



Inspecting policing
in the public interest

**INSPECTION OF THE
ROYAL NAVY POLICE
SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS
BRANCH**

OCTOBER 2010

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ACPO	Association of Chief Police Officers
COT	Covert Operations Team
DBR	Director of Business Resilience
DCPG	Defence College of Policing and Guarding
DFAU	Defence Fraud Analysis Unit
DIRC	Defence Irregularity Reporting Cell
E&D	Equality and Diversity
FIB	Force Intelligence Bureau
HMIC	Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary
HOLMES	Home Office Large Major Enquiry System
HOPF	Home Office Police Force
HQ	Headquarters
HSE	Health and Safety Executive
HTCU	Hi Tech Crime Unit
JPA	Joint Personnel Administration
MDP	Ministry of Defence Police
MOC	Maritime Operations Centre
MOD	Ministry of Defence
NCO	ACPO National Co-ordinator's Office for Organised Crime
NIM	National Intelligence Model
NPIA	National Policing Improvement Agency
PM(A)	Office of the Provost Marshal (Army)
PM(N)	Office of the Provost Marshal (Navy)
PM(RAF)	Office of the Provost Marshal (Royal Air Force)
OIC	Officer in charge
RAFP	Royal Air Force Police
RMP	Royal Military Police
RN	Royal Navy
RNP	Royal Navy Police
RPO	Regulating Petty Officer
SIB	Special Investigations Branch
SOCA	Serious and Organised Crime Agency
SP	Service Police
SPA	Service Prosecuting Authority
SPCB	Service Police Crime Bureau
ViSOR	Violent and Sexual Offenders

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary's (HMIC) conducted an inspection of the Royal Military Police (RMP) Special Investigations Branch (SIB) in 2006, and of the Royal Air Force Police (RAFP) SIB in 2009. As part of a continuing inspection of Service Police (SP), the Ministry of Defence (MOD) Director of Business Resilience (DBR) commissioned HMIC to inspect the Royal Navy Police (RNP) SIB.

1.2 The commission was accepted with an undertaking from HMIC that the inspection would not review individual operations or cases, but would focus on an assessment of processes and procedures that support the investigation of major and serious crimes.

Terms of reference

1.3 HMIC agreed the Terms of Reference for inspection with the Office of the DBR and the Office of the Provost Marshal (Navy) (PM(N)):

- To inspect RNP SIB specialist policing functions in the investigation of major and serious crimes, including investigations conducted on operations overseas, and to identify any areas for improvement (in the context of current good practice by Service Police and Home Office Police Forces, where applicable).
- To identify transferable good practice emerging from the inspection.
- To alert the Service Provost Marshal to any issues that may impact upon the conduct of an ongoing investigation.
- To deliver a draft report to the PM(N) for consideration on behalf of the Minister for the Armed Forces and in parallel to DBR.
- To deliver a final report for the attention of the same.

Methodology

1.4 The inspection was conducted by HMIC in three distinct phases:

- analysis of written documents supplied;
- interviews with RN officers and personnel; and
- interviews with those who engage with, or impact upon, the RNP SIB in the course of investigations.

1.5 These phases were conducted by the HMIC inspection team¹, which included current practitioners who are experts in their relevant fields of work and have knowledge of latest best practice.

1.6 The RNP SIB provided HMIC with a selection of documents, prior to the inspection, that were supplemented by additional documents as the inspection progressed.

1.7 The interview stage was conducted during April and May 2010. HMIC recognises that inspections can be disruptive to “business as usual” and is grateful to all concerned for their enthusiasm, co-operation and flexibility.

Acknowledgements

1.8 HMIC would like to express its sincere appreciation for the assistance provided by the Office of the Provost Marshal (Navy) and Lt Commander Geoff Wilson, who provided ongoing liaison. HQ PM(N) and RNP SIB staff displayed a high appreciation of their public service role that is clearly conducted in a professional and highly trained manner. HMIC found everyone involved to be open and receptive to the full potential of the inspection process. This report, therefore, is intended to contribute to developments that will enable the RNP SIB to make an even greater contribution to the Royal Navy (RN) and the communities they protect.

CHAPTER 2: BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

2.1 The RNP SIB is the smallest of the three forces, with a total SIB strength of 24 permanent staff serving a force strength of 35,550 (as of July 2010) made up of RN personnel and Royal Marines².

2.2 This is not a full inspection of the RNP, but an inspection of the RNP SIB capability and capacity to investigate major and serious crime, and to gather intelligence to tackle it. It considers areas of business that are relevant to these functions.

2.3 The RNP SIB currently occupies premises at HMS Nelson in Portsmouth and HMS Drake in Plymouth. These sites also provide accommodation for crime scene examination, interviews, and exhibit and archive security.

2.4 RNP staff who work on board ships are required to conduct crew functions in addition to their primary policing role; often as flight deck officers and helmsmen etc. Only when an incident requires RNP SIB support would a team of investigators be deployed.

2.5 The inspection recognises that the RNP is not a Home Office Police Force (HOPF) and is not, by law, subject to inspection by HMIC. The criteria used to inspect HOPFs, in the areas of major and serious crime and intelligence, are not universally applicable to this inspection. Within the responsibilities of the wider RNP, the SIB carry out Level 3 and 4 investigations³; fatal accident investigation; and policing of the RN personnel in the UK and overseas, the RN estate and its personnel. In doing so, it faces both real threats against the physical security of sensitive and valuable assets, and criminality and/or critical incidents that may harm the reputation of the RN. This report recognises the importance of these policing services and the need for regular inspection.

Headquarters Provost Marshal (Navy) (HQ PM(N))

2.6 PM(N) is the head of the RNP and is the competent authority for developing RNP practice and standards. The post holder is responsible, *inter alia*, for RNP doctrine and policy, for monitoring progress of investigations and for advising the Commander-in-Chief Fleet and Commanding Officers on policing matters. The current PM(N) has been in post for two years.

2.7 The RNP mission statement is 'to support operational effectiveness and delivery of military capability by deterring, investigating and detecting criminal and disciplinary offences'.

2.8 To deliver the policing function effectively, the RNP is divided into three sections: Regional Naval Provost Marshals (NPM) operating at three ports - Plymouth, Portsmouth and Faslane; RNP personnel at sea operating in the larger ships of the RN fleet; and the RNP SIB which, although shore-based, is globally deployable. The RNP SIB conducts investigations into criminal and disciplinary offences committed by Service personnel and certain civilians subject to the Armed Forces Act 2006 .

2.9 The Military Criminal Justice System (MCJS) disciplines offenders through the Court Martial system, which is compliant with the European Convention on Human Rights.

2.10 The HQ PM(N) and the RNP SIB headquarters are both located at Portsmouth. The RNP contributes to the Service Police Crime Bureau (SPCB) alongside the RMP and RAFP. The SPCB is located separately from the HQ PM(N), as is the Defence College of Policing and Guarding (DCPG), which provides core investigative training.

2.11 The experience of HOPFs in the UK is accessed by the RNP through direct liaison, often with surrounding forces, and through its links with the National Police Improvement Agency (NPIA). The RNP can also gain from SP engagement with the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) Working Groups.

