection

- 2.2.4.1 Data Protection is considered an area of strength within Hampshire Police. The function, under the overall title of Information Compliance, falls within the responsibility of the Professional Standards Department (PSD) which subsequently falls within the portfolio of the DCC. This is good practice and ensures that the auditing regime remains independent of operational functions.

- 2.2.4.2 The force has embraced the principles of the ACPO Data Protection and Audit Manual (ACPO DPAM) and uses the manual as the foundation for the audit activity it carries out. A five year audit plan has been developed using a risk assessment of the systems and data being managed within the force. The plan is reviewed annually to ensure it is still relevant and to gauge any potential impacts from new legislation or the introduction of new systems. Audits of various aspects of the PNC are an integral part of the audit plan.

- 2.2.4.3 In addition to the good planning of audits, the force has taken the approach of conducting the audits as process based. This is good practice and provides the force with opportunities to continually monitor the processes that are employed in the management of data. If an audit results in the identification of errors, the use of process based auditing will highlight the areas of weakness that have contributed to the existence of errors. The force is then in a position to review the process and implement changes to reduce the risk of errors occurring in the future.
- 2.2.4.4 The reports that are produced as a result of an audit are also done in accordance with the ACPO DPAM, using recommended samples sizes of data and classifying errors as Major, Intermediate or Minor. The use of effective sample sizes of data ensures that the confidence level of the audits is raised because the data that is being tested can be considered as representative of the overall total for the force. In addition, the classification of the errors enables the force to immediately identify areas of concern within the audit in order that action can be taken. The classification of errors also highlights the level of risks that is attached to any incorrect data that is found on the system. Furthermore, upon completion of an audit, as well as reporting up the line management structure to the DCC, the report is also sent to the PSG. The PSG take ownership of any recommendations that are made and include them in the overall action plan in order that progress towards improvement can be monitored during meetings. This is also considered to be good practice.
- 2.2.4.5 HMIC Auditors also reviewed the process for transaction monitoring within the force. Transaction monitoring is a process contained within the ACPO DPAM that forces should use to determine the legitimacy of PNC transactions carried out by its operators. The DPAM states that a minimum of 3 per day should be conducted, although depending on the size of the force, the sample size should be representative of the overall number of transactions completed by the force. This aspect is also considered to be an area of strength for the force.
- 2.2.4.6 The process within Hampshire for transaction monitoring is that 6 checks per day are randomly selected by information compliance staff and sent electronically via e-mail to the officer responsible for requesting the PNC check, or the operator. The officer or member of staff who made the check must endorse the e-mail with the reason that a check was carried out and return it via their own line manager to the information compliance staff.
- 2.2.4.7 The line managers of officers and staff have a responsibility to ensure that the reason entered on the e-mail is valid and that there is sufficient documentation to support the PNC enquiry, for example, an entry in a pocket notebook. As a fail safe mechanism, information compliance staff carry out a dip sample of all returns to ensure that documentation does in fact exist. The dip sample consists of 2 checks per week on a random basis. All staff were aware of this process, including line managers ensuring that there is a culture within the force that the risk of misusing data is not worth taking because the chance of being caught is considered to be high. This perception amongst staff is testament to the efficient and strict regime that is employed.

2.2.4.8 Finally in relation to Data Protection, the force has taken steps to raise awareness of information management issues. As mentioned in paragraph 2.2.3.6, all staff must successfully complete a mandatory on-line training package covering Information Protection. However, the force has also set up a helpline for staff which staff can use to ensure they are getting the most out of the data and also to deal with queries in relation to disclosure and appropriate use of data. A web page on the force intranet has also been developed and a recent marketing campaign has been carried out. During interviews and focus groups, all staff were aware of the importance of correct use of information within the force.

2.3 People

2.3.1 PNC Awareness

2.3.1.1 At the end of 2004, Hampshire conducted a survey to gauge the level of awareness of PNC amongst operational staff. The results of the questionnaire were used to develop a marketing strategy aimed at narrowing the knowledge gaps in specific areas. This is considered to be good practice, however, HMIC auditors found that almost twelve months on from the completion of the survey, the levels of awareness are still considered to be 'hit and miss'.

2.3.1.2 During focus groups, HMIC auditors discovered that there were different levels of knowledge between uniformed staff and staff who are working in a CID environment. Some uniformed staff are not aware of some of the basic functions of PNC that can assist them in their every day work, for example, driving licence records whilst CID staff had a good working knowledge and experience of using the more complex functions of VODS and QUEST. It was of particular note that officers who were young in service did not have a good knowledge of the system and the functionality it provides.

2.3.1.3 The good levels of awareness amongst CID staff can be attributed in part to the secondment of an analyst from PNCB to major investigations. Analysts within PNCB are trained to the highest level on PNC within the force and the force has utilised their skills when research is required on major cases. HMIC auditors consider this to be good practice because it ensures that specialist staff can pass on their expertise as opposed to training a large number of staff who may only use the skills on an infrequent basis. The use of the specialist adds value to the investigations and can also breed knowledge amongst staff when a success is made.

2.3.1.4 HMIC auditors were made aware that the current shift pattern on the BCUs includes the provision for training days. These days are useful opportunities to improve the knowledge amongst operational staff of what PNC can do for them. PITO² Customer Services teams are available and can deliver presentations to various shifts within the force outlining the benefits of PNC as an operational and investigative tool. The service is free of charge and the force is recommended to consider the use of their services. The presentations can be run as a combined venture between the PNCB and PITO in order that officers are not only alerted to what PNC can do, but also how they can gain access to the facilities locally within force.

