

Best Value Review of Police Training

Force: Hertfordshire

Date of Inspection: 5–6 January 2005



A Report by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary

ISBN 1-84473-523-0
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Published 2005

Context and Force performance

Context

Population served by the Force	1m	
Number of police officers	2215	
Number of police staff	1554	
Number of special constables	223	
Number of PCSOs	92	
Budget for training for the financial year:	Financial Value	Percentage of Overall Force budget
2003/04	Not asked	1.57%
2004/05	£2,671,000	1.75%

Performance

A baseline assessment of the Force was undertaken between March and October 2004. The findings of HMIC relating specifically to the HR area can be found at: www.homeoffice.gov.uk/hmic

Further details of the Force performance can be found at: www.herts.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 pleased to find there is a training strategy in place that conforms to HOC 53/03 that it is fully aligned to organisational objectives.</p>
QUALITY OF COSTED TRAINING PLAN	<p>HM Inspector was concerned to find that the Force does not currently have a detailed costed plan for the training function. The 2004/05 plan is incomplete as it only captures centrally delivered courses. All specialist training has yet to be costed.</p> <p>Historically the Force has not applied the resources to producing a costed training plan, but has focused on developing the wider Activity Based Costing (ABC). HM Inspector acknowledges that there is now a joint approach by training and finance managers to produce next year's plan. The draft 2005/06 plan has captured all training in the Force and there are arrangements to apply the full NCM methodology once budgetary decisions have been made. Despite these costing difficulties the Force has continued to invest in training year on year to reflect the growth in the Force.</p> <p>HM Inspector was pleased to find that there are sound plans to utilise the management information which is being produced from the draft NCM data.</p>
MONITORING COSTED TRAINING PLAN THROUGHOUT THE YEAR	<p>The training plan is routinely and regularly monitored at the monthly Force Management Board as part of the HR Business Report. Activity and budget spend against the plan are reported.</p>
TRAINING NOT INCLUDED IN THE COSTED TRAINING PLAN	<p>HM Inspector found that a significant amount of specialist training is excluded from the 2004/05 costed plan, as it falls outside the responsibility of the Head of Training. It is acknowledged that all training has been captured in next year's draft plan.</p>

Area Examined	Findings
<p>CLIENT/CONTRACTOR ARRANGEMENTS</p> <p>NOTEWORTHY PRACTICE</p>	<p>HM Inspector was pleased to see that the learning and development strategy clearly outlines how the Force Training Council (FTC) leads the client side to determine prioritisation and establish a monitoring regime for the training function. The chair of the FTC is a member of the Force Management Board, but is not an ACPO appointment. BCU commanders and departmental heads are represented on this council.</p> <p>Furthermore, it is noteworthy that there are lower level area and departmental training councils to oversee the implementation of FTC decisions. The Force is reviewing how the FTC can be more responsive to issues that arise outside of the formal meeting times.</p>
<p>MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS FOR TRAINING</p>	<p>Responsibility for the training and development function rests with the Head of HR (which is not an ACPO appointment) but who reports directly to the DCC. The Head of HR is line manager to the Head of Training.</p> <p>Although the Head of Training is a training professional she does not currently hold the ‘head of profession’ status for all training. Consequently, all specialist training staff [firearms, public order, roads policing, dogs, and HOLMES] operate outside the professional management of the Head of Training. Crime training and driver training are part of the central training department. It is acknowledged that the Head of Training has aspirations to move towards being responsible for all training.</p> <p>There are no formal local training arrangements and all Force trainers are located at the central or specialist training sites.</p> <p>There are formalised and documented meeting structures across the training function for training managers and trainers and the Head of Training is included in strategic meetings outside the Training Department.</p> <p>HM Inspector was encouraged to see there is clear and proactive PA involvement in the training process at all levels who also get involved in the development of key training programmes.</p>

