

# Best Value Review of Police Training

Force: Leicestershire

Date of Inspection: 25-26 August 2004



A Report by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary

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# Context and Force performance

## Context

Population served by the Force	938,811	
Number of police officers	2,300	
Number of police staff	1,007	
Number of special constables	159	
Budget for training for the financial year:	Financial Value	Percentage of Overall Force budget
2003/2004	not asked	0.3%
2004/05	£2.43m	1.8%

## 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/leicestershirebaseline1004.pdf](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/hmic/leicestershirebaseline1004.pdf)

Further details of the Force performance can be found at: [www.leics.police.uk](http://www.leics.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/hmic.htm](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/hmic/hmic.htm)

# Findings

Area Examined	Findings
<p><b>TRAINING STRATEGY</b></p>	<p>HM Inspector of Constabulary found that although the training strategy was aligned to Home Office guidance, it had only recently been completed. At the time of the inspection the strategy had not been published to the Force.</p> <p>The strategy is also considered to be insufficiently detailed in terms of specific responsibilities being articulated.</p>
<p><b>QUALITY OF COSTED TRAINING PLAN</b></p>	<p>HM Inspector found that the CTP had also only been drafted very recently. Whilst it was aligned to the NCM, the plan was incomplete and had not been seen by the PA at the time of the inspection.</p> <p>The CTP shown did not capture information regarding training provided under devolved arrangements, including specialist departments. It is clear, therefore, that the true cost of training in the Force is not known.</p> <p>HM Inspector could find no evidence of the CTP linking to either corporate or BCU priorities. The Force is urged to address this as a matter of priority – particularly for the plan for 2005/06.</p>
<p><b>MONITORING COSTED TRAINING PLAN THROUGHOUT THE YEAR</b></p>	<p>At the time of the inspection, the Force had not been routinely monitoring the CTP – principally because the latter had not been prepared in the required format. Whilst HM Inspector acknowledges that some form of costing had been historically applied, this was not in line with the NCM.</p> <p>The Force has recently established a ‘Training Priority Panel’ (TPP). HM Inspector was informed that this group is <i>‘in its infancy, but will be the decision making body for the Force’</i> in respect of training issues.</p> <p>HM Inspector considers that the establishment of the TPP is a positive step. However, the inspection revealed a perception that the purpose of the group was not fully understood, and that its terms of reference were ‘evolving’ rather than well established.</p>

Area Examined	Findings
<p><b>TRAINING NOT INCLUDED IN THE COSTED TRAINING PLAN</b></p>	<p>Training provided under devolved arrangements as well as specialist training is not included within the CTP.</p> <p>HM Inspector was also concerned to hear that it is not envisaged that 'devolved training' will be captured by the plan in the future. Unless all training costs are captured by the CTP the Force will not be in a position to effectively manage its training provision.</p>
<p><b>CLIENT/CONTRACTOR ARRANGEMENTS</b></p>	<p>The Force has created the TPP, which has been referred to above. The group comprises a number of stakeholder representatives and is chaired by the Director of HR – a police staff member with ACPO status.</p> <p>The group has only met on two or three occasions in the past year, and HM Inspector was concerned to find that there were no recorded minutes of the meetings – this being a decision taken at an earlier meeting. HM Inspector was assured that minutes would be taken in the future and would stress the absolute need to do so.</p> <p>HM Inspector was also unable to ascertain how the TPP was to effectively manage training provision within a client contractor relationship. The Force acknowledged that they were <i>“unable to clearly define these interrelations at present, as the Force realignment and programme boards are in their infancy, and still formulating their processes”</i>.</p> <p>HM Inspector considers that there has been insufficient planning in relation to the purpose of the TPP and as such there is a real danger that the potential utility of it will never be realised.</p> <p>HM Inspector also considers that the chair of the TPP would be better located with a senior management team member who does not have, as in the present case responsibility for the contractor side of the relationship.</p>

