

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary



HMIC Inspection Report

Merseyside Police Major Crime

July 2008



Merseyside Police – HMIC Inspection Report

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Introduction to HMIC Inspections

For a century and a half, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) has been charged with examining and improving the efficiency of the police service in England and Wales, with the first HM Inspectors (HMIs) being appointed under the provisions of the County and Borough Police Act 1856. In 1962, the Royal Commission on the Police formally acknowledged HMIC's contribution to policing.

HMIs are appointed by the Crown on the recommendation of the Home Secretary and report to HM Chief Inspector of Constabulary, who is the Home Secretary's principal professional policing adviser and is independent of both the Home Office and the police service. HMIC's principal statutory duties are set out in the Police Act 1996. For more information, please visit HMIC's website at <http://inspectorates.homeoffice.gov.uk/hmic/>.

In 2006, HMIC conducted a broad assessment of all 43 Home Office police forces in England and Wales, examining 23 areas of activity. This baseline assessment had followed a similar process in 2005, and thus created a rich evidence base of strengths and weaknesses across the country. However, it is now necessary for HMIC to focus its inspection effort on those areas of policing that are not data-rich and where qualitative assessment is the only feasible way of judging both current performance and the prospects for improvement. This, together with the critical factor that HMIC should concentrate its scrutiny on high-risk areas of policing – in terms of risk both to the public and to the service's reputation – pointed inexorably to a focus on what are known collectively as 'protective services'. In addition, there is a need to apply professional judgement to some key aspects of leadership and governance, where some quantitative measures exist but a more rounded assessment is appropriate.

Having reached this view internally, HMIC consulted key stakeholders, including the Home Office, the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) and the Association of Police Authorities (APA). A consensus emerged that HMIC could add greater value by undertaking more probing inspections of fewer topics. Stakeholders concurred with the emphasis on protective services but requested that neighbourhood policing remain a priority for inspection until there is evidence that it has been embedded in everyday police work.

HMIC uses a rigorous and transparent methodology to conduct its inspections and reach conclusions and judgements. All evidence is gathered, verified and then assessed against specific grading criteria (SGC) drawn from an agreed set of national (ACPO-developed) standards. However, the main purpose of inspection is not to make judgements but to drive improvements in policing. Both professional and lay readers are urged, therefore, to focus not on the headline grades but on the opportunities for improvement identified within the text of this report.

HMIC Business Plan for 2008/09

HMIC's business plan (available at <http://inspectorates.homeoffice.gov.uk/hmic/our-work/business-plan/>) reflects our continued focus on:

- protective services – including the management of public order, civil contingencies and critical incidents phase 3 of the programme in autumn 2008/spring 2009;
- counter-terrorism – including all elements of the national CONTEST strategy;
- strategic services – such as information management and professional standards; and
- the embedding of neighbourhood policing.

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In addition, we are currently developing a scrutiny of strategic resource leverage, and are liaising with the Audit Commission on a methodology for the anticipated inspection of police authorities.

HMIC's priorities for the coming year are set in the context of the wide range of strategic challenges that face both the police service and HMIC, including the need to increase service delivery against a backdrop of reduced resources. With this in mind, the business plan for 2008/09 includes for the first time a 'value for money' plan that relates to the current Comprehensive Spending Review period (2008–11).

Our intention is to move to a default position where we do not routinely carry out all-force inspections, except in exceptional circumstances; we expect to use a greater degree of risk assessment to target activity on those issues and areas where the most severe vulnerabilities exist, where most improvement is required or where the greatest benefit to the service can be gained through the identification of best practice.

Programmed Frameworks

During phase 2 of HMIC's inspection programme, we examined force responses to major crime, serious and organised crime and neighbourhood policing in each of the 44 forces of England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

While this document includes the full graded report for the major crime inspection, the inspection relating to serious and organised crime is detailed in a separate thematic report.

Major Crime

This framework covers the force effectiveness and efficiency in dealing with homicide and other major crimes that will normally require a force to set up a major incident room. There is only one statutory performance indicator at present, although other indicators shown in the report facilitate appropriate comparisons of performance between forces; the indicators suggested give some context regarding the volume of such crimes, success in detections and trends over time, but they need to be interpreted with care. The assessment is primarily qualitative, with a judgement as to the extent to which the force predicts and prevents major crime as opposed to solely discovering and reacting to such crime. Major crime includes any investigation that requires the deployment of a senior investigating officer and specialist assets.