Area Examined	Findings
<p>IMPLEMENTATION OF:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing Learning • Training Matters • Diversity Matters • Foundations for Change 	<p>HM Inspector was pleased to find <i>Managing Learning</i> is referred to in a number of plans since it remains crosscutting activity supporting the Learning and Development strategy.</p> <p>There are also sound action plans which support the <i>Diversity Matters</i> and <i>Training Matters</i> recommendations, together with effective PA monitoring.</p> <p>Progress against the FfC is monitored regionally where the chair holds a central database of activity. The 19 FfC have been prioritised by the Region and portfolio holders identified where appropriate. Progress against plan is monitored bi-monthly at the Strategic Meeting of Training Managers and fed back to Police Authority on a regular basis. The Force is leading on QA and performance indicators for the Region.</p>
<p>CURRENT IMPROVEMENT PLAN</p>	<p>The BVR IP 2003 is mostly complete with two outstanding recommendations. HM Inspector was pleased to find a revised improvement plan for the learning and development function that seeks to impact across the Force. At the time of the inspection the revised IP was not owned by ACPO but subject to routine monitoring by the Head of Training.</p>
<p>MONITORING THE IMPROVEMENT PLAN</p>	<p>The BVR IP has been regularly monitored at the PA Performance Scrutiny Committee but now goes to the HR working Group on a quarterly basis. The learning and development improvement plan is monitored at HR Departmental management meetings on a monthly basis.</p>
<p>QUALITY ASSURANCE PROCESSES</p>	<p>HM Inspector was concerned to find that there is no formal framework for developing a QA regime across the Force and in practice there is limited QA being applied within centrally provided training. There is no routine trainer assessment or validation of lesson plans, although HM Inspector acknowledges the Head of Training's proposed project plan to develop a generic assessment tool for learning materials.</p> <p>HM Inspector encourages the Force to develop an assessment culture on all training courses to ensure learners are engaged with the training.</p>

Area Examined	Findings
QUALITY ASSURANCE PROCESSES (cont.)	<p>The Force has recruited a QA manager but in the short/medium term their main focus will be to develop work based assessment. In the long term, this post will have the responsibility to develop QA for the wider training function, but this has not yet been planned.</p> <p>The Force has stated its intention in the HR business plan to pursue the IIP award in the medium term.</p>
EVALUATION OF TRAINING	<p>HM Inspector was pleased to find an independent evaluation function which sits in the Organisational Intelligence and Development Department, reporting to that unit's superintendent. The evaluation strategy/plan that exists needs to be updated to reflect recent Home Office guidance in this area.</p> <p>Tasking comes from a number of sources such as Head of Training, project boards and individual approaches by trainers and other sponsors. Completed evaluation reports are routed back to the Sponsor, the Head of Training and the Force Training Council. There is evidence that evaluation recommendations are implemented although there is no audit trail or longer term monitoring to demonstrate this routinely takes place.</p> <p>Just a small percentage of courses are evaluated to level one. Consequently, student feedback is not being routinely captured. The ALI was concerned that there is very little formal assessment of student knowledge taking place, although informally trainers do assess students in a number of ways in the majority of training courses.</p> <p>There are concerns that the depth of level 3 and 4 evaluations does not cover all components of the Kirkpatrick model as claimed. For example, the Institute of Leadership and Management evaluation methodology was limited to observation of the training and student reaction questionnaires.</p> <p>PDR has not yet been effectively linked to evaluation and there is a general absence of external indicators of the impact of the training on performance, return on investment or evidence of community involvement in evaluation activity.</p>

Area Examined	Findings
<p>COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN TRAINING</p>	<p>HM Inspector was pleased to find a developing programme of community involvement across training delivery. IAG members from the County Group are represented on project boards where there are learning and development implications, for example, the Street Intervention project. Members of the community representing victims are involved in the Level 2 sexual offences programme.</p> <p>Diversity Training – the initial performance gap analysis, design and post-training evaluation has been achieved partially through external consultation with members of the community.</p>
<p>COLLABORATION – EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS</p> <p>NOTEWORTHY PRACTICE</p>	<p>HM Inspector was pleased to see the future direction of collaboration activity is outlined in the Learning and Development strategy. There are good examples of collaborative effort within the diversity and leadership programme. In particular, the Force has worked with Wadenhoe Consultancy to develop bespoke management training that will be applied to all ranks and grades.</p> <p>HM Inspector acknowledges the new project underway to set up an exchange programme with partner organisations in order to facilitate collaborative working that involves Herts Partnership Trust, local councils, public health and representatives from Responsible Authority Groups.</p>
<p>COLLABORATION – OTHER POLICE ORGANISATIONS</p>	<p>There is good evidence of collaboration and shared training with other regional Forces and police organisations. These include the Eastern Region Crime Training Partnership – to purchase crime training collaboratively in order to obtain a better price and flexibility of delivery, and the Eastern Region Forces – for family liaison officers, inspector’s statutory responsibility and trainer training.</p>