Area Examined	Findings
<p><b>MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS FOR TRAINING</b></p>	<p>The Head of Training does not have management control over the entirety of training conducted by the Force. Of particular concern is the training conducted under devolved arrangements, where standards in relation to planning, cost and delivery are unknown.</p> <p>HM Inspector can see no reason for trainers based on BCU's being effectively exempted from the standards that apply at the centre. The PA is encouraged to ensure that the Force introduces a mechanism which ensures that all trainers in the Force, including those based on BCU's are accountable to the Head of Training in relation to standards, costs, planning and processes.</p>
<p><b>IMPLEMENTATION OF:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Managing Learning</b></li> <li>• <b>Training Matters</b></li> <li>• <b>Diversity Matters</b></li> <li>• <b>Foundations for Change</b></li> </ul>	<p>The Force was unable to provide any structured IPs in relation to these reports. Whilst it is acknowledged that <i>Managing Learning</i> and FfC are being addressed through the BVR of training IP both locally and regionally, HM Inspector considers that these reports ought to be underpinned by structured IPs which are capable of monitoring objectively.</p> <p>HM Inspector would strongly urge the Force to prepare detailed IPs in respect of these reports, utilising a common format that shows the intended outcome, together with time-bound milestones and progress updates.</p>
<p><b>CURRENT IMPROVEMENT PLAN</b></p>	<p>The current IP is that which resulted from the BVR of training. Sitting alongside this plan, is one which resulted from the BVR of probationer training.</p> <p>The format of the IP utilised by the Force for the BVR of training was adopted from the national project team when the latter was collecting data at a late stage in the project. The format issued, was only ever intended to be 'indicative'. As a finalised template it is inappropriate, as it lacks sufficient detail in relation to 'enablers' or 'milestones, particularly in relation to major areas for improvement which are likely to be protracted.</p> <p>HM Inspector is also aware that the Force is in the process of developing a number of internally designed initiatives in respect of training, which will take some time to embed. These too, ought to be incorporated into what in effect should be a dynamic IP.</p>

Area Examined	Findings
<b>MONITORING THE IMPROVEMENT PLAN</b>	<p>The PA Personnel Committee reviews the Best Value IP on a quarterly basis. However, in the absence of an overarching and ongoing IP for the training function, HM Inspector is concerned that once the current IP is regarded as complete, that effective monitoring will diminish.</p> <p>The TPP does not currently include PA membership, and HM Inspector was informed that engagement with the PA on training issues beyond the BVR was irregular. HM Inspector considers that formal engagement with the PA on improvements to training is essential, and would encourage the Force to open dialogue with the PA to find the best way of achieving this.</p>
<b>QUALITY ASSURANCE PROCESSES</b>	<p>HM Inspector found no evidence of a corporate strategy regarding QA within the Force. Whilst QA processes have been outlined in the recently developed training plan, these have not as yet been put into practice or published to the Force. In effect these processes remain aspirations rather than effective operating procedures.</p> <p>HM Inspector is also concerned that the QA procedures that are being developed will not apply beyond the central Training Department. This will inevitably lead to a lack of corporate standards across the Force.</p> <p>HM Inspector strongly encourages the Force to introduce a corporate QA strategy and procedures in respect of all training and trainers as a matter of priority.</p>
<b>COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN TRAINING</b>	<p>The Force acknowledged that this remains an area for significant development. Although the Training Department has been represented on internal advisory groups, there is no formal strategy for engaging communities in the broader aspects of the training cycle.</p> <p>HM Inspector strongly urges the Force to develop a strategy for engaging relevant sections of the community, as appropriate in all aspects of the training cycle, from initial analysis of need through to evaluation.</p>

Area Examined	Findings
<p><b>EVALUATION OF TRAINING</b></p>	<p>The Force has one full time evaluation officer. However, at the time of the inspection, the incumbent had been undertaking other duties, which means that in practice, there has been minimal evaluation capacity for around eight months.</p> <p>Evaluation procedures are articulated in the recently developed training plan, but as already mentioned, this plan has not yet been published, and as such remains almost entirely aspirational.</p> <p>HM Inspector also found that the evaluation officer reports to the Head of Training, who in turn reports to the Head of Personnel. It is assumed that the TPP will become the commissioning body for evaluations in the future. HM Inspector would suggest that this arrangement lacks objective independence, and would encourage the Force to consider the line management arrangements for the evaluators post. More importantly, however, HM Inspector would urge the Force to address the current resourcing within the Training Department, to ensure that the evaluator’s post is fully utilised for its intended purpose.</p>
<p><b>COLLABORATION – EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS</b></p>	<p>The Force engages with a number of external agencies on a variety of training issues. The arrangements take the form of both formal training contracts, and voluntary arrangements. Additionally, the Force are also partners in multi-agency collaborative arrangements including initial child protection awareness training.</p>
<p><b>COLLABORATION – OTHER POLICE ORGANISATIONS</b></p>	<p>HM Inspector is aware that the Force is actively perusing collaborative arrangements within the east midlands region on a number of aspects of training. These arrangements, particularly the outcomes will be subject of HMIC inspections in the near future.</p>