The grading system has changed this year to allow for a single ACPO threshold standard against which forces will be assessed as compliant, not compliant or exceeding compliance. It is recognised that collaborative arrangements can be used where appropriate. At a high level, the ACPO lead summarises the threshold standard as set out below:

- Intelligence – Compliance with the 2005 ACPO National Intelligence Model guidance on the shared understanding of and response to the risks and demands of the major crime threat, with effective intelligence and data sharing internally, with neighbouring forces and with key partners.
- Prevention – Effective proactive partnerships to prevent major crime in compliance with the European Convention on Human Rights; this includes precursor offending and options such as Osman warnings.
- Enforcement – Compliance with the 2006 ACPO *Murder Investigation Manual* and guidance in the 2005 ACPO major incident room standardised administrative

procedures, having sufficient resources to meet and manage the predicted demand and contingency to meet extraordinary demand from major crime investigation and review.

- Performance management and resilience – Efficiency through robust performance measures linking costs/resources, inputs and outputs to goals (ie the outcomes of reduction and prevention, detection and conviction work).

Future Programmed Inspections

Following these serious and organised crime and major crime assessments, HMIC plans work in the following areas:

Inspection area	Dates
Neighbourhood policing	April 2008 – September 2008
Developing citizen focus	April 2008 – September 2008
Civil contingencies	September 2008 – May 2009
Public order	September 2008 – May 2009
Critical incidents	September 2008 – May 2009
Professional standards	June 2009 – December 2009
Information management	June 2009 – December 2009
Leadership	June 2009 – December 2009

The Grading Process

HMIC has moved to a new grading system based on the national standards; forces will be deemed to meet the standard, exceed the standard or fail to meet the standard.

Meeting the standard

HMIC uses the ACPO agreed standards as the starting point for its SGC. The standards against which forces are measured are communicated to all forces and police authorities some time before the inspection starts. The standards are set at a level that ensures that risk to the public is identified, managed and mitigated as far as is feasible; all forces should find the standards achievable.

Exceeding the standard

Where a force can demonstrate capacity and capability that exceed the agreed national standards, it is expected that risk assessment and business cases justify the availability of 'additional' resources, and that they are deployed appropriately. For example, some forces require a higher level of capacity/capability to counter extraordinary threat levels or to discharge a regional or lead force remit. Without such a rationale, an over-investment would almost certainly represent poor value for money and thus attract criticism.

Failing to meet the standard

This assessment is appropriate when a force cannot provide evidence that it meets a number of significant criteria that correlate with the ACPO national standards. Where evidence is provided to confirm that the particular issue has been properly risk assessed and the risk is being managed, then the report may not necessarily draw an adverse conclusion. The assessment may also give some credit in situations where a force has the ability to remedy any deficiencies promptly, in terms of time and investment levels needed.

Developing Practice

In addition to assessing force performance, one of HMIC's key roles is to identify and share good practice across the police service. Much good practice is identified as HMIC conducts its assessments and is reflected (described as a 'strength') in the body of the report. In addition, each force is given the opportunity to submit more detailed examples of its good practice. HMIC has therefore, in some reports, selected suitable examples and included them in the report. The key criteria for each example are that the work has been evaluated by the force and the good practice is easily transferable to other forces; each force has provided a contact name and telephone number or email address, should further information be required. HMIC has not conducted any independent evaluation of the examples of good practice provided.

Force Overview and Context

Geographical Description of Force Area

Merseyside is a metropolitan area covering approximately 160,000 acres bordering Greater Manchester, Lancashire and Cheshire. There are five local authority areas within Merseyside: Knowsley, Liverpool, Sefton, St Helens and Wirral. The city of Liverpool, with its associated seaport and industrial hinterland, lies at the centre.

Demographic Description of Force Area

Merseyside is enormously diverse economically, racially and culturally, with a population of just under 1.4 million. This reflects a significant change, given the decline in Merseyside's population over a number of decades, and is a sign of recent and sustained economic growth. Liverpool's status as European Capital of Culture offers further opportunities for regeneration.

The first phase of significant investment in Liverpool city centre – Liverpool 1 – opened in May 2008. The completion of the project in 2009 will complete the biggest retail development of its kind in Europe. The Port of Liverpool, a barometer for the success of the whole of Merseyside, is the largest freeport zone in the UK and the main UK port for container trade with the USA. A new £19 million cruise terminal opened in 2007 and has already led to the berth of several cruise liners and with them, thousands of tourists. John Lennon Airport is one of the fastest growing regional airports in Europe.