Area Examined	Findings
ADOPTION OF NATIONAL GUIDANCE	<p>HM Inspector was encouraged to find the ethos within the <i>Models for Learning and Development</i> is being integrated into the development of new training programmes and for all stages of the training process across the Force. In addition this development activity is reflected in the improvement plan.</p> <p>HM Inspector encourages the Force to produce a QA policy that will illustrate how these standards for training will be applied and rolled out across the Force.</p>
MAIN AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE FORCE	<p>To more effectively manage service provision and monitor performance against plan;</p> <p>To develop the assessor infrastructure;</p> <p>To be more responsive to new/changing business needs;</p> <p>To improve delivery and support for training at a local level;</p> <p>To take full advantage of alternative methods of learning;</p> <p>To ensure all training comes within the remit of the Head of Training to produce a consistent approach; and</p> <p>To develop the skills and experience base within the trainer teams.</p>
APPLICATION OF THE 4Cs SINCE THE REVIEW	<p>Strategically, the Best Value ethos remains in the Force and there is evidence that it is being applied to major training programmes. However, better use could be made of the NCM outputs to enable comparisons to be made routinely across the whole training function.</p>
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INTEGRATED COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK	<p>The Force has an ICF action plan to oversee its full introduction. There are role profiles for police officers and role profiles for police staff are near completion. All new lesson plans have been aligned to NOS but there are no plans to revisit existing training unless there is a requirement for revision. The evaluation strategy has not yet defined how the Force will explore the extent to which the National Occupational Standards have been achieved through training.</p>

Area Examined	Findings
<p>MONITORING PROCESS AND COMPLETION OF PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT REVIEWS FOR POLICE OFFICERS AND POLICE STAFF</p>	<p>PDRs are quality checked by first and second line managers and routinely monitored centrally. Force completion levels average 93 per cent for officers and staff. The new PDR system that takes effect from April 2005 will be IT based.</p>
<p>BUSINESS PLANNING FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF TRAINING</p>	<p>The training business planning cycle correlates to HOC 53/2003 and effectively assists the corporate planning process. There have been difficulties in producing full NCM costs but HM Inspector acknowledges that next year's plan is in the process of being fully costed.</p>
<p>PRIORITISATION MODEL FOR TRAINING</p>	<p>HM Inspector was encouraged to find that prioritisation is largely driven by ACPO who identify key priorities at the start of the process. The Training Department then promulgates these priorities across the Force using the training council structure.</p> <p>Bids for growth are submitted to the Force Management Board in November prior to negotiation with the PA.</p>

Recommendations

Recommendation 1

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

Recommendation 2

HM Inspector recommends that the Force training plan is developed to ensure it captures all training in the Force irrespective of where or by whom it is provided

Recommendation 3

HM Inspector recommends that the Force develop 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 4

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 5

HM Inspector recommends that the Force develops a robust evaluation function for all training. This should include a clear mechanism for commissioning and actioning evaluation projects and their recommendations, together with a monitoring regime up to implementation

Judgements

Judgement 1:

The training function is fragmented across the Force and although there is a training professional overseeing the centrally delivered training, there is no 'head of profession' to manage the significant amount of specialist and other training that operates outside of the training department. There are elements of the training process that need further development, such as QA, evaluation and the costing of training courses. The Adult Learning Inspectorate found indications of a training culture that does not routinely monitor or assess learners or the training itself.