Area Examined	Findings
<p><b>ADOPTION OF NATIONAL GUIDANCE</b></p>	<p>The Force has developed a technically sound process for the commissioning of new training events through the TPP. However, as already mentioned, the process is very new. Although there is evidence that it has been employed on a few occasions, HM Inspector is conscious of the need for both the process and the vehicle for implementing it to be publicised across the Force and adopted by all areas.</p> <p>The process is incorporated within the training plan/strategy, and the issues surrounding this have already been outlined in this report.</p> <p>Whilst the processes are sound, HM Inspector is concerned that the Force has not formally adopted the Centrex guidance across all training providers. It is essential, that corporate standards are introduced and maintained. HM Inspector would therefore encourage the Force to ensure that the Centrex guidance is compared with their own internally designed processes and that the outcome of these comparisons translates to corporate standards in relation to TNA, design, delivery and evaluation.</p>
<p><b>MAIN AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE FORCE</b></p>	<p>The Force identified a number of challenging areas to address. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• continuing to improve the client/contractor relationship;</li> <li>• improve the range of costing for training;</li> <li>• further strengthening regional collaboration; and</li> <li>• strengthening the involvement of communities in training.</li> </ul> <p>HM Inspector concurs that these areas are ones that the inspection also confirmed as necessary to address.</p>
<p><b>APPLICATION OF THE 4Cs SINCE THE REVIEW</b></p>	<p>The Force does not have a formal process to ensure the principles of Best Value are applied to new training events. Whilst the new training commissioning process could be used to ensure appropriate practice HM Inspector considers that the relevant forms need to be strengthened so that this is more explicit.</p>

Area Examined	Findings
<p><b>IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK</b></p>	<p>The Force has undertaken the mapping of some generic profiles against the NCF and will eventually take this work further to ensure that specialist roles are also included.</p> <p>The Force advised that the mapping of generic profiles was felt to be sufficient, as this would capture the majority of competencies required. HM Inspector would urge caution in making such an assumption, particularly in respect of those specialist roles that require the application of competencies in sensitive areas of policing.</p> <p>HM Inspector was informed that very little work had been undertaken in relation to mapping training courses against the ICF.</p>
<p><b>MONITORING PROCESS AND COMPLETION OF PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT REVIEWS FOR POLICE OFFICERS AND POLICE STAFF</b></p>	<p>Personal Development Reviews (PDR) are monitored at BCU and Force level.</p> <p>The Force has developed a monitoring mechanism in line with NSPIS HR and has trained appropriate personnel in its use.</p>
<p><b>BUSINESS PLANNING FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF TRAINING</b></p>	<p>Typically the business planning process for training takes place at the same time as the corporate cycle.</p> <p>HM Inspector is concerned that the business planning process for training for the year 2004/05 has effectively failed to comply with the majority of Home Office guidance. However, it now seems that the processes to improve this situation have been designed, and that an enabling management structure is beginning to emerge.</p> <p>HM Inspector advises the Force to continue to refine these processes and ensure that they are sufficiently robust prior to developing the CTP for 2005/06. In this respect, it is essential that the CTP has clear and direct links to organisational and BCU priorities.</p>
<p><b>PRIORITISATION MODEL FOR TRAINING</b></p>	<p>In the absence of clear links to corporate and BCU objectives in the incomplete CTP, HM Inspector considers that the prioritisation of training will be at best a highly subjective exercise.</p> <p>The TPP have reviewed the training plan for 2004/05, but as already explained, the relevant meeting was not minuted, and it is therefore not possible to see what criteria was applied.</p>

# Recommendations

## **Recommendation 1**

HM Inspector recommends that the Force develop its training strategy so that it is more aligned to the guidance given in relevant Home Office Circulars – particularly in relation to individual responsibilities

## **Recommendation 2**

HM Inspector recommends that the Force develop a training plan that is aligned to the guidance given in relevant Home Office Circulars. In particular, the plan should have clear links to corporate and BCU objectives

## **Recommendation 3**

HM Inspector recommends that the Force training plan is developed to ensure it captures all training in the Force irrespective of who provides it

## **Recommendation 4**

HM Inspector recommends that the Force and the Police Authority establish a formal mechanism to monitor the training plan on an ongoing basis. This should include the development of performance measures in relation to the delivery of the plan

## **Recommendation 5**

HM Inspector recommends that the Force develop a more distinct client/contractor arrangement that ensures that the client has a clear role in the commissioning of training and the contractor is held accountable for delivery

### **Recommendation 6**

**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 training is provided**

### **Recommendation 7**

**HM Inspector recommends that the Force develop structured implementation plans in respect of the reports concerned and these are regularly monitored through to completion**

### **Recommendation 8**

**HM Inspector recommends that the Force develop a single improvement plan, which captures all locally identified improvement actions as well as those that result from this or previous HMIC Training reports. The improvement plan should also capture any improvement actions, which have resulted from other relevant sources having an impact on training**