2.12 The RNP has benefited from a series of studies and reviews by the MOD and RN, culminating in a Review of Policing Functions in the Naval Service in 2006. This review addresses the following issues in policing functions:

- independence of investigations from the unit chain of command in order to remove any potential for undue interference or influence prior to reporting conclusions;
- quality assurance, through inspections and evaluations;
- practice and standards of RNP investigations;
- technical and IT support and the sharing of functions with RMP, RAFP and MDP; and
- the independence of the RNP as a specialised department of the RN.

Operational environments

2.13 The RNP SIB can investigate all crimes committed within their jurisdiction⁴. In the UK, the initial responsibility for the investigation of incidents lays with the HOPF in whose area the crime was committed. However, ownership of the subsequent investigation is dictated by the seriousness and circumstances of the incident. The RNP SIB conduct serious and/or complex investigations on a global basis.

2.14 The RNP SIB provides three levels of overseas deployment, namely:

- support to operational theatre deployments in Afghanistan (which are led by the RMP SIB);
- global deployment of investigative teams to front-line Naval units; and
- provision of the management of investigations to the British Indian Ocean Territories Police Force in Diego Garcia.

2.15 Investigating crime overseas, particularly in operational environments, presents challenges that are rarely, if indeed ever, experienced by HOPFs.

- The RNP SIB investigators deploy alongside the fighting force in locations where levels of hostility place them under deadly threat.
- The maintenance of crime scene security requires a major planning exercise if examiners are to conduct even a limited search. Some scenes are not accessible for days, resulting in a loss or degradation of evidence, while others are in constant use.
- The cultural aspects of caring for the dead, place an obligation on the RNP SIB to understand issues of language, faith and custom.
- The political consequences of action have to be considered in areas of military conflict.
- In addition to the specific Rules of Engagement set for a particular theatre, service personnel are subject to the laws of England and Wales wherever they are serving by virtue of the Armed Forces Act 2006.

2.16 The operating conditions on board ship have been seen first hand by members of the inspection team. This cramped operational environment provides unique challenges.

2.17 In 2008 the RNP SIB took primary policing responsibility for Level 3 investigations involving Royal Marines, except while deployed operationally on land (attached to a Land Forces Unit or Component). This means there is an increase in demand for their services.

CHAPTER 3: LEADERSHIP

3.1 The officer in charge (OIC) of the RNP SIB is of a Lieutenant Commander rank, and reports to the PM(N). He is supported by two deputies, and these officers are posted to the positions for a period of two to three years. The current OIC has been in place since July 2009. At the time of the HMIC Inspection, two of these three officers were due to be redeployed during 2010.

3.2 The RNP SIB is a specialist team made up of: three Officers; one Warrant Officer; two Master-at-Arms/Colour Sergeants; 16 Regulating Petty Officers (RPOs)/Sergeants; two Corporals; and three Civilian Staff. An additional eight RPOs have been temporarily seconded to the RNP SIB to support operations in Afghanistan.

Strengths

3.3 The inspection found a rank structured organisation as is necessary for military order. The executive leadership team of Headquarters PM(N) and RNP SIB were described by staff to HMIC as being highly visible, very approachable, and easily contactable.

3.4 In 2008, a continuous improvement event – ‘Lean’ – was held to debate the configuration of the RNP in order to meet its core roles (especially for dealing with the more serious criminal activity) and comply with recommendations of recent studies and the Armed Forces Act 2006.

3.5 The RNP SIB closely monitors its capability to carry out its investigative responsibilities, and raises appropriate business cases to meet operational demands as the need arises.

3.6 The OIC RNP SIB has set a clear mission statement for the RNP SIB: the delivery of Level 3 investigations on a global basis in support of RN deployments and operations.

3.7 The RNP shares policies and procedures with its personnel using PM(N) Technical Instructions and Policy notes. These are re-circulated each time they are updated and are available to RNP SIB as electronic and paper documents.

3.8 The RNP SIB conduct weekly case conferences to keep the management team updated of investigative developments and provide appropriate guidance and direction where required. Call conferencing enables

investigators from anywhere in the world to attend. The decisions made during this meeting are recorded by the lead investigator within the case files. These meetings are commented upon elsewhere within this report (see chapter 5 – Crime Investigations, paragraph 5.7 and chapter 9 – Training and Development, paragraph 9.8)

3.9 There are a number of protocols, developed with partners, to improve co-operation. These include:

- Defence Policing Protocol 2009 with SP and MDP on mutual assistance;
- Memorandum of Understanding between the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) and the MOD and Service Police (dated 28 August 2008);
- Guidance on the Investigation of Deaths on Land or Premises owned, occupied or under the control of the Ministry of Defence (dated 29 September 2008);
- Bedfordshire Police Service Level Agreement 2009 on the provision of fingerprint services; and
- MOD Police Protocol 2010 on the provision of major incident room support known as HOLMES 2⁵.

3.10 The RNP SIB are supportive of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office in the detachments to Diego Garcia and in the policing function in Afghanistan, where they provide mentoring to the local police.

Work in progress

3.11 The RNP leadership team is in the process of assessing its plans and prioritising actions within a strategic assessment. These will give clear direction to the RNP SIB on the allocation of staff and other resources. This is commented upon elsewhere in this report (see chapter 4 – Managing Intelligence, paragraphs 4.2 and 4.9).

3.12 HMIC found that the RNP SIB does identify and develop members of staff to fill key management posts. In order to address some of the issues raised within this report, a period of stability in the RNP SIB's staff structure may be necessary so that developing practises can become embedded.

3.13 In response to increased RNP SIB tasking arising from military deployments to Afghanistan, an extra eight RPOs have been temporarily assigned to SIB. These staff are in post, three of which are currently undergoing training in preparation for deployment to Afghanistan.

3.14 Protocols relating to the SPCB and Covert Operations Team (COT) are being developed with the RMP as described elsewhere in this report (see chapter 4 – Managing Intelligence, paragraph 4.6 and 4.22). A process to formalise existing agreements with Hampshire Police, Devon and Cornwall Police and the Serious Organised Crime Agency would be of benefit to the RNP SIB.

Areas for improvement

3.15 HMIC would expect the Navy Board to be fully sighted on organisational and reputational risks as they become identified through the RNP SIB gathering of criminal intelligence. There is a need for RNP SIB and the PM(N) to communicate these risks to senior RN management so that they can implement appropriate control measures.

Recommendation 1:

HMIC recommends that a process be developed whereby the Navy Board are sufficiently informed of threats, harms and risks to the Royal Navy.

3.16 The RNP is led by an officer of Commander rank (PM(N)). The rank of this officer is not equivalent to his other SP counterparts – Brigadier PM(A) and Group Captain PM(RAF). Despite this, the PM(N) is required to operate at that upper level in joint service activities. The three Provost Marshals within the SP meet as a group known as the Defence Police Chiefs Forum. This forum met in January 2009, and then in July 2010. HMIC believe that this forum can have a positive impact on joint working and learning opportunities.

3.17 The numbers of RNP personnel and support staff are set by Royal Navy Command Headquarters, in accordance with the Government's authorised establishment for the Royal Navy, and in accordance with their budget. PM(N), as the professional head of the RNP, currently has no input into the process.

Recommendation 2:

HMIC recommends that PM(N) should advise the Navy Board and the Royal Navy Command Headquarters regarding the level of staffing required to deliver the RNP SIB operational objectives.