However, there is a commitment within the Force to drive performance through training and it is recognised that the Force has acknowledged the frailties that exist. ACPO, the Police Authority and the Head of Training are providing effective leadership and linking training to performance.

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

Judgement 2:

The Best Value improvement programme has been regularly monitored and the Force has produced a revised improvement plan for the training function, which is comprehensive and has the priorities for future improvement and resourcing clearly laid out. There is ownership at ACPO level and the Police Authority continues to be actively engaged in the process and is committed to close monitoring and scrutiny of the training function. The improvement plan is ensuring that training is being effectively linked to the key performance issues and there is confidence that it will be fully implemented.

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

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

Adult Learning Inspectorate

Summary of findings

The Adult Learning Inspectorate undertook an assessment of several training sessions alongside the HMIC (PandT) inspection. A summary of their findings is shown below:

Achievement and Standards

- Practical skills attainment is good. Learners achieve high levels of repeatable competence especially in activities such as firearms and driving. Attainment is satisfactory in theory sessions, learners effectively develop relevant skills and during observed sessions learners demonstrated competence and confidence in the assigned tasks.
- Insufficient time was available to analyse performance data, however retention rates are high, with very few learners leaving or being backclassified. Results of knowledge tests introduced in the newer modules of the COMPASS programme indicate high levels of achievement. However some programmes do not have any formal assessment of performance. Managers and tutors do not routinely measure performance of learners as a means of ensuring or improving the quality of the provision.

Quality of education and training

- None of the observed sessions was graded as unsatisfactory, the majority were satisfactory or good with only one session being graded as very good. Teaching styles are predominantly that of instruction and tutor led with the learners attentive but passive. There is an over reliance on powerpoint presentations and overly complex printed materials in the 'legacy' programmes.
- Learners are not encouraged to actively participate in the learning or take any responsibility for their own learning. Most learners only participate when tutors use directed questioning. Most classrooms have informal layouts which make it difficult for learners to take notes. Most learners attend sessions ill prepared and when tutors make key learning points they do not routinely encourage the learners to note the points. Rapport between learners and tutors is good, however questioning is insufficiently thorough to effectively gauge learner understanding or assess whether the learning objectives of the session have been adequately met.
- Sessions are planned to meet the needs of the group, there is little differentiation to meet the needs of individuals with few extension activities for those able to work at a faster pace or repeat activities for those that need time to consolidate their skills. [There is 1:1 work and tutorials for communications operators, although the ALI did not observe this during their visit].

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- There are sufficient numbers of well qualified trainers to deliver the programmes and most are either experienced police officers and/or trainers. Many have or are working towards teaching and/or assessor qualifications. They make good use of their experience in the training and are able to illustrate key teaching points with real life examples. Particularly effective use is made of guest speakers, who are usually serving officers. Learners highly value these inputs and consistently rate these as the best sessions within their training.
- Accommodation is generally satisfactory. Rooms however have informal layouts and little provision is made for learners to take notes.
- Facilities are satisfactory with machines and software replicating the real working environment and learners having access to live systems. Appropriate attention is placed on health and safety with wrist and foot rests available at all work stations. However there is insufficient space between workstations to allow learners to place their work or notes if they wished to.
- Assessment either formative or summative is not routinely used to monitor or assess individual learner progress. Recently introduced knowledge checks are being used to assess the effectiveness of the teaching sessions in some of the COMPASS modules. Tutors have little awareness of the needs of the learners before the courses start and sessions are not planned to incorporate differentiated activities. In the observed sessions there was a wide mix of prior learner experience which was not routinely used or allowed for in the lesson planning or delivery.
- Learners on the COMPASS programmes do have a more structured learning experience than those on the previous programme, but these programmes are still under development and it is too early to judge the impact of these changes. However early indications are that learners are performing as well or better than those on the legacy groups and supervisors in the attachments have a greater involvement in the training.
- The tutors provide satisfactory support in the taught sessions. They develop good relationships with the learners, make good use of humour and provide appropriate encouragement and motivation during focussed discussions and questions, particularly in practical sessions.



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