² Police Information Technology Organisation

- 2.3.1.5 In addition, the force should also consider a review of the way that PNC functionality is delivered to student constables in their initial training. New staff should not be immediately trained in the use of the PNC, but they must have a good working knowledge of the system prior to them becoming operational officers. This aspect is considered as an area where most improvement can be made. Young in service staff were not aware of some basic functions, therefore, the content and structure of the training needs to be reviewed. HMIC learned that the presentation that is currently used to raise awareness amongst student constables is out of date and does not include recent functionality that has been added to the PNC.
- 2.3.1.6 One area in which HMIC auditors consider as a good opportunity to develop the levels of awareness amongst all staff is the crime supervisors. All crimes are supervised by certain staff on each BCU, ensuring that all relevant actions and lines of enquiry have been considered by the officers investigating the crimes. It is felt that if crime supervisors were given the knowledge of PNC and its investigative capabilities, the officers carrying out the investigation could then be prompted to consider the various functions of the PNC to assist their enquiries. This approach would provide the force with an opportunity to gain long term benefits from a solution that could be achieved in a short time scale and with minimal impact on current workloads. The knowledge provided to crime supervisors would be cascaded amongst staff when they are prompted to consider further lines of enquiry.

Recommendation 3

Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary recommends that the force should;

- **consider the use of training days to deliver 'PNC Awareness' campaigns to operational staff to raise awareness of the functionality of PNC;**
- **review the current content and method of delivery for providing student constables with information about the functionality of the PNC. Any information should ensure that officers learn more than the basic elements of PNC and should be equipped with knowledge of the investigative capabilities of the system;**
- **Consider the role of crime supervisors as an opportunity to promote the effective use of the PNC by equipping them with sufficient knowledge to advise or prompt officers who are conducting crime enquiries.**

2.3.2 Training

- 2.3.2.1 PNC Training is provided by various means depending on the person being trained and the role they are carrying out. The majority of PNC training is delivered by the I.T. Training Unit (ITTU), however, there is limited capacity here to deliver update training, therefore, the force has had to use external training providers in order to train staff from PNCB and the CJUs. In addition, the Force Enquiry Centre (FEC) and Control Room have their own PNC trainer to deliver training to new staff.

- 2.3.2.2 The limited capacity within ITTU has come as a result of two main factors. The unit has lost a number of accredited trainers through resignations, who could deliver PNC training and the unit as a whole has also been committed to training a large number of staff within the force on the new Records Management System (RMS) that has been introduced. HMIC auditors acknowledge the reasons for the current limitations on training, but it also highlight the lack of resilience that the force has in terms of PNC training, resulting in what can be an expensive option by using external providers. However, the force has already committed to increasing the number of trainers to provide the services and enable it to improve the resilience. HMIC auditors are encouraged by this work in progress.
- 2.3.2.3 During the inspection, the structure of courses was also reviewed to see if there is compliance with national standards that have been set by Centrex. The standards are set to ensure that PNC training delivered throughout the country is consistent regardless of where the training is delivered. Within Hampshire, HMIC auditors found that the duration of the courses is less than the prescribed period set within the Centrex standards, however, the content of the courses contains all appropriate aspects of the training package. It is the opinion of HMIC auditors that the force should satisfy itself that the current structure of courses is complying with the relevant standards. This will require contact with Centrex who will need to approve the courses.

Recommendation 4

Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary recommends that the force ensures that all PNC Training courses are complying with National Standards by seeking approval from Centrex.

- 2.3.2.4 The planning of training is determined through an application process using a form known as the PNC9. The form is available in hard or soft copy and is submitted by an applicant to their line manager. The line manager then sends a copy of the form to the ITTU who will either approve or refuse the request. As previously discussed in paragraph 2.2.3.2, only selected roles within the force can have access to PNC as a user, all other access is indirectly via trained operators. Nevertheless, despite the roles being defined and included in a force policy, the ITTU continue to receive applications for PNC courses from staff who are not in approved roles. The policy does include a process to appeal against the list of roles, however, this should be via the manager of the PNCB and the PNC Steering Group. The result of failing to follow the policy correctly is that inefficiencies occur within the force from the applicant, through to their line manager and eventually in ITTU.

- 2.3.2.5 In order to reduce the level of inefficiency, it is the opinion of the HMIC auditors that the principles of the policy must be enforced on a more stringent basis. The force should consider the removal of the hard copy of the form ensuring that all applications are made online. The adoption of this approach will enable the online form to be configured so that it contains certain controls to ensure that only staff in eligible roles can apply for PNC courses, for example, a drop down list of pre-defined roles instead of a free text option. This will also ensure that training courses are being delivered to staff who need them to fulfil their role, potentially reducing any waiting times, and also reduce the administration of the existing PNC9 process.

Recommendation 5

Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary recommends that the force reviews the current process for requesting PNC training courses. The process should include sufficient supervision of requests before ITTU receive them and also include sufficient controls to avoid unnecessary applications.

- 2.3.2.6 HMIC auditors also learned that there is currently no formal process of post-training evaluation for any training course. Evaluation sheets, commonly known as 'Happy Sheets', are used immediately at the end of a training course but there is no follow up to ensure that a new PNC user returned to their workplace with the skills they expected to receive on the course. Whilst there is no formal process in place in ITTU, FEC and Control Room trainers carry out a dip sample of newly trained staff once they have settled into their new role. The force should consider an extension of this process to all training course with the results of the sampling being recorded. Records of evaluation can be used to ensure that courses continue to meet the demands and expectations of all users.

Recommendation 6

Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary recommends that in order to ensure that training are meeting their objectives and the expectations of students, the force should consider the introduction of formal evaluation of training courses, including post-training once a student has returned to the workplace.

- 2.3.2.7 Whilst some areas for improvement were identified within the training environment, the force also displayed some strengths. All PNC courses that are delivered in house are subject of a formal assessment at the end of the course. The pass mark for the assessment is 70%. If a trainee fails to achieve the standard during the assessment, further coaching is provided in the area that was identified as the weakness. Once the weakness has been overcome, a trainee can re-take the assessment without the need for a further full training course. In addition, HMIC auditors were encouraged by a strong relationship between all PNC training staff. Staff in ITTU and Control Room maintain regular contact concerning the content and delivery of courses to ensure that a consistent approach is sustained.