3.18 The Authorising Officer for covert operations requiring RIPA⁶ authority is the PM(N), and this is a 24/7 commitment. While the number of authorisations is small, HMIC would expect a deputy to be appointed to provide resilience.

3.19 The Marine Accident Investigation Branch, on behalf of the Department of Transport, investigates accidents involving UK merchant shipping and fishing vessels anywhere in the world. The RNP SIB investigates RN ship groundings and collisions. While there is communication between these two organisations, structured contact and regular sharing of good practice may be mutually beneficial.

3.20 The national Maritime Operations Centre (MOC) is based at the MOD joint operations centre. Its role is to tackle terrorism, piracy, drug smuggling and illegal immigration. The MOC will enable multiple agencies to share information and thereby create a single collaborative picture of maritime activity. Despite the serious nature of the criminal activities being tackled, the RNP is not represented within the MOC.

3.21 The attendance of the RMP at the ACPO Homicide Working Group, and the RAFP at the ACPO Air Support Working Group, has revealed increased knowledge and understanding on all sides to the benefit of those involved. Given the RNP activity in relation to piracy and drug trafficking, it is the view of HMIC that the RNP SIB could benefit from the development of contact with ACPO Marine, and Serious and Organised Crime groups.

CHAPTER 4: MANAGING INTELLIGENCE

4.1 The National Intelligence Model (NIM) is used by police forces in the UK to gather and manage information in order to understand policing risks. It allows forces to identify patterns of crime and disorder, and so to target their resources to have the greatest impact on problems in their areas. This 'tasking' or allocating of resources is decided at regular meetings at a local, regional and national level. RNP is not currently led by intelligence and does not yet fully use the NIM; however, RNP is working towards introducing it. This section, therefore, describes skills, resources and other opportunities that could develop and support intelligence-led policing.

Strengths

4.2 RNP SIB staff understand the need to develop a proactive approach to policing. A well considered plan has been developed to establish the NIM, and a draft Strategic Assessment and Control Strategy have also been prepared. Policing priorities have separately been identified and communicated in a Technical Instruction (see chapter 3 – Leadership, paragraph 3.7) and staff demonstrated an understanding of these priorities.

4.3 The RNP contributed to the Force Intelligence Bureau (FIB), located within the SPCB. The two RNP FIB members work alongside RMP, RAFP and Ministry of Defence Police (MDP) staff. A third member of RNP was posted to the FIB on 25 October 2010. Commitment to the SPCB benefits RNP by allowing its staff access to a range of additional partnerships and information.

4.4 SP Level 3 investigation training provided to RNP SIB staff includes an understanding of the NIM, awareness of source handling and other covert tactics. Intelligence personnel are also given Intelligence Managers' and Analytical training, provided by the National Police Improvement Agency (NPIA).

4.5 The scope of RNP work has been limited and there is not a frequent requirement for RNP to employ covert tactics. It would not be cost effective for the organisation to develop a comprehensive covert capability of its own (eg Dedicated Surveillance and Technical Support). Should these capabilities be required, the RNP would use RMP COT resources. The inspection team consider that this is a cost effective means of accessing and using covert tactics.

Work in progress

4.6 A Service Level Agreement (SLA) is being negotiated between PM(A) and PM(N) to formalise the way they work together in the SPCB. The draft SLA is comprehensive and PM(N) should pursue the completion of this agreement.

4.7 The RNP needs to establish ways to develop intelligence-led policing, and is critical to the organisation. The HMIC inspection team attended a meeting with RNP managers and key staff. As a result of this meeting, PM(N) committed to taking responsibility for developing methods to support intelligence-led policing in the organisation. This need not be a bureaucratic exercise, but it is important that these methods are appropriate to the size and needs of the organisation and crafted to meet the threats it faces.

4.8 HMIC and NPIA have offered to provide advice, guidance and reviews to assist the PM(N) in embedding the NIM into RNP activities. They will also help the RNP to understand how it is used to the advantage of HOPFs.

4.9 The draft Strategic Assessment is comprehensive. Recommendations are based upon a range of information including external sources and crime, incident and Compulsory Drug Testing (CDT) information. In the document, crime types are considered separately. They are described, their trends are assessed and their data sources explained. There is a good description of crimes dealt with by the RNP and the resultant draft Control Strategy details two priorities:

1. Investigation of drug offences and the successful prosecution of offenders, and the prevention and reduction of drug misuse; and
2. The prevention and reduction of acquisition crime.⁷

4.10 There is, however, a need to consider:

- A review of force assets⁸ including investigative, forensic and other capabilities; and consideration of resilience levels which could hinder the organisation's ability to meet the requirements of the Control Strategy;
- Stakeholder engagement – there is limited engagement with key RN operational staff (eg Permanent Joint Headquarters and ships' commanding officers) that are effectively the communities to which the RNP provides policing; and
- An analysis of potential threats to RNP capability and an understanding of their likelihood and potential impact.

4.11 These considerations will provide a retrievable record of the decisions made to:

- deliver the service, taking into account priorities;
- recognise changes in circumstances;
- alter resources or priorities; and
- manage skills and resources.

4.12 The RNP Control Strategy includes Prevention, Intelligence and Enforcement plans for each of the two overall priorities. It is, however, important that Control Strategy priorities are:

- focused on the most critical areas against which resources can be successfully targeted; and
- influenced by specific objectives for delivery and that nominated individuals take responsibility⁹.

Areas for improvement

4.13 Few intelligence reports are submitted by RN staff and there is little focus on the gathering or submission of intelligence. Raising the profile among RNP staff of the value of intelligence and the issuing of intelligence requirements would be likely to increase the volume of reports, thereby enabling a greater understanding of emerging threats.

Recommendation 3:

HMIC recommends that the PM(N) implements specific initiatives to improve intelligence reporting from which the most appropriate policing priorities should be identified and addressed.

4.14 There should be a process for recording who is responsible for developing intelligence received from other agencies. HMIC found that intelligence and evidence could sometimes be recorded in a notebook rather than an auditable intelligence gathering system. Information, particularly when it results in activity, should be retained in a retrievable and searchable format.

4.15 Decisions, actions and agreements with information providers should be recorded to ensure that RNP is accountable for activity and effective management of intelligence.

4.16 There is little indication that information is shared between managers within the organisation in a format that would inform policing decisions. An example could be the transfer of personnel whom intelligence indicates may be involved in wrong-doing. The development and sharing of subject profiles based on assessed intelligence could improve the monitoring of potential

wrong-doers and the use of prevention initiatives as they move within the organisation.

4.17 Effective and embedded briefing and debriefing processes would improve intelligence collection. Establishment of a method to circulate current intelligence priorities would assist in focusing staff activity.

4.18 There is potential that the organisation could share intelligence and produce comprehensive profiles that could inform the RN about policing opportunities, risks and crime and disorder patterns at ports visited by ships. 'Fleet Port Guides', to which ships' crews contribute after visits to ports, are the only debriefing products mentioned by RNP staff. They include general supportive information that informs ships making subsequent visits. They are not routinely informed by policing intelligence.

4.19 A focus on the gathering of intelligence from those who have committed crimes of interest to RNP (eg Military Correction and Training Centre (MCTC) or the debriefing of people administratively dismissed after failing CDT) could assist in the understanding of criminality within RN units.