### **Recommendation 9**

**HM Inspector recommends that the Force and the Police Authority open dialogue to determine a more effective way of monitoring the improvement plan once it has been developed**

### **Recommendation 10**

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

### **Recommendation 11**

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

### **Recommendation 12**

HM Inspector recommends that the Force address the resourcing of the evaluation function for training. This should also ensure independence from the Training Department and should include a clear mechanism for commissioning and actioning of evaluation projects and their recommendations

### **Recommendation 13**

HM Inspector recommends that the Force ensure that all relevant personnel are conversant with, and are utilising national guidance in the form of the *Centrex Models for Learning and Development in the Police Service*. Alternatively, the Force should ensure that its own processes are benchmarked against this guidance, and these are used in a corporate way

### **Recommendation 14**

HM Inspector recommends that the Force develop a mechanism which ensures that the principles of Best Value are applied to all new training initiatives and that these are capable of audit

### **Recommendation 15**

HM Inspector recommends that the Force ensures that all training programmes are mapped against the ICF

### **Recommendation 16**

HM Inspector recommends that the Force and the Police Authority ensure that the business planning process for training is amended so that it is better able to respond to other BCU and departmental plans

### **Recommendation 17**

HM Inspector recommends that the Force develop a prioritisation mechanism for training which is objectively linked to organisational outcomes

# Judgements

## Judgement 1:

HM Inspector is concerned at the length of time it has taken the Force to develop the structures, policies and procedures necessary to improve the management and delivery of training in the Force. Many of these procedures, if not the majority were only finalised within a few weeks of the inspection taking place.

The Force continues to operate without a fully costed training plan, and the Police Authority has still not formally reviewed that which has been produced.

The development of the new processes is still not intended to formally embrace that training provided under devolved arrangements, and this extends to Quality Assurance processes.

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

## Judgement 2:

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

A number of positive aspirations were articulated to HM Inspector, all of which, should they be effectively managed and implemented ought to lead to significant improvement.

Since the inspection took place, the Force has liaised closely with HMIC on a range of issues that needed to be addressed in order to ensure there was a sustainable approach to implementing the necessary improvements.

The Force has produced a challenging overarching improvement plan, which seeks to address the issues raised in the inspection as well as some which had been identified internally. To support the plan, the Force has also revised internal monitoring arrangements, which ought to ensure that improvement actions are consistently and effectively monitored.

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

# Adult Learning Inspectorate

## Summary of Findings

The Adult Learning Inspectorate undertook an assessment of during the course of the HMIC (P&T) inspection. A summary of their findings is shown below.

### **Achievement and Standards**

- There is little data available about pass rates on courses and learner's success rates are not routinely monitored. However, there are good pass rates on the general-purpose dog training courses and the senior investigating officer courses. For these specialist courses pass rates are almost 100 per cent. This is in line with the pass rates for other Forces. Pass rates for probationer training is not monitored but nearly all of those in training are meeting the required standards. There is little formal assessment of learners' attainment on most other courses.

### **Quality of Education and Training**

- Training for senior investigating officers is good. The course is designed and taught by an external consultant. The trainers are well qualified, competent and experienced. They make excellent use of their own experiences as senior investigating officers. The course is well-planned and enables officers to build on the skills they are developing. Excellent use is made of case studies based on real crimes. There is a good mix of trainer led sessions and workshops. Trainers are skilful at involving all learners whilst ensuring that the sessions cover all of the planned topics. Effective use is made of initial assessment and pre-course materials to enable all the learners to start with the required basic knowledge. Assessment is carried out throughout the course and good use is made of individual feedback and action plans. The course team ensures that there is good communication with the operational teams so that the officers receive the support they require during on-the-job training. Once they have completed the course learners are invited to attend up-date sessions or new sessions which have been developed as a result of feedback from previous learners.
- Trainers make good use of a wide range of teaching methods during theory sessions. All trainers complete a basic police trainer's course but most go on to achieve a postgraduate qualification. Trainers develop good working relationships with learners and are careful to change the pace and style of the sessions to meet the learners needs.