2.4 Partnerships and Resources

- 2.4.1 HMIC Auditors were pleased to discover that there is a regular meeting between the CJU managers within the force and the managers of the local magistrates' courts. However, in view of feedback being received during focus groups that the level of co-operation from the courts varies, the effectiveness of the meetings can be called into question. The meetings are an ideal opportunity for the force and the courts to agree protocols to ensure that performance of both agencies can be optimised. The courts have an obligation to provide the force with up to date information from court hearings in order that the PNC can be updated in accordance with the performance indicators of the code of practice. In turn, the force can then provide the courts with accurate and up to date previous convictions from the PNC to assist in the preparation of pre-sentence reports.
- 2.4.2 It is the opinion of HMIC auditors that the meeting can become more effective if a mechanism is introduced to raise issues with the Local Criminal Justice Board (LCJB). The LCJB is a higher level strategic group which includes the ACC from Hampshire who has overall responsibility for the PNC. Any issues that are affecting performance that are discussed by the CJU Managers meeting, could be raised via the LCJB if no resolution can be found with the courts. The issues that are being addressed can also be promulgated to the PSG through the chairmanship of the ACC.

Recommendation 7

Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary recommends that in order to improve the effectiveness of the CJU Managers Meetings with the Court Managers, the force in conjunction with the courts, should develop a formal line of communication between the meeting and the Local Criminal Justice Board. A formal line of communication will enable the escalation of issues that cannot be resolved at the manager's meeting.

- 2.4.3 In addition to the relationships that are being developed with the courts, the force has also developed good relationships with other external agencies. A data sharing protocol is in place to ensure that all agencies who have permission for information from the PNC, are aware of their responsibilities when requesting the information. This approach ensures that security of the information is protected with only a limited number of personnel from external agencies having the ability to submit requests to the force. The force has also developed a new electronic form for use by NPPAs for the notification of information for update to PNC. The development has included consultation with external agencies and the form has been agreed for use in the future.

2.4.4 Furthermore, the force has also developed good working relationships with other police forces to overcome local difficulties or restrictions of service. At a time when training demand was high but there was limited availability of the training, the force formed an agreement with Surrey police to utilise its training resources. Whilst there was a cost to the force, the savings in time and efficiency by having staff suitably skilled as soon as possible after being recruited compensated for the cost. Without this partnership approach, the force would have risked having people employed in posts in which they could not carry out their role effectively. Despite there currently being no requirement to use the resources of Surrey police, the agreement remains in place to ensure that Hampshire retain a number of options should the need arise.

2.5 Processes

2.5.1 In terms of processes, HMIC PNC Compliance Auditors found a number of issues within Hampshire Police that are worthy of note in this report. These relate to the creation of Arrest/Summons reports, Court Results & Bail Conditions, Data Quality, Warning Signals, Ad-Hoc Intelligence updates, Warrants and the ViSOR³.

2.5.2 Creation of Arrest/Summons Reports

2.5.2.1 Within Hampshire Police, arrest/summons (A/S) reports are created following electronic transfer of the information from the force's own Prisoner Management System (PMS). The PMS can send up to 57 fields across the interface to create the A/S record. Subsequent completion of the record is carried out by Criminal Justice Unit (CJU) staff upon receipt of a hard copy form known as the PNC2a, which is completed by the officer in the case.

2.5.2.2 The electronic process that exists for the creation of the records is also supported by a further process to ensure that any rejections that may occur on the interface are dealt with as soon as possible in order to minimise impact upon overall performance. The PNCB, which provides 24 hour/7 day cover is responsible for checking any rejections that may occur. Every two hours, the PNCB are notified electronically of any rejections that have occurred, enabling any problems to be rectified and submitted again to PNC.

2.5.2.3 The combination of the interface and supporting process in the PNCB has ensured that the force has been able to sustain good performance against the targets on a consistent basis. This is on top of the introduction of the Criminal Justice Act which the force has embraced and the force's decision to input Penalty Notices of Disorder. However, there are some issues that the force should seek to address to improve the level of resilience it has when trying to meet the targets and also to improve the quality and quantity of information being updated on the system.

³ Violent and Sex Offenders Register

- 2.5.2.4 One issue is that of quality of the information being submitted for update to PNC. After the initial registration to PNC, further information should be supplied by officers on the PNC2a form. During the inspection, HMIC auditors reviewed a number of these forms that had been submitted and almost 50% of those that had been submitted were blank. Whilst the information requested on the form is not critical to the arrest information, the force is losing intelligence information that could be recorded and used by other forces across the country should the offender be arrested in another force area.
- 2.5.2.5 The submission of blank forms also has a cost implication for the force. The costs of the production of forms, simply to be signed by officers is a waste of resources, as is the administrative time spent by BCU staff sending the forms and CJU processing the forms when they are received. Furthermore, during interviews and focus groups, it was stated that the data items on the form are available from other systems within Hampshire Police. HMIC auditors were unable to confirm this anecdotal evidence, however, the force should be aware of the comments that have been made and consider a review of the use of the PNC2a. If data is already being recorded, using another method to get this information to the CJU staff will improve quality and also reduce a number of inefficient processes.

Recommendation 8

Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary recommends that the force review the current process for the use of the PNC2a. Consideration should be given to removing the form as data is available via other sources, or implement more stringent levels of accountability upon officers responsible for submitting the forms. (see recommendation 1)

- 2.5.2.6 Another area that HMIC auditors identified as an area for improvement relates to the submission of documentation arising from the issuing of Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs). If an offender is issued with an FPN, a copy of the document should be sent to the relevant CJU. During interviews and focus groups, it was clear that there is confusion amongst operational staff regarding the correct route that documents should take in order for PNC to be updated. In some cases, officers reported that the documents should be sent to the Central Ticket Office (CTO) which is responsible for processing FPNs for road traffic offences.
- 2.5.2.7 A failure to submit the documentation to the appropriate CJU could have an impact on the performance of the force in relation to the creation of A/S records. HMIC acknowledge that the impact would be minimal, however, any improvement in processes will ensure that the force is more resilient if failures occur elsewhere. The force is currently re-structuring the CJU environment to reduce the number of units, therefore, the force has an ideal opportunity to reinforce the correct process and reduce the risk of continued confusion amongst staff.

