



Inspecting policing
in the public interest



Anti-social Behaviour Inspection Report

Merseyside Police

Merseyside experiences a relatively higher level of anti-social behaviour (ASB) and a higher level of crime per head of population.

Our ASB review

In Spring 2010, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) carried out a review of anti-social behaviour in England and Wales. This included asking victims about their experience of reporting ASB to the police, and inspecting the quality of the processes that forces use in tackling and responding to the problem.

Working with the Police Science Institute at Cardiff University, we then used these results to answer the question of how the police can best tackle ASB.

What works?

Forces have the best chance to give victims a good service if they do three key things:

- Brief all relevant officers and staff (including neighbourhood policing teams, officers who respond to emergencies and CID officers) regularly and thoroughly about local ASB issues;
- Regularly gather and analyse data and information about ASB places, offenders and victims in their area, and use this information to allocate resources to tackle the problems; and
- Provide their neighbourhood policing teams with the right tools and resources to tackle ASB, and then monitor the plans the teams put in place to resolve local ASB issues.

This is how Merseyside Police is performing in these areas.

Are all relevant officers and staff regularly and thoroughly briefed about local ASB issues?

HMIC found that the way officers were briefed and the way they briefed themselves varied widely across the force, resulting in a lack of consistency. For instance, CID officers did not attend the briefings that were attended by neighbourhood policing team (NPT) officers, police community and support officers (PCSOs) and response officers. Officers questioned by HMIC did not expect CID to attend, as they thought ASB did not directly affect crime.

Is the force using ASB information to target its work in tackling ASB?

Each local policing area holds a daily management meeting, at which repeat and vulnerable ASB victims from the last 24 hours are identified. This information is passed to NPT inspectors, to ensure that resources are allocated to deal with the issues. This meeting is supplemented by separate ASB management, at which hotspots are identified and targeted. Recommendations are made on the deployment of the centrally based ASB Taskforce which supports local officers in tackling larger scale problems.

Do neighbourhood policing teams have the right tools and resources to tackle ASB, and are the plans they put in place to resolve local ASB issues monitored?

There was good evidence of NPTs working with partners to solve long-term ASB problems. For instance, HMIC found plans in place aimed at tackling particular ASB hotspots. There were, however, inconsistencies: in one NPT, each ward manager has to produce a three-month neighbourhood plan prioritising responses to local ASB problems, which the inspector reviews every three months; in another, plans are only recorded and completed by NPT officers; while elsewhere they are produced for all local priorities. Regardless of the recording differences, HMIC found very good evidence of solving ASB problems. Merseyside Police would, however, benefit from contacting other forces to consider options for more efficient and combined IT systems.

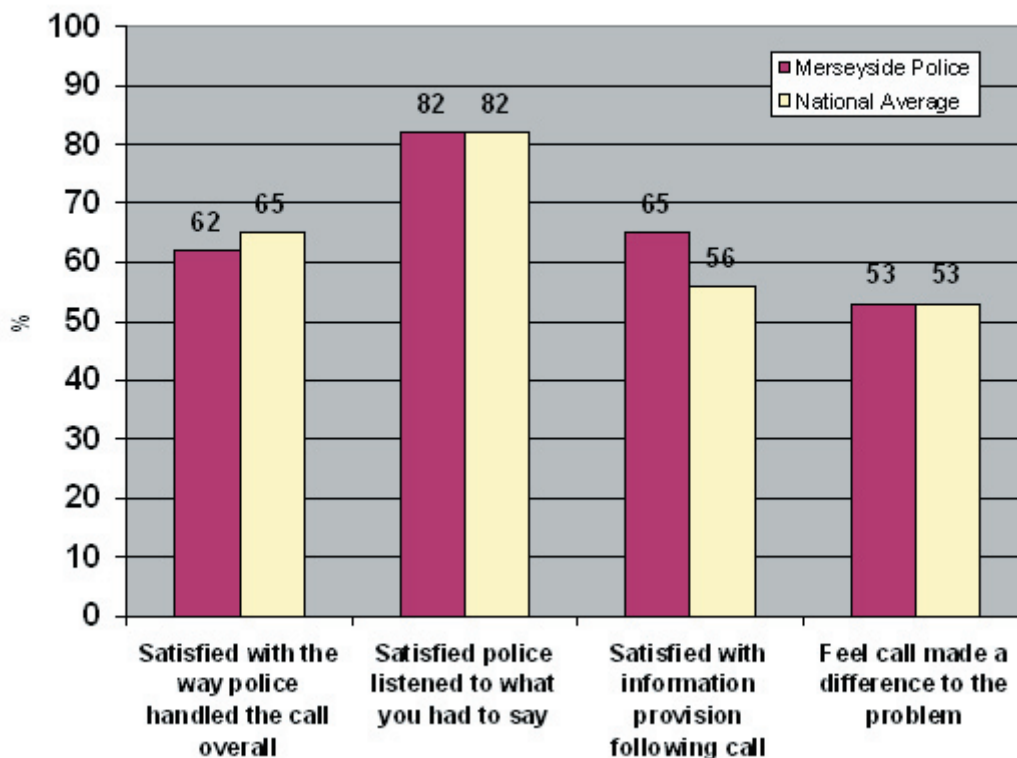
Is ASB a priority for the force?

ASB features in the policing plan as a force priority. Staff are aware of the importance of tackling ASB. In terms of the level of resources devoted to ASB, the anti-social behaviour units in each local policing area, as well as the level of analysis conducted on ASB issues, show that the commitment to tackling ASB is high.

Results of the victim satisfaction survey

We surveyed 100 people who reported ASB in Merseyside during September 2009. They were asked a range of questions about their perceptions of ASB generally and their experience in reporting ASB to the police.

Experience of reporting ASB



From the results, it can be seen that the force is performing broadly in line with the national average for the areas considered in the survey.

In addition to the above results, fewer respondents than the national average were aware of what the police had done to address the problem they rang up about. This was, however, offset by them being satisfied with the level of information provided after their call, which was in line with the national average.