4.20 Opportunities undoubtedly exist for the RNP to be more proactive by taking a broader approach to policing through closer engagement with other units. One example is the investigation of fraud connected with RN pay and expenses systems. It is acknowledged that the RNP receive referrals from the Defence Irregularity Report Cell (DIRC) to investigate, and that the RNP SIB attend the Government National Investigators Committee. The Defence Fraud Analysis Unit (DFAU) identifies cases where it is suspected that personnel have fraudulently obtained money from the RN and also refers cases to RNP for investigation. Closer engagement with DFAU could provide opportunities to pursue a wider range of intelligence, prevention and enforcement options against the problems as a whole instead of dealing with the issue on a case by case basis.

4.21 The identification and understanding of the primary risks in policing the RN and the availability of resources is limited. Analysis undertaken by RNP currently focuses on crime networks (one example that was provided demonstrated relationships within the military centred on a person convicted of dealing in firearms). There is a need for RNP to develop a dedicated strategic analytical capability in order to address its priorities in an efficient and effective manner while remaining sighted on emerging threats.

4.22 Resources for covert operations are supplied by RMP SIB COT. However, there is no documented agreement that details processes for assigning staff activity, what service would be provided and how the

effectiveness of the operation would be assessed. An official, agreed document – a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) – would formalise the relationship between RMP and RNP in the delivery of covert capability and strengthen their understanding of the availability of staff and other resources. This would also inform the organisation’s Strategic Assessment.

Recommendation 4:

HMIC recommends the PM(N) should, as a high priority, take forward implementation of structures and processes to deliver the National Intelligence Model within the RNP.

CHAPTER 5: CRIME INVESTIGATIONS

5.1 The RNP SIB has the responsibility to investigate:

- all incidents falling within Schedule 2 of the Armed Forces Act 2006;
- Level 3/4 investigations;
- circumstances prescribed in accordance with the Armed Forces Act 2006; and
- complicated cases involving multiple units (for instance, assaults involving a large number of personnel from different ships).

5.2 It therefore investigates a wide variety of crime types including violence, dishonesty and breaches of Service Discipline – the code of conduct for the Armed Services. This section considers the organisation's effectiveness in investigating major crime offences, and serious and organised crime. The limited number of major crimes investigated by the RNP SIB makes direct comparison with any HOPF difficult.

Strengths

5.3 Staff volunteer to join the RNP SIB (see chapter 8 – Human Resources, paragraph 8.2). Personnel interviewed by HMIC appeared highly motivated and committed to their work. The training provided to RNP SIB personnel is considered by the NPIA to be of a high standard and is detailed later in this report (see chapter 9 – Training and Development), paragraphs 9.5 and 9.6).

5.4 Investigators have developed significant skills for the complex environment in which they operate. A practical example of this is an explosion that occurred on board a submarine which required the investigators to be deployed to a remote location, the use of HOLMES2, collaboration with other service police, overseas policing and HSE agencies, and complex forensic investigation.

5.5 There is a high level of flexibility in the ways investigators work. Strong contingencies exist for provision of remote support and advice to investigators deployed overseas, and for the forming and deployment of ad hoc teams, at short notice, anywhere in the world. As a result of lessons learned from investigations, the RNP SIB now has the ability to deploy an additional ten officers from the RNP at short notice to support a major inquiry.

5.6 RNP SIB enjoys good working relationships with HOPFs and other law enforcement agencies. This facilitates two-way assistance and knowledge sharing.

5.7 There is clear accountability for the management of investigations. Investigators are 'on call' 24 hours every day of the year, and have access to managers and senior investigators for support. Supervisors hold weekly case review meetings where managers supervise the workload of individual staff. Investigators are encouraged to give their views on how their cases are progressing. Decisions about actions and direction are recorded in electronic 'Case File Diaries'.

5.8 RNP has committed one member of staff to the SPCB Hi Tech Crime Unit (HTCU) and made significant investment in specialist training (both in the UK and overseas). Work loads are prioritised to focus on RNP referrals, and 20 examinations have been completed in the past two years. HTCU personnel attend the regional HTC User Group with HOPF staff, thereby ensuring that they remain up to date with developments in practice and technology.

5.9 RNP SIB has made use of HOLMES2, and staff have received awareness briefings on Major Incident Room (MIR) procedures from HOPFs. The provision of HOLMES2 by MDP has been tested on a live investigation and proven to be successful. An MOU with the MDP provides access to their HOLMES2 resources, which meets the operational needs of the RNP SIB.

5.10 SPCB provides oversight of the management of violent and sexual offenders on behalf of the three SP organisations. An RMP Warrant Officer manages the Violent and Sexual Offenders (ViSOR) database, and shares information with HOPFs and Multi Agency Public Protection Panels about 'land based' military personnel. ViSOR information about offenders posted overseas is passed to their commanding officers.

Work in progress

5.11 With regards to Royal Marine personnel killed in action, three RNP SIB investigators have received training and mentoring to compile reports on behalf of H.M. Coroner. The compilation of the reports follows a process which has been developed by the RMP SIB. Additionally, RNP SIB has two Crime Scene Investigators (CSI) who support the post mortem procedures.

5.12 The RNP are introducing a computerised command and control system – 'Coppers' – currently in use by the SPCB 24/7 Operation Room, that

records incidents and occurrences. This will replace the current practice of using a Daily Occurrence Book.

5.13 Comparison of RNP SIB personnel case load with that of the other SPs is not possible due to the different measurement processes used. RNP SIB personnel carry out diverse and global case loads with peaks and troughs in demand. In times of need, RNP SIB would draw upon resources from other SP organisations, HOPFs and the MDP. Although cooperation between these organisations is good, there has been no scenario testing or exercising to strengthen confidence in the availability of resources.

Areas for improvement

5.14 Despite the RNP's staff and training investment made in the HTCUC and the level of output from this specialised role, there is no succession plan or service level agreement in place to maintain the provision of service should the position become vacant.

Recommendation 5:

HMIC recommends that the PM(N) should implement continuity plans to ensure that ongoing service from the Hi Tech Crime Unit is guaranteed.

5.15 It would be beneficial for RNP SIB to have their own capability to promptly deploy Covert Human Intelligence Sources (CHIS) and other covert tactics in order to carry out investigations. It is recognised that the RMP COT can provide Dedicated Source Unit and other covert capabilities on behalf of the RNP SIB. Examples of cases examined by the HMIC were seen to have had opportunities to gain valuable intelligence through swift deployment of CHIS staff and consideration of other covert tactics.

5.16 While fraud and acquisitive crime have been identified as policing challenges for RNP SIB, the organisation has no accredited financial investigation capability. Financial investigation capability is currently sought from Serious and Organised Crime Agency (SOCA), Ministry of Defence Police (MDP) or HOPFs. Additionally, an increase in Joint Personnel Administration (JPA) fraud allegations requires the current Subject Matter Expert (SME) position to be changed to permanent post. This position should be clearly marked as one that must be filled quickly if it became vacant and recognised as crucial to the organisation. The RNP may wish to consider exploring capacity and expertise opportunities with the other SP by sharing the investigative burden.