Recommendation 9

Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary recommends that the policy for submitting Fixed Penalty Notices for update to PNC be reinforced on a forcewide basis to provide clarity to officers on the correct route for the documentation.

2.5.3 Court Results and Bail Conditions

- 2.5.3.1 The responsibility for updating court results on the PNC rests with each of the CJUs. Information in the form of court registers is printed off automatically in each CJU when the courts have validated the information. Using this process of automatic notification should enable the force to achieve the target set within the code of practice on a consistent basis, however, it is failing to do so. HMIC auditors found areas which could contribute to an improvement in performance but they were unable to determine what factor the timeliness of the court results was playing in the overall performance.
- 2.5.3.2 The force does not routinely record the dates that court registers are received from the courts, nor do they record the date that the information is entered onto PNC once the data is in their possession. This has resulted in a lack of management information available to the force and CJU management staff. HMIC auditors are of the opinion that if management information was produced and it highlighted deficiencies in the delivery of the court registers, the force would be in a better position to work with the courts in order to develop a process that delivers the information in a timely manner. In addition, management information would also serve as evidence to HMIC auditors that the force is meeting its obligation to update the information within 7 days of receipt.

Recommendation 10

Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary recommends that in order to provide evidence of performance for court resulting to comply with the code of practice for PNC, the should commence recording information regarding the date of receipt of court information and the date that information is entered onto PNC.

- 2.5.3.3 HMIC auditors also found what they consider to be basic weaknesses in the business processes for managing the updates of court results, which could also be impacting on the overall performance of the force. Improvements of these weaknesses would not require significant change to the force and they can be achieved with slight amendments to local procedures.
- 2.5.3.4 HMIC auditors learned that each CJU is responsible for the court information in their own area. This is a logical approach to adopt, however, when a case appears at a court in one area but it originated in another, the CJU in receipt of the court result do not update the result. The responsibility is left to the CJU where the case originated. This approach results in a delay in some cases being updated on PNC.

- 2.5.3.5 A similar approach is also taken with regards to cases originating from Non-Police Prosecuting Agencies (NPPAs). Historically, the creation of the arrest/summon report and the update of the result have been the responsibility of the PNC Bureau (PNCB), therefore, when a case appears on the register that originates from an NPPA the information is sent to PNCB to do the update. One reason that the cases are sent to the PNCB is that the impending prosecution is often missing from the PNC, therefore, the case needs to be created before it can be resulted. HMIC auditors acknowledge that in these cases, the PNCB should retain responsibility for carrying out the relevant update, however, if the impending prosecution does exist from an NPPA, the result should be updated as any normal court result.
- 2.5.3.6 With all disposals from the courts affecting the performance of the force, it is vital that all results are updated at the earliest opportunity. It is the view of HMIC auditors that the force should change the area of responsibility for the CJUs to include all disposals that appear on the court registers they receive, not just the cases that originate from their own area.
- 2.5.3.7 At the time of the inspection, the force was in the midst of restructuring the CJU environment from BCU orientated to a regionalised structure. The new structure will provide resilience for the force in the areas which currently have limited staff carrying out the CJU functions. The re-structure is therefore also an ideal opportunity to implement change and embed any new business processes.

Recommendation 11

Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary recommends that as part of the restructure of the CJUs, the areas of responsibility should be changed to ensure that all results, regardless of their origin, are input by the CJU which is in receipt of the information from the court. Only in cases where the information is missing from the PNC should the CJU transfer the responsibility.

- 2.5.3.8 In addition, the update of FPNs (see paragraph 2.5.2.6) can also have an impact on the performance of the force because these disposals are included in the statistics produced on a monthly basis. When an A/S report for a case where a FPN has been issued is updated on PNC, statistically, it is recorded on both the A/S performance and the court results performance. Therefore, if the correct procedure is reinforced for the submission of the documentation, there is another opportunity for the force to improve its overall performance.
- 2.5.3.9 With regards to bail conditions, the facility exists on PNC to record them in order to alert other forces that conditions may have been imposed elsewhere in the country. Currently, Hampshire Police do not update the PNC with any bail conditions, therefore, other forces will not be alerted to the fact that conditions exist if they have originated in the Hampshire area.

- 2.5.3.10 During interviews and focus groups, reasons for failing to record the conditions were given as a lack of confidence in the courts to provide timely updates, for example, if conditions were varied at the court and also because the conditions are currently recorded on RMS.
- 2.5.3.11 HMIC auditors are of the opinion that using existing relationships with the courts, for example, the meetings between the CJU managers and court managers, the force should develop a protocol for the transfer of bail information between the courts and the police. The protocol should improve confidence in the information being provided and enable the force to divert the resources from updating a local system and to update the PNC to allow all forces to be made aware of the existence of bail conditions if an offender is brought to justice in the future.

Recommendation 12

Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary recommends that the force review the current process for recording bail conditions to place PNC as the primary system for conditions to be recorded.