- Good use is made of productive links with external agencies, specialist police departments and other police forces. Many courses include visits from guest speakers who have specialist knowledge and use their experiences to broaden the learner's knowledge. An assessor from another police force carries out final assessments for the initial general-purpose dog training. Although this is not required by police force regulations it ensures that each new handler undergoes objective assessment and helps to maintain a high standard. The modernisation project for probationer training includes collaborative exercises with a local FE college. Students from the college are used effectively in role-play scenarios which are observed by trainers. These exercises develop the new police officers' skills but also help to break down barriers between the police force and the local community. A similar exercise is carried out at a local community centre for gay, lesbian and bisexual men and women.
- The selection and training of tutor constables is ineffective. There is no formal selection process for tutor constables and no person specification for this role. A financial incentive is used to attract police officers to apply but this does not necessarily attract the best candidates for the role. Training for tutor constables is brief and superficial. There is no formal assessment at the end of the course and no minimum level of required knowledge or skill. Some probationers have unsuitable tutor constables and this promotes a divide between the on- and off-the-job training. It encourages the view that training is too idealistic and not related to the activities or culture of the working police force. There is no system to ensure good quality tutoring or avoid the promotion of poor working practices.
- There is a lack of specialist resources in many areas of training. The teaching rooms are bare and much of the seating is poor. In many cases learners are not able to take notes during sessions, as they have nowhere to rest their papers. There are insufficient resources to allow the required annual personal safety refresher training. Too many police officers have not completed their annual training – some for several years. These police officers may be putting both themselves and their colleagues at risk. One police fitness trainer is still not qualified as a trainer although he has been carrying out this role for four years. A lack of specialist assessors means that he can not achieve the qualification. The reduced level of fitness required of probationers and a lack of annual personal safety training makes it difficult to identify those officers who might be at risk due to poor fitness. The dog training section is operating at a bare minimum and it is not able to offer courses, which develop specialist skills. For example, training for firearm support dogs. The section is only just able to provide the necessary annual training days to re-licence dogs. The section is having difficulty in finding suitable dogs and the failure rate of dogs is high. Up to 80 per cent of dogs fail to complete their training. There is no effective system to provide replacement dogs either through links with local breeders or through a Force breeding programme. At the time of the inspection one new dog handler was about to start work with his third dog due to difficulties with the suitability of two previous dogs. This greatly delays the handler's training, wastes training resources, and is costly for the police force and frustrating and de-motivating for new handlers.

- There is thorough recording of all of the training, which a general purpose, drug detection or explosive detection dog completes. Each dog has a training book which forms a comprehensive history of the dogs' activities. The book includes action plans to meet development needs. These training records can be used as evidence of a dog's strengths and weaknesses in the various tasks it must complete.
- Most learners receive insufficient feedback during training to allow them to develop their skills effectively. For example, too often dog handling training consists of working the dogs and handlers through a number of activities with very little feedback which might improve their performance. If an exercise is very poorly completed the trainer offers useful help and guidance to improve it but almost no feedback is given for satisfactory performance. The recently introduced competence standards for dog handlers require that experienced handlers and dogs should work towards either an advanced or excellent standard. Although the Force is currently aiming to meet only the standard required for licensing, handlers are not receiving the feedback that might help them to advance to the next level. During training too much emphasis is placed on the performance of the dog rather than the handler. Insufficient time is allocated to providing individual feedback during probationer training. During personal safety refresher training feedback is limited to those having difficulty completing the tasks. Most learners are not able to develop their skills beyond a basic level.
- Insufficient use is made of assessment to monitor progress or to identify individual learning needs. This is particularly evident for probationer training where there is no on-going or final formal assessment. Lack of skill is then only identified by poor performance at work. There is no formal assessment for personal safety refresher courses. On practical course, such as dog handling courses, there is no assessment of learners' knowledge and understanding.
- There is poor planning of training. There is insufficient advance planning to ensure that the needs of the Force are met and insufficient succession planning. One probationer course had accepted a double intake to meet the Force's requirements for new officers. This resulted in some planned sessions being unsuitable, and in these cases the lesson plans were not adapted to meet the group's needs. For example, a session on drug and alcohol awareness with a visiting speaker was ineffective as the large number of learners inhibited discussion. Many of the small group activities could not be carried out. Often visiting speakers are inadequately briefed and the learning outcomes are too dependent on the questions that learners ask. Where speakers from specialist agencies contribute they focus too much on descriptions of their own role and actions rather than helping the learners to develop the skills and knowledge they will require. In some cases learners have identified this in their evaluation feedback but no action has been taken to improve the sessions. During the inspection, one planned session did not take place due to poor communication between the Force and a community centre. It was not clear how this session could be re-planned at a later date.

- Tutors provide satisfactory support. Police officers are encouraged to progress their careers once they have completed probation. Police officers may try a different specialism through an attachment. However, this is dependent on individual divisions and there is no central system. In some cases career planning is poor. For example, some trainers do not know how long they will continue in the role and do not know what use will be made of the training expertise they develop. New trainers should have mentors to support them in their new role but this does not always happen.