5.17 It is recognised that, with an establishment of 24 members of staff, RNP SIB is a small organisation. Current arrangements where specialist functions are provided by RMP, HOPFs and other organisations are an effective means of securing such services. However, where policing risks (eg acquisitive crime) are identified as priorities for the organisation, RNP should seriously consider developing independent capabilities. Dedicated financial investigation and CHIS management capabilities are two examples.

5.18 A lack of understanding of the value of intelligence submission was found among investigators. For example, while a number of investigators demonstrated knowledge of a trend in the misuse of Class A drugs, limited intelligence had been submitted that could form the basis of further research and the development of tactical options.

5.19 A formal policy and procedure for delivering or managing witness protection, threats to life or 'Osman' issues has not been developed within the RNP. While options to reduce vulnerability by relocating staff within the RN have been used, it is limited, and when RNP has faced this type of challenge, it has called upon HOPFs to provide guidance.

Recommendation 6:

HMIC recommends that the PM(N) should develop policy and guidance to manage witness protection and threats to life issues.

5.20 There is potential that staff working within the Hi-Tech Crime Unit are exposed to disturbing images. It is best practice in HOPFs for such staff in this area of police work to have ready access to counselling and support services. This was not available to RNP SIB staff engaged in this investigative activity.

5.21 While the SPCB provides oversight of the management of violent and sexual offenders, ViSOR information about offenders posted overseas is passed to their commanding officers. These commanding officers have not received formal input on offender risk management. Such training could reduce the likelihood of re-offending by convicted service personnel posted overseas.

CHAPTER 6: FORENSIC SERVICES

6.1 The RNP SIB forensic management function is based at HMS Nelson, Portsmouth. This is purely a scenes of crime function; all other forensic disciplines (eg fingerprints) are outsourced.

6.2 Additional crime scene examination skills are provided to a number of investigators who are rotated in the same way as other RNP personnel. The Crime Scene Investigator (CSI) role is not frequently required on board ships. Should an incident occur where a CSI is not immediately available, mechanisms are established to maximise forensic opportunities.

6.3 Scene examinations fall into two broad areas – those on military bases and those on board RN vessels. The latter present significant challenges for forensic examinations, as vessels are primarily operational, and pursuing ships' missions will inevitably take precedent over forensic recovery. The cramped environments make it impracticable to establish cordons for prolonged periods. Crew members also will invariably have legitimate access to all areas of ships, thereby negating the value of most trace evidence types such as fingerprints and fibres.

6.4 Numbers and types of crimes scenes that require forensic intervention are limited. In 2009, 26 cases were submitted to external forensic service providers (the majority of which were for drugs analysis) and four cases were submitted for fingerprint searching – only two cases were submitted during the previous year.

6.5 There is no specific allocated annual forensic budget available to RNP SIB to support their investigations. Forensic costs are incorporated in the overall annual RNP SIB budget and are increased if individual case costs escalate. While the budget manager is separate from the RNP SIB, there is evidence that the forensic needs of investigations were being met.

Strengths

6.6 Good progress has been made in trying to ensure that serious incidents are dealt with as effectively as operational imperatives allow. Each Capital Ship has an adequately stocked Major Incident Bag. RNP personnel receive crime scene guidance presented on a Major Incident DVD, produced in partnership with Hampshire Constabulary, which advises on scene containment, forensic assessment and recovery. All surface ships have access to UK based CSIs for advice.

6.7 Reviews of closed cases and incidents provide good evidence that forensic lessons have been learned and addressed, by both changing processes and ensuring that an officer has been nominated to deliver these improvements (ie Fleet Crime Scene Manager).

6.8 Training of CSIs was delivered by the NPIA and is subject of comment elsewhere within this report (see chapter 9 – Training and Development, paragraphs 9.6 and 9.7). It has, however, been recognised that SP requirements were not being met by a course ostensibly targeted at HOPFs. More tailored training, accredited by Teeside University, is now being delivered by the DCPG.

6.9 RNP SIB identified limitations in its forensic capability, expertise and global reach. These limitations are mitigated by engaging in partnerships with other service police organisations and HOPFs.

6.10 RNP SIB has a working relationship with the United States Naval Criminal Investigative Service which, in the past, has facilitated crime scene investigations in remote countries where RNP SIB could not attend or gain access within a reasonable time frame.

Areas for improvement

6.11 RNP SIB needs to remain aware of developments in the wider forensic field. The RNP SIB CSIs have limited awareness of how HOPFs are improving their forensic performance under the 'Forensics21' programme, which includes EDIT (Evidential Drug Identification), DAPSS (Detainee At Police Station Sampling), NFFA (National Forensic Framework Agreement), and ADAPT (Accelerated DNA Profiling Technology).

6.12 While recognising that the number of RNP SIB forensic tasks is limited, there should be a performance framework to ensure that the organisation achieves the best from its forensic functions, both internally and externally. An SLA with Bedfordshire Police, signed in January 2009, specifically refers to the provision of performance information. LGC Forensics, the primary external forensic service provider, does hold this type of information and is willing to provide it.

6.13 An independent review of a September 2008 wounding case recommended that the PM(N) should ensure that information relating to timeliness and quality of service supplied by forensic providers is collected and put to use in negotiations aimed at fixing forensic costs.

Recommendation 7:

HMIC recommends that PM(N) develops a forensic performance framework to ensure that the most efficient and effective use of forensic services is achieved.

6.14 There is a need to provide greater supervision of the use of forensic services within RNP SIB. Its present approach is purely reactive and deals with incidents on a case by case basis.

6.15 RNP SIB should consider outsourcing or at least benchmarking forensic work (including PACE DNA samples) using NFFA. To best control how it saves money, it should consider undertaking this as part of an arrangement with the other SPs and linking into a HOPF regional tendering exercise.

Recommendation 8:

HMIC recommends that PM(N) explores the opportunities presented through joint SP forensic services to secure improved delivery and value for money.

CHAPTER 7: CRIMINAL JUSTICE PROCESSES

7.1 PM(N) was given direct ownership of RNP investigations and line management of RNP SIB, following the Armed Forces Act 2006 and the Review of Policing Functions within the Naval Service.

7.2 In 2008 the PM(N) was assigned responsibility by the First Sea Lord and Chief of Naval Staff for the conduct and direction of all RNP investigations. These were to be 'conducted independently of the chain of command'.

7.3 The Armed Forces Act 2006 created a joint Service Prosecuting Authority (SPA) which came into existence on 1 January 2009.

7.4 Criminal and disciplinary advice is provided to RN commanding officers by the Fleet Legal Cell. RNP receives policing advice on matters, such as jurisdiction, from Fleet or Area Legal Cell Advisors. The RNP and RNP SIB obtain their legal advice from the newly established SPA.

Strengths

7.5 Historically, the former Naval Prosecuting Authority (NPA) had assessed the competence of RNP investigations as "below standard" and their effectiveness was criticised by the Judge Advocate General. However, the SPA reported that recent prosecuting material within current case submissions was of a satisfactory standard.

7.6 An independent review of a wounding case in September 2008 recommended that the PM(N) negotiate with NPA for the provision of a report by the prosecutor in all cases where a not guilty verdict is delivered at General Court Martial, or where the case is abandoned prior to trial. This procedure has continued with the introduction of the SPA. Feedback reports, which are provided to individual investigators, are then used to communicate learning to RNP SIB colleagues at the weekly case conference.