2.5.4 Data Quality

- 2.5.4.1 Under this heading, HMIC Auditors considered the process for the quality assurance of updates made to the PNC. Quality assurance is carried out in both the PNCB and the CJU covering their individual areas of responsibility.
- 2.5.4.2 Within the PNCB, HMIC auditors were pleased with the level of quality assurance being conducted. Each member of staff has a proportion of their work checked on a regular basis with the results being recorded on a detailed spreadsheet that is used by the PNCB manager. The information recorded about staff in the PNCB is then used, if necessary, as performance objectives in staff Personal Development Reviews (PDRs). HMIC Auditors consider this to be good practice.
- 2.5.4.3 In the CJUs, a similar format has been adopted whereby a proportion of the work is checked by a supervisor, however, the results of the quality assurance is not recorded for future reference. In order to use the results of quality assurance to improve staff performance and utilise the PDR process more effectively, the CJUs should consider recording the information as supporting evidence when producing objectives for their staff. As with the changes in court resulting recommended above, the re-structure should provide an ideal opportunity to examine the current process and make changes where relevant.
- 2.5.4.4 The existence of quality assurance work was evident during reality checks carried out by HMIC Auditors. Checks were made on the PNC against source documentation pertaining to A/S reports and court results. There were no significant errors found. A number of minor errors were detected, however, the scale of the errors would not have had any impact on the use of the information as they were classed as typographical errors.

Recommendation 13

Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary recommends that the force should draw on the good practice within the PNCB and develop a formal process of quality assurance, including the recording of performance for use in Personal Development Reviews, within the CJU function.

2.5.5 Warning Signals

2.5.5.1 Warning Signals exist on PNC to enable officers to be made aware that an offender or person stopped in the street has the potential to react in a particular way or that they may be concealing something on their person, for example, a person has been known to be violent or in possession of offensive weapons. Warning Signals can also be used to protect the welfare of prisoners when they are brought into custody. The signals are used in the risk assessment by the custody staff who may be alerted if a prisoner has been known to 'Self Harm' or if they have had, or do have suicidal tendencies.

2.5.5.2 Within Hampshire Police, the process for updating a warning signal is either by a custody officer updating the custody with a marker in order that the information is sent over the interface, or by an officer using the form PNC2a and submitting the request to the CJU. During reality checks carried out by HMIC auditors, a number of offences that warranted a warning signal did not have a supporting request on the PNC2a form, nor had the marker been sent over the interface. In addition, auditors also learned that staff making the updates in CJU are not empowered to make a decision themselves on whether an offence supports the creation of a warning signal. For example, if an offender is arrested and charge for Grievous Bodily Harm, the offence justifies the creation of a 'Violent' warning signal. If the warning signal has not been created by the interface or a request for the warning signal is not on the PNC2a, the warning signal will not be created.

2.5.5.3 The result of this is that a number of warning signal are not being created despite the evidence being available to support them. The force is missing opportunities to record the information and placing officers and prisoners at risk because full assessments can not be made when a PNC record is being checked.

Recommendation 14

Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary recommends that the force review the current process for updating warning signal on the PNC to ensure that all relevant warnings are being updated. The review should give consideration to empowering PNC operators within the CJU to update the PNC based upon the source document if an offence is justification for a warning in its own right.

2.5.6 Ad-Hoc Intelligence Updates

- 2.5.6.1 Ad-hoc intelligence updates are updates that are made to the PNC where the source of the information is other than an arrest or summons where a source document would be used.
- 2.5.6.2 In Hampshire, a form known as a PNC5 is available to request ad-hoc updates to the PNC. Ad-hoc updates could be a new address or a change in description and if an officer becomes aware of the new information, the PNC5 should be completed and submitted to the PNCB to make the appropriate update.
- 2.5.6.3 During interviews and focus groups, HMIC auditors learned that the submission of the PNC5 is not taking place in most BCUs. During focus groups, operational staff commented that the PNC5 is not routinely submitted because the information will be updated on the recently introduced Records Management System (RMS). Updates to RMS will provide local intelligence with suitable information but in the case of criminals who may be active in other force areas, other forces are being deprived of the new information. HMIC auditors are of the opinion that the force should reinforce the policy for submitting the PNC5 forms, ensuring that all officers, including intelligence staff on BCUs are aware of the type of information that can be updated on the PNC.

Recommendation 15

Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary recommends that the Force reinforce the policy for submitting the PNC5 to ensure that updates to RMS are subsequently updated on PNC when the information is relevant. Reinforcement of the policy should also include a programme to raise awareness of the requirement amongst intelligence analysts.

2.5.7 Warrants

- 2.5.7.1 The management of warrants is considered to be an area of strength by HMIC auditors. The force has a Warrants Management System (WMS) that records all circulations and cancellations when warrants are issued, executed or withdrawn.
- 2.5.7.2 Each BCU is responsible for managing their own warrants but when WMS is updated, the system automatically generates a notification in the form an e-mail to a generic mail box in the PNCB to enable the relevant updates to be made. The central control of the updates and automatic notifications means that there is limited responsibility for staff on the BCUs to ensure PNC is accurate and up to date.

- 2.5.7.3 However, in order to ensure that records are accurately maintained, the WMS produces a list every 90 days for all warrants held by each BCU. When the list is produced, BCU staff have the responsibility to check that the information is still relevant and notify PNCB of any necessary changes. HMIC auditors consider this regular review as good practice to minimise the risk of incorrect information being held on the PNC.
- 2.5.7.4 As previously mentioned in paragraph 2.3.1.3, there is a good awareness throughout the force of the investigative capabilities of the PNC. However, a number of officers informed HMIC Auditors that they are reluctant to make use of the facilities because the process is bureaucratic and does not allow provision for real time searches of the system when an urgent response is required.
- 2.5.8 ViSOR
- 2.5.8.1 ViSOR has recently been introduced to the force following national roll out of the system by PITO. One of the procedures that forces must adopt is to ensure that records on PNC and corresponding ones on ViSOR are synchronised so they are holding the duplicate data.
- 2.5.8.2 Hampshire Police have carried out a data cleansing exercise on the system to ensure that records on both systems are accurate and up to date and HMIC auditors are encouraged by this proactive approach to the management of the data. However, the force should also ensure that once the data is cleansed and ready for use on both systems, a robust process is developed to ensure that records are updated in a timely and accurate manner. In doing this, the force should also take account of the impact that all PNC operators have on the use of ViSOR if a PNC record is checked and ViSOR marker exists, therefore, a programme of awareness should also be considered.