Areas for Improvement

7.7 The former NPA operated a forum with RNP SIB investigators, which has since ceased following the introduction of the SPA. HMIC suggests that the reintroduction of this forum is an opportunity to improve relationships further, provide feedback, highlight key topics and secure swift advice.

CHAPTER 8: HUMAN RESOURCES

8.1 In 2009, the RNP assessed its capability gap to deliver RNP SIB investigations in the light of increased activity arising from operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. In response to a request for more staff to meet this demand, a further eight Investigators were approved on a temporary basis.

Strengths

8.2 RNP personnel volunteer for RNP SIB and, while there is no formal application process, suitable candidates are transferred to SIB using RN HR procedures.

8.3 HMIC was impressed with the positive attitude of the vast majority of the personnel interviewed. The nature of their roles and the culture of the organisation demand a flexible approach to working at short notice.

8.4 The adaptability and goodwill of the staff is critical to the organisation's ability to fulfil its role when a number of personnel are deployed on operations.

8.5 There is recognition and understanding in the leadership team for the welfare of all personnel and their families.

8.6 The RNP SIB has the ability to deploy an additional ten officers from the RNP at short notice to any site to support a major enquiry or to meet extraordinary peaks in demand, although this capability has yet to be tested.

Work in progress

8.7 The inspection team believes that there are opportunities in some areas to improve the ongoing process of job rotation and succession planning. It is sensible to make mention of this area here and recognise that, in some departments this has been accepted and work is in progress to identify critical posts and strengthen ways to retain and develop staff.

Areas for improvement

8.8 HMIC could find no formal process to monitor staff absence, particularly sickness. If staff are absent due to illness, those individuals are responsible for noting it themselves. Only if the absence is prolonged will it be recorded and support mechanisms offered.

8.9 Without such formality, the RNP SIB has no overview of sickness trends and therefore is unable to identify genuine sickness, welfare issues or patterns of absence that may hide other underlying issues.

Recommendation 9:

HMIC recommends that PM(N) introduces an absence monitoring policy capable of recognising trends, opportunities and risks.

CHAPTER 9: TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

9.1 The DCPG delivers a wide range of core police training to all three Service Police organisations, however it does not provide specialist training.

Strengths

9.2 There is an extensive range of specialist skills invested in the RNP SIB staff covering the areas expected in reactive investigations. Training Needs Analysis is conducted by the RNP Warrant Officer (Training and Recruitment), in consultation with RNP SIB, and courses are allocated to individuals to enhance their skills base.

9.3 The number of staff within RNP SIB with these skill sets fluctuates regularly due to staff turnover caused by the RNP SIB responsibility to Diego Garcia and the loss of staff to postings. While opportunities to regularly use some of the skills are limited within RNP, staff spend time working for HOPFs to gain further experience.

9.4 All of the personnel interviewed were clearly highly motivated and acknowledged a responsibility to develop themselves to perform at the highest levels in their role. There has been a concerted effort to develop investigators beyond the basic level and equip staff, particularly for operational deployment overseas, where they are required to act independently.

9.5 The RNP SIB has three officers trained as Senior Investigating Officers (SIO) to the same standards of initial training delivered within HOPFs. These officers have joined programmes offered by South Wales Police and Greater Manchester Police as this training is not provided by the DCPG. However, there is an inability to provide ongoing training with a view to achieving the same level of accreditation as would be achieved by an SIO in a HOPF.

9.6 The RNP SIB skills base includes:

- one Achieving Best Evidence (ABE) interviewer;
- two Tier 3¹⁰ suspect interviewers;
- one Crime Scene Manager (CSM);
- 11 CSIs;
- three Disaster Victim Identification (DVI) trained officers;
- one DVI Senior Identification Manager;

- one Fraud Investigator (FI);
- one Family Liaison Coordinator (FLC);
- three Family Liaison Officers (FLOs); and
- six Sexual Offences Investigator Trained (SOIT) Officers.

9.7 RNP SIB has temporarily assigned officers to the following areas:

- Hampshire Sexual Offences Investigation Unit (Crystal Team);
- Hampshire MIR; and
- Hampshire Constabulary CSI operations.

This is a further measure to ensure that RNP SIB trained staff are exposed to a wider range of experiences, thereby maintaining and improving their skills levels.

9.8 Lessons from cases are learned during the weekly case conference, reviews for the most serious of investigations and, on some occasions, during legal advice post trial.

9.9 The weekly case conference allows for the sharing of experience and for learning from other services to be shared. This learning opportunity is highly valued by staff.

9.10 Following a recommendation from a study conducted by the Vice Chief of the Defence Staff (VCDS), the DBR appointed and manages an Independent Case File Assessor to conduct case reviews. This individual serves the case review requirement of all three SPs. The shared use of such a resource is to be commended and demonstrates value for money.

9.11 The Navy Command also operates a learning account system to identify best practice and inform improvement processes. This is exemplified in chapter 5 – Crime Investigations, paragraph 5.5, whereby the learning from investigations has led to the development of a surge capacity from the RNP to support major inquiries.

9.12 It is mandatory that RNP SIB staff receive Equality and Diversity training every two years and this training is currently up to date. This is subject of comment elsewhere in this report (see chapter 10 – Equality and Diversity, paragraph 10.8).

9.13 It is worthy of note that since January 2009 all RPOs of the RNP attend the Level 3 Investigations Course as part of their career progression. This training will benefit RNP SIB in the medium to long term, whereby personnel transferring from RNP into RNP SIB will already be Level 3 trained.

Work in progress

9.14 The RNP SIB currently has 20 (83 percent) of its 24 investigators trained to Level 3 standard. This course has been assessed by NPIA as being equivalent to HOPF Initial Detective Course.

9.15 The RNP Warrant Officer (Training and Recruitment) is in the progress of receiving funding to deliver further RNP SIB training. However, examination of feedback received to assess training needs, raises questions of the operational need for, and the value for money of, some of the requests for training.

Areas for improvement

9.16 The number of RNP SIB personnel trained in areas of intelligence gathering, analysis and crime prevention is limited. Given the mission of the RNP to deter and investigate criminal and disciplinary offences, coupled with a wider preventative responsibility, HMIC considers this to be a viable reason to raise the awareness of RNP SIB staff to recognise prevention opportunities and implement initiatives (eg the identification of vulnerable personnel who may be susceptible to corruption or criminal enterprise).

9.17 As previously mentioned in this report, the establishment of ways to improve intelligence-led policing is critical. To develop methods and structures that support intelligence-led policing in the organisation, specialist training in the form of the following courses will be required:

- NIM Foundation Course
- NIM Manager Course
- Local Intelligence Officer Course
- Analyst Course
- National Intelligence Analysis Training (NIAT) Course.

9.18 There is a concern, highlighted at paragraph 9.5 above, that maintaining professional accreditation for SIOs is challenging without regular high level investigations. The shadowing of HOPFs is highly recommended to improve experience and thereby provide sufficient flexibility in times of high demand, such as multiple site deployments. It is noted that two of the SIOs are due to be redeployed shortly at the end of their current postings. This could create extra demand for the remaining SIO.

9.19 In the same vein and in order to meet predicted demand, the current levels of officers trained in Achieving Best Evidence (ABE) and Sexual

Offences Investigation Trained (SOIT) needs to be maintained, as well as the implementation of trained and accredited financial investigators.