Recommendation 16

Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary recommends that the force raise the awareness of the ViSOR system amongst operational PNC staff to ensure that lines of responsibility are clear when records are checked. The force must also develop a robust process for the manual exchange of data between the two systems.

2.6 Results

- 2.6.2 In the 12 months to September 2005, Hampshire Police have consistently achieved the target for the creation of A/S reports. The force fell slightly below the target in October and November 2004 recording performance of 87.1% and 87.6% respectively. However, since then the force has achieved the target in every month reaching a high of 95.6% in May, July and September 2005. With regards to the number of days taken to enter the quickest 90% of records, a similar trend as occurred with performance showing 7 days in October 2004 improving to 1 day in December 2004 and remaining as 1 day for every subsequent month. Against both indicators, the force is performing better than the England & Wales averages of 80.8% and 13 days respectively.
- 2.6.3 Performance with regard to the input of court results has been less consistent. When the Code of Practice for PNC was introduced in January 2005, the force met the target of 50% in each month up to the end of June 2005. However, since the target was revised to 75% at the beginning of July, the force has failed to meet the target, achieving a high of 67.3% in July 2005. The current performance is below the national average for England and Wales of 64.6%. Whilst this remains outside of the revised target of 75%, the force has identified potential areas for improvement and is already taking remedial action that will contribute to an overall improvement in performance. With regard to the number of days taken to meet the respective targets within the Code of Practice, 50% between January and June and 75% from July 1st, the Force has shown a decline in performance with the number of days taken to enter 75% rising from 12 days in July 2005 to 19 days in September 2005.
- 2.6.4 In terms of Impending Prosecutions (IPs), the overall number of outstanding IPs has increased from 6,956 to 11,861 between October 2004 and September 2005, an increase of approximately 70.5%. However, there is a direct correlation between the increase in the number of IPs and the implementation of the 2003 Criminal Justice Act which has resulted in the number of cases being added to the PNC increase from an average of approximately 3000 per month in September 2004 to 4,300 in September 2005. However, despite the large increase, the force has continued to ensure that the number of old Impending Cases is kept to a minimum. At the end of September 2005, the number of cases over 12 months old was only 12.9% of the total number.

Appendix A

A Summary of Good Practice within Hampshire Police

- The PNC Steering Group manages the force action plan and takes ownership of all recommendations, from internal or external inspection, relating to the PNC.
- The PNC Bureau is included in a circulation list from Human Resources that details all leavers and movers in the force to enable them to manage User IDs more effectively.
- Staff are mandated to complete an online training package on Information Protection.
- The data protection function is independent of any operational function and audits are processed based.
- Specialist knowledge in the form an analyst is used on major crime enquiries, ensuring that best use is made of the PNC.
- Results of quality assurance within the PNC Bureau are recorded and used within the Personal Development Review process.

Summary of Recommendations for Hampshire Police

Recommendation 1

Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary recommends that the force urgently considers the introduction of a performance culture surrounding the submission of source input documents for update to PNC. The performance should measure the timeliness and quality of submission and result in management information being produced for BCU Commanders in order that officers are held accountable.

(Paragraph 2.1.8)

Recommendation 2

Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary recommends that the force should consider analysing the reasons why some staff do not use the system once they have been trained. The results of the analysis could provide efficiency savings for the force in terms of the selection of staff who are receiving training.

(Paragraph 2.2.3.5)

Recommendation 3

Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary recommends that the force should;

- consider the use of training days to deliver 'PNC Awareness' campaigns to operational staff to raise awareness of the functionality of PNC;
- review the current content and method of delivery for providing student constables with information about the functionality of the PNC. Any information should ensure that officers learn more than the basic elements of PNC and should be equipped with knowledge of the investigative capabilities of the system;
- Consider the role of crime supervisors as an opportunity to promote the effective use of the PNC by equipping them with sufficient knowledge to advise or prompt officers who are conducting crime enquiries.

(Paragraph 2.3.1.6)

Recommendation 4

Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary recommends that the force ensures that all PNC Training courses are complying with National Standards by seeking approval from Centrex.

(Paragraph 2.3.2.3)

Recommendation 5

Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary recommends that the force reviews the current process for requesting PNC training courses. The process should include sufficient supervision of requests before ITTU receive them and also include sufficient controls to avoid unnecessary applications.

(Paragraph 2.3.2.5)

Recommendation 6

Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary recommends that in order to ensure that training are meeting their objectives and the expectations of students, the force should consider the introduction of formal evaluation of training courses, including post-training once a student has returned to the workplace.

(Paragraph 2.3.2.6)

Recommendation 7

Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary recommends that in order to improve the effectiveness of the CJU Managers Meetings with the Court Managers, the force in conjunction with the courts, should develop a formal line of communication between the meeting and the Local Criminal Justice Board. A formal line of communication will enable the escalation of issues that cannot be resolved at the manager's meeting.

(Paragraph 2.4.2)

Recommendation 8

Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary recommends that the force review the current process for the use of the PNC2a. Consideration should be given to removing the form as data is available via other sources, or implement more stringent levels of accountability upon officers responsible for submitting the forms. (see recommendation 1)

(Paragraph 2.5.2.5)

Recommendation 9

Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary recommends that the policy for submitting Fixed Penalty Notices for update to PNC be reinforced on a forcewide basis to provide clarity to officers on the correct route for the documentation.

(Paragraph 2.5.2.7)

Recommendation 10

Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary recommends that in order to provide evidence of performance for court resulting to comply with the code of practice for PNC, the should commence recording information regarding the date of receipt of court information and the date that information is entered onto PNC.

(Paragraph 2.5.3.2)

Recommendation 11

Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary recommends that as part of the restructure of the CJUs, the areas of responsibility should be changed to ensure that all results, regardless of their origin, are input by the CJU which is in receipt of the information from the court. Only in cases where the information is missing from the PNC should the CJU transfer the responsibility.

(Paragraph 2.5.3.7)

Recommendation 12

Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary recommends that the force review the current process for recording bail conditions to place PNC as the primary system for conditions to be recorded.
(Paragraph 2.5.3.11)

Recommendation 13

Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary recommends that the force should draw on the good practice within the PNCB and develop a formal process of quality assurance, including the recording of performance for use in Personal Development Reviews, within the CJU function.
(Paragraph 2.5.4.4)

Recommendation 14

Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary recommends that the force review the current process for updating warning signal on the PNC to ensure that all relevant warnings are being updated. The review should give consideration to empowering PNC operators within the CJU to update the PNC based upon the source document if an offence is justification for a warning in its own right.
(Paragraph 2.5.5.3)

Recommendation 15

Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary recommends that the Force reinforce the policy for submitting the PNC5 to ensure that updates to RMS are subsequently updated on PNC when the information is relevant. Reinforcement of the policy should also include a programme to raise awareness of the requirement amongst intelligence analysts.
(Paragraph 2.5.6.3)

Recommendation 16

Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary recommends that the force raise the awareness of the ViSOR system amongst operational PNC staff to ensure that lines of responsibility are clear when records are checked. The force must also develop a robust process for the manual exchange of data between the two systems.
(Paragraph 2.5.8.2)

Appendix B

Thematic Inspection Report on Police Crime Recording, the Police National Computer and Phoenix Intelligence System Data Quality - 'On The Record'

Recommendation 9 (Chapter 5 page 86)

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that all Forces produce position statements in relation to the 1998 PRG report recommendations on Phoenix Data Quality and the ACPO Compliance Strategy for the Police National Computer. He further recommends that Forces produce a detailed action plan, with timescales, to implement their recommendations. The position statements and action plans together with progress updates should be available for audit and inspection during future HMIC PNC Compliance Audits and inspection of Forces. Forces should send copies of action plans to HMIC's PNC Compliance Audit Section by 1 February 2001.

Recommendation 10 (Chapter 6 page 104)

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that Forces urgently review their existing SCAS referral mechanisms in the light of the above findings. These reviews should include verification with SCAS that all Force offences fitting the SCAS criteria have been fully notified to them, and updated. This process should be managed by Forces through their in-Force SCAS Liaison Officers.

Recommendation 11 (Chapter 7 page 111)

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that the marketing, use and development of national police information systems is integrated into appropriate Force, local and departmental, strategic planning documents.

Recommendation 12 (Chapter 7 page 112)

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that where not already in place, Forces should establish a strategic PNC Steering Group. This group should develop and be responsible for a strategic plan covering the development, use and marketing of PNC and Phoenix.

Recommendation 13 (Chapter 7 page 118)

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that all Forces conduct an audit of their present in-Force PNC trainers to ensure they have received nationally accredited training. Any individuals who have not been accredited as PNC trainers by National Police Training should not conduct in-Force PNC training.

Recommendation 14 (Chapter 8 page 145)

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that Forces ensure that each Phoenix inputting department develops an audit trail to register the return of substandard PSDs, via line supervisors, to originating officers. The system developed should include a mechanism to

ensure the prompt return of PSDs. Forces should also incorporate locally based audit trails, monitoring the passage of returned PSDs between line supervisors and originating officers.

Recommendation 15 (Chapter 8 page 146)

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that Forces develop clear guidelines to cover their expectations of officers on the return of incomplete or substandard PSDs. This guidance should be communicated to all staff and regular checks conducted to ensure compliance.

Recommendation 16 (Chapter 8 page 148)

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that Forces should develop a system to ensure that all ad-hoc descriptive and intelligence updates registered on local Force systems are automatically entered onto the Phoenix system. The policy should clearly outline whose responsibility it is to notify Phoenix inputters of any descriptive changes. Forces should also ensure that the policy is marketed to staff and that regular checks are conducted to ensure compliance.

Recommendation 17 (Chapter 8 page 150)

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that Forces develop a formal system to ensure that a proportion of each member of Phoenix inputting staff's work is regularly checked for accuracy. Forces should also consider the benefits of measuring other aspects of their work including speed of entry and compliance with policies. Performance outcomes should be evidenced in staff PDRs.

Recommendation 18 (Chapter 9 page 164)

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends, where not already present, that Forces develop risk assessed Force Data Protection Officer audit programmes.

Recommendation 19 (Chapter 9 page 164)

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that Forces integrate PNC and Phoenix data quality compliance into their performance review and inspectorate programmes for BCUs and specialist departments.

Recommendation 20 (Chapter 9 page 165)

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that PSD performance statistics should be incorporated in routine Force performance information. The statistics should identify omissions and errors in individual fields, in particular, descriptive information. Appropriate accountability measures should be established to ensure that any performance shortfalls identified are addressed.

Appendix C

PRG Report “Phoenix Data Quality” Recommendations

- National performance indicators and standards for timeliness of input, data fields to be completed, quality assurance requirements and the provision of training should be agreed by ACPO and promulgated to all Forces.
- Achievement against and compliance with these indicators should be audited after a period of 12 months, perhaps through the inclusion in the scope of HMIC audits.
- Senior officers take an active and visible role in policing compliance with agreed standards within their own Force.
 - ACPO performance indicators should be reflected in Force policy or standing orders (or the Force equivalent). Guidance should include the responsibilities of officers at each stage of the process e.g. for the provision of source documentation, for approval, time taken to pass to input bureaux, and the bureaux' responsibilities for data entry and quality control.
 - Line and divisional managers, as well as chief officers, should be held accountable for compliance with these standards. This could be achieved through inclusion in divisional efficiency assessments, and through the publication and dissemination of performance statistics throughout individual Forces and nationally.
- Source documentation should be common across all Forces, if not in design, in the information requested. A national format, stipulating a hierarchy of fields to be populated, should be developed.
- Programme(s) geared to raising awareness amongst operational officers and line managers of the potential benefits of Phoenix in a practical sense and their responsibilities of the provision of data should be developed. To ensure all officers have an opportunity to benefit from these programmes, consideration should be given to inclusion of a 'Phoenix awareness' module in student constable training, promotion courses and divisional training days.
- Best practice in administrative arrangements and organisational structures should be widely distributed. Internal working practices and organisational structures should be streamlined to remove any redundancies.