9.20 While evidence was found that post investigation Case Reviews take place, it was reported that this practice was not endorsed by policy. In order that organisational learning and development becomes expected, a policy should be written for the RNP and for consideration by the other two SPs.

9.21 HMIC understands that the RNP has previously received funding for specialist training, but there has been no budget allocated for 2010/11 onwards. Although all departments are under financial scrutiny, if the closure of investigations and prosecutions are to be prevented and convictions unchallenged, then the appropriate investment in RNP specialist training should be reinstated permanently.

9.22 Research conducted by the Training Manager has revealed that, while the provision of a number of specialist skills and training courses represent good value for money, this was not universal. Examples were provided whereby the investment made in training was more than required, and the skills were not being regularly used or refreshed. Consequently, during this time of financial constraint, further bids for training need to be supported by analysis of officers' current skill base, demand and succession planning.

Recommendation 10:

HMIC recommends that PM(N) must be allocated a separate budget to provide appropriate levels of specialist training, in accordance with Best Value principles.

CHAPTER 10: EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

10.1 HMIC conducted an equality and diversity (E&D) impact assessment under its responsibilities as set out by the Race Relations Amendment Act 2000 (RRAA 2000) in order to assess compliance against other equality duties.

10.2 The assessment identified a 'potential for the operations of the RNP SIB to have a differential and/or adverse impact to staff members and, consequently on the perception, quality and nature of service delivery of their investigations'.

10.3 HMIC decided to use the inspection to promote Equality and Diversity (E&D) as the inspection process presented opportunities.

10.4 The MOD has several exemptions under the law to safeguard operational effectiveness. These relate to gender, race and ethnic origin, disability, age and flexible working. Nevertheless, the First Sea Lord has confirmed an ethos that is inclusive and which welcomes and appreciates differences.¹¹

Strengths

10.5 The inspection team found that the RNP SIB is a close-knit organisation. Individuals seek to support one another in a potentially stressful investigative role that requires confidentiality and where the sense of camaraderie was found to be strong and empowering. HMIC recognises that RNP and RNP SIB personnel live and work alongside other Service personnel, and this calls for excellent interpersonal skills in order to maintain a professional relationship while carrying out investigations.

10.6 RNP SIB are directed by an Equality Strategic and Tactical Plan which is set by the Armed Forces Equality and Diversity Steering Group (AFE&DSG) chaired by the 1 Star Commodore.

10.7 The Naval Base Commander is responsible for E&D within the RNP SIB whose aim is to promote, by means of strong, effective, consistent, moral leadership, an environment free from harassment and intimidation. The inspection team found that the overall culture in RNP SIB was inclusive and staff felt they were respected.

10.8 Within the small unit that is RNP SIB:

- The E&D lead sits with the Deputy Officer In Command, who is responsible for welfare and monitoring E&D data relating to grievance, discipline and training.
- Obligations to comply with the Equality duties is, in principle, well understood within the RNP SIB. E&D Policy was prominently displayed on the Personnel notice board but is due a review to confirm the current leadership team's ongoing commitment.
- Mandatory training on E&D is held every two years which includes all the strands of diversity as required by the Royal Navy. An unsolicited comment from an interviewee, that 'everybody's opinion is valued', gave evidence that the training has been a success.
- Training given before deployment and debriefs conducted afterwards provide understanding of different customs and beliefs.

10.9 Within the RN as a whole:

- E&D is an agenda item at the six monthly Divisional Briefing meetings; any concerns are reported to a RN Equality Manager.
- The RN anti-discrimination, bullying and harassment policies exceed the necessary levels for compliance. The policy of zero tolerance to such behaviour is clearly evident in the working environment and fully understood by all staff.
- E&D Advisors (EDA) of, at least, CPO rank and assistant EDAs of Leading Hand or Corporal rank are available on every ship and establishment.
- The RN has an E&D Investigation Team to deal with intricate and highly sensitive management disputes and discrimination cases either by mediation or through the complaints procedure.

10.10 HMIC found that the RN have effective policies for recruitment and progression to maximise the skills and expertise of its employees. While some roles are legitimately barred to women, the RNP SIB does not do this. At the time of the HMIC inspection, there were eight female staff in RNP SIB out of a total of 35 (23 percent); and in the RNP there were 58 female personnel out of a total of 285 staff (20 percent).

10.11 In relation to equality of progression available to women and men, there is an indication that work/life balance and the variety of roles have encouraged opportunities for women. The average length of service in the RNP SIB is five years.

10.12 The RNP SIB have access to a number of RN support groups, which include Family Federation, Welfare Services, Civilian Chaplains and other multi-faith Leaders. There are no Black and Minority Support Groups but it is encouraging to see that the RN has become more inclusive and has set up the Lesbian Gay and Bisexual Support Group.

Work in progress

10.13 The RNP SIB has recognised the need to build a diverse group and to develop a different approach to acquiring the necessary skills. The amalgamation of all existing equality legislation may, importantly, allow for positive action to be taken to develop an action plan that balances under-representation. The appointment of an external adviser may assist the development of positive action opportunities within the boundaries of MOD policies.

Areas for improvement

10.14 The RNP SIB function requires specialist training and skills, and currently acquires its recruits from an extremely small group. To raise its profile, the RNP SIB could consider promoting the opportunities presented by the Branch to individuals from diverse backgrounds, particularly where they may add greater knowledge to its skills base.

10.15 There is an over-emphasis on the RN taking the lead on developing the E&D Action Plan. Not unexpectedly, considering the small size of the Branch, HMIC did not find an individual plan for the RNP SIB. However, its development needs to be addressed by the RNP or PM(N). HMIC would expect a local diversity action plan to include objectives, nominated leads and clearly defined timescales.

10.16 The RNP SIB relies on the MOD to ensure that its policies are impact assessed. However, local policy needs to conform to legislation as well as the overarching MOD position, and there should be an impact assessment to ensure this.

10.17 Due to a lack of monitoring, the RNP SIB was able to provide only limited evidence of how it was addressing issues relating to sexual orientation and religious belief. The Inspection team also found that data on the employment of diverse groups is not readily available.

10.18 While the RNP SIB has a good understanding of working in multi-

national environments, the development of independent advisory group function to support local engagement at the major shore establishments would assist in building greater community trust and confidence. This engagement could be achieved through liaison with the HOPFs Independent Advisory Groups (IAGs) in the areas where these establishments are located.

Recommendation 11:

HMIC recommends that an RNP action plan be developed to cater for current and impending Equality and Diversity legislation, and includes RNP SIB actions in order that it reflects the community that it serves.

CHAPTER 11: PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Strengths

11.1 The size of RNP SIB leads to many aspects of performance and supervision being discussed on a daily basis between the principal command team members.

11.2 Personal Functional Standards (PFS) were issued in 2005 to provide mandatory requirements and desirable objectives to budget holders. These are monitored and maintained by the Second Sea Lord on behalf of the Navy Board. To meet PFS guidelines, investigations by the RNP SIB should, where possible, be completed within four calendar months, from the initial assignment to despatch of the final SIB report.

11.3 The RNP uses a computer system that is common to all SP – the REDCAP database – for monitoring and tracking live cases. In 2009, RNSIB conducted 88 separate investigations involving 109 offences made up of predominantly fraud, but also including violence, drugs, sexual assaults and military discipline.

11.4 Of the above 88 investigations, it is believed that 75 (85 percent) were achieved within the PFS standard.

11.5 The inspection team found that Captains and RNP on board ship reported an excellent service in the delivery of timely guidance from RNP SIB in the early stages of incident investigation before investigators reach the scene.

11.6 There is evidence that RNP SIB has provided support to HOPFs where those investigations involve Royal Navy personnel. This is essential to improving investigative performance and maintaining a strong flow of intelligence.

Work in progress

11.7 PM(N) has a RNP Professional Standards Unit which is in the process of developing an inspection template to assess compliance by RNP SIB with HQ PM(N) policy, standards and practises.

11.8 A key RNP SIB priority is 'increasing the professional investigative ability of RNP SIB by ensuring that all investigators, if not already qualified, attend the Level 3 Investigation Course within 12 months of joining the unit'. There are some examples where this commitment has not yet been achieved.

Areas for improvement

11.9 There is no performance reporting regime in place that records and highlights RNP SIB achievements or outputs. Managers are held to account on PFS targets only. For example, of the 88 investigations conducted in 2009, HMIC have not been able to clearly establish the outcomes of 16 of them. As stated above at paragraph 11.4, it is not absolutely clear how many cases have not achieved the PFS standard.

11.10 Where performance measures were in place, they were of a basic nature – in many cases simply actions against lines of enquiry or relating to timescales. There is a compelling case for the PM(N) to review business areas and put in place an informative and quality based performance regime.

11.11 RNP SIB aspires to being able to attend all Level 3 and 4 incidents, globally, within 24 hours. However, when challenged by HMIC, the RNP SIB was unable to readily provide details or records of when, or indeed if, staff were deployed in this fashion during 2009.

11.12 The numbers of offences investigated by the RNP SIB staff are small in comparison with HOPFs and make benchmarking unreasonable. However, there may be opportunities to conduct some correlation with the other SPs (subject to a common way of recording) including comparisons of ratios of investigators to personnel.

Recommendation 12:

HMIC recommends that PM(N) reviews the RNP SIB business area and puts in place an informative, qualitative and regularly reviewed performance regime.

CHAPTER 12: CONCLUSION

12.1 Vice Chief of Defence Staff studies, RN review and RNP improvement events have assisted in bringing the RNP SIB up to its current establishment and has driven forward the demand for Level 3 trained personnel. HMIC commends the leadership and direction given in these changes which has resulted in the RNP SIB becoming a more professional organisation. The recommendations made in this report should enhance and build on the solid base that has been put in place.

12.2 The RNP SIB has operated across all levels of criminality. With the changing remit, greater demand will be placed on the Branch in the future. It has proven that it is capable of delivering a competent investigation at Level 3, but there is only limited experience within the Branch and some of these officers are to be redeployed shortly.

12.3 There is an opportunity for the RNP SIB to shift its focus from being a predominantly reactive unit, to one that has an intelligence led proactive approach, considered by HMIC to be of the **utmost importance** to protecting the Royal Navy from criminal and reputational risks. The SP have the available technology to complement the adoption of the NIM within the RNP. A shared approach to the development of intelligence within the FIB may be beneficial.

12.4 The RNP SIB does not publicise its activity and, more importantly, its successes. This approach unnecessarily restricts the understanding of its contribution to the Royal Navy's operational function, thereby inhibiting the potential for developing rich sources of crime prevention.

12.5 A wider range of performance measures to improve outputs and inform strategic decision making will need to be developed if demand and capability are to be fully understood.

12.6 The RNP is a legitimate law enforcement agency and therefore, should be subject of inspection by a competent authority on a regular basis if they are to continue to improve. The fact that they and the MOD have made a voluntary request for independent inspection is to be commended.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1:

HMIC recommends that a process be developed whereby the Navy Board are sufficiently informed of threats, harms and risks to the Royal Navy.

Recommendation 2:

HMIC recommends that PM(N) should advise the Navy Board and the Royal Navy Command Headquarters regarding the level of staffing required to deliver the RNP SIB operational objectives.

Recommendation 3:

HMIC recommends that the PM(N) implements specific initiatives to improve intelligence reporting from which the most appropriate policing priorities should be identified and addressed.

Recommendation 4:

HMIC recommends the PM(N) should, as a high priority, take forward implementation of structures and processes to deliver the National Intelligence Model within the RNP.

Recommendation 5:

HMIC recommends that the PM(N) should implement continuity plans to ensure that ongoing service from the Hi Tech Crime Unit is guaranteed.

Recommendation 6:

HMIC recommends that the PM(N) should develop policy and guidance to manage witness protection and threats to life issues.

Recommendation 7:

HMIC recommends that PM(N) develops a forensic performance framework to ensure that the most efficient and effective use of forensic services is achieved.

Recommendation 8:

HMIC recommends that PM(N) explores the opportunities presented through joint SP forensic services to secure improved delivery and value for money.

Recommendation 9:

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HMIC recommends that an RNP action plan be developed to cater for current and impending Equality and Diversity legislation, and includes RNP SIB actions in order that it reflects the community that it serves.

Recommendation 12:

HMIC recommends that PM(N) reviews the RNP SIB business area and puts in place an informative, qualitative and regularly reviewed performance regime.

ENDNOTES

- 1 The team included: Mr Tristram Elmhirst, West Mercia Police Head of Forensics; Mr Everett Henry, National Policing Improvement Agency (NPIA) Head of Equality, Diversity and Human Resources; Detective Chief Inspector Jeff Longrigg, NPIA Professional Practice Developer; Dr Peter Stelfox, NPIA Head of Investigative Practice, Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) Homicide Working Group; Detective Superintendent Jane Tilzey, ACPO National Co-ordinator's Office (NCO) for Organised Crime and Mr Bob Youldon, NPIA Implementation Manager.
- 2 Army strength 102,500; Royal Air Force strength 40,340; data supplied by Ministry of Defence.
- 3 Level 3 investigations involve incidents or offences that, due to their gravity and/or complexity, require investigation by SIB trained personnel. Level 4 investigations involve enquiries or incidents that attract 'special' status due to their sensitivity, or other influencing factors.
- 4 This includes regular and reserve forces subject to Service Law, and civilians subject to Service Discipline (ss.367 – 370 Armed Forces Act 2006).
- 5 Home Office Large Major Enquiry System is the title of the computerised enquiry management system used by all HOPFs.
- 6 Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000
- 7 Acquisition Crime is defined as offences where the offender derives material gain from the crime.
- 8 The HMIC report *Get Smart; Planning to Protect – Protective Service Review* (2008) describes five key considerations in strategic planning: Inputs, Analysis, Governance, Outputs and Outcomes. The Inputs element includes a review of force assets.
- 9 HMIC report *Get Smart; Planning to Protect – Nominated personnel given clear responsibility for delivery would fulfil the 'Governance' dimension of the strategic planning model.*
- 10 Nationally accredited advanced witness interviewer required to interview victims and witnesses in serious and complex crime investigations.
- 11 *The First Sea Lord's Equality and Diversity Directive* (November 2009).

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ISBN: 978-1-84987-370-3

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