- Greater computerisation of the transfer of results from courts direct to Phoenix should continue to be developed. In the shorter term, the Police Service is likely to retain responsibility of the input of court information. To minimise the resource burden on the Police Service in this interim period, the police and courts should work to ensure recognition of each other's requirements and to minimise any inconsistencies in their respective working practices.
 - In the first instance, this might be achieved by ACPO highlighting to Magistrates' Courts and to the Crown Court, perhaps through the Trials Issue Group, the importance of Phoenix records to the integrity of the criminal justice system as a whole. Liaison meetings could usefully be established to introduce greater consistency in working and recording practices between the courts and police Forces e.g. for recording data. In the first instance, this could be pursued locally, perhaps through the court user group. Issues considered by such meetings might include supplying additional information (such as Arrest / Summons numbers) to the Magistrates' Court system and to automated transfer of court registers.
 - Consistent practice and performance is also required from the courts. Recommendations referring to performance indicators and standards, audits and monitoring, senior level commitment, common recording practices, awareness of system customers and administrative 'best practice' could equally apply to the courts. Mirroring the responsibilities of Chief Constables for their Force, the Court Service and the Magistrates' Court Committee should be accountable for the performance of courts.
 - Consistent practice in advising custody details, including transfers and releases, is required. This includes consistency in advising CRO numbers to maximise the number of complete records. The police and prison services should liaise to encourage greater understanding and acknowledgement of each other's requirements.

Appendix D

Police National Computer Data Quality and Timeliness – 1st Report

Recommendation One (Paragraph 5.2)

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector recommends that ACPO nationally review the position and priority of PNC within the structure of portfolio holders to reflect both the technical and operational importance of PNC.

Recommendation Two (Paragraph 5.11)

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector draws renewed attention to Recommendations 11 to 20 of *'On the Record'* (2000), and recommends that all forces develop appropriate systems, overseen at a senior level, to ensure that they are implemented.

Recommendation Three (Paragraph 5.19)

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector recommends that PITO review, as a matter of urgency, the supplier/customer relationship between PNC and forces, particularly in relation to the marketing of PNC functionality, and the type, frequency and validity of management information reports produced.

Recommendation Four (Paragraph 5.29)

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector recommends that Her Majesty's Inspector (Training), in consultation with PITO and National Police Training, conducts a review of the quality and availability of accreditation training for PNC trainers and the extent to which they are subsequently employed in forces.

Recommendation Five (Paragraph 5.31)

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector recommends that discussions take place between ACPO, PITO and other relevant stakeholders to examine what opportunities exist for a short term 'technology solution' for the inputting of Court Results, either involving NSPIS applications currently in development, or an interim solution.

Recommendation Six (Paragraph 5.34)

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector recommends that renewed and re-invigorated discussions should take place between relevant stakeholders to, (a) Ensure that local systems are in place to maximise co-operation with the courts to achieve their respective 72 hours targets and, (b) Work towards Magistrates' Courts and Crown Courts assuming full responsibility for inputting all case results directly onto PNC.

Recommendation Seven (Paragraph 6.10)

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector recommends that following appropriate consultation with relevant stakeholders, a national inspection protocol for PNC data quality and timeliness be introduced.

Recommendation Eight (Paragraph 6.12)

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector recommends, that following appropriate consultation with relevant stakeholders, the Secretary of State should consider using his powers under Section 5 of the Local Government Act 1999, to require all police authorities to institute a Best Value Review of processes to ensure PNC data quality and timeliness. Such review should be conducted against a common template and terms of reference.

Recommendation Nine (Paragraph 6.14)

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector recommends, that in consultation with the Standards Unit and other stakeholders, HM Inspectorate should urgently review their current PNC audit responsibilities in the light of the findings of this report, with a view to adopting a more proactive stance in relation to force performance, data quality and timeliness.

Recommendation Ten (Paragraph 6.16)

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector recommends, that in consultation with other stakeholders, ACPO IM Committee initiate research with a view to encouraging mutual support between forces for out of hours PNC data entry purposes.

Appendix E

Police National Computer Data Quality and Timeliness – 2nd Report

Recommendation 1

The Home Office should lead and co-ordinate an urgent re-examination of the current PNC strategy and standards with a view to producing national binding performance and compliance criteria to which all relevant stakeholders and partners are agreed and committed.

Recommendation 2

ACPO nationally and Chief Constables locally must ensure that the national standards for PNC operation, resourcing and training are fully integrated into local Information Management Strategies and recognised as an important part of operational service delivery. This area must receive sustained high-level support through a 'champion' at chief officer level.

Recommendation 3

PITO should be tasked to consolidate the force 'profiling' approach as used in the inspection into the routine statistical returns provided to forces. PNC statistics should then be integrated into the mainstream suite of management information/indicators that inform decisions at force and BCU levels.

Recommendation 4

HMIC should be tasked to establish a risk-assessed programme of monitoring and inspection that is able to respond quickly and effectively to deviations from accepted standards. This programme should include;

- remote monitoring of performance (PITO profile statistics)
- regular collaboration and contact with force PNC Managers
- proportionate programme of visits and inspections
- targeted interventions to respond to identified problems

Recommendation 5

The Home Office should establish a structured process for addressing and remedying any significant and persisting deviation from the agreed national standards (see Recommendation 1). This process should identify the respective roles of HMIC, Police Standards Unit and police authorities. It should set out the escalation of responses, which might include an agreed action plan, re-inspection, Intervention, and ultimately withdrawal of facility.