Structural Description of Force including Staff Changes at Chief Officer Level

Merseyside Police is led by Chief Constable Bernard Hogan-Howe, supported by a chief officer group consisting of a deputy chief constable (DCC), four assistant chief constables (ACCs) covering the operations, operations support, personnel and citizen focus portfolios and a senior police staff member director of resources who is ACPO equivalent.

The force has an annual budget of over £349 million, and a budget establishment of 4,557 police officers, plus 2,748 police staff (including police community and traffic support officers (PCTSOs)) for 2007/08. To ensure policing services meet the needs of local communities, the force structure reflects the boundaries of the five local authorities. Basic command units (BCUs) are coterminous with local authority areas with the exception of Liverpool which, due to its size and policing complexity, is divided into two policing areas: North and South Liverpool.

Strategic Priorities

To enable the force to achieve its vision – 'to provide the best police service in the UK' – its total policing strategy aims to utilise the total resources of the force and direct them towards three strategic priorities:

- **Total War on Crime** – where opportunities for crime are reduced, the law is robustly enforced and offenders are arrested and successfully prosecuted;
- **Total Care for Victims** – where the needs of the victim, witness and law-abiding citizen are at the heart of the service provided; and

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- **Total Professionalism** – where an efficient, effective and motivated workforce provides a professional, quality service to all.

In the last two years, the performance of the force in delivering crime reduction has been the best of any force in the UK. An 11% reduction in overall crime in 2006/07 has been followed by an 18% reduction in 2007/08.

This significant and sustained improvement in force performance has enabled it to focus on a reduced number of policing priorities, confident in the knowledge that good performance will be maintained or improved in other areas. Policing priorities for 2008/09 include:

- anti-social behaviour (ASB);
- serious violent crime – with a focus on domestic violence, sexual offences and hate crime;
- gun crime;
- protective services;
- improving public satisfaction;
- neighbourhood policing;
- improving care for victims and witnesses;
- using technology in the war on crime;
- efficient management of assets – with a focus on the estate and vehicles;
- quality – with a focus on forensic science and data quality; and
- people issues.

In all of the above, the force wants to deliver a quality, high performance service that gets it right first time, is tailored to individual needs and achieves value for money. There is also emphasis on crime prevention – not only focusing on detection as a means of solving crime, but identifying potential for crime and disorder and doing something about it before it occurs.

The recent introduction of a two-tiered performance management regime supports its strategic direction and reflects force improvements in performance and its policing priorities. Targets have been set for performance indicators which are most closely aligned to its policing priorities. Performance against these targets will be subject to stringent scrutiny and reported to the police authority. All other indicators have directional targets.

A programme of efficiencies and savings amounting to £3 million will enable the force to recruit an additional 100 police officers in 2008/09. These officers will be deployed in support of policing priorities, particularly neighbourhood policing and gun crime.

Key initiatives to improve performance during 2007/08

Key corporate initiatives

Collaboration (strategic partnerships)

The joint agency group (JAG), chaired by the force lead for gun crime (detective chief superintendent matrix), and the multi-agency governance group (MAGG), chaired by the DCC, are used to deliver co-ordinated activity through criminal justice and partner agencies, including the independent advisory group (IAG). The JAG is a tactical group meeting weekly to track progress and the MAGG is a strategic group to clear blockages at the highest levels of partner agencies.

The force has allocated additional officers into those neighbourhoods where gun crime is more prevalent. In these locations, officers patrol 24 hours a day to provide a strong reassuring presence for local people. They also act as a deterrent for those intent on becoming involved in gun crime.

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As one of ten Home Office demonstrator sites, the force has entered into collaborative arrangements with Lancashire and Cheshire Constabularies to establish a joint team to tackle serious and organised crime. Best practice and the lessons learned from this arrangement are being reported to the Home Office so that, where appropriate, they can be adopted nationally. More recently, the force has worked with the same forces to establish a strategic roads policing unit to tackle the criminal use of the region's motorway network.

The north-west and south-west collaborative agreement, signed in February 2008, supports the procurement of forensic science services. The agreement, which involves 14 forces including Merseyside, helps to ensure the provision of quality and value for money forensic science services and is consistent with one of the aims of the force, which is to reduce the average cost of forensic identifications.

A police patrol vessel, *Consortium*, has been acquired by six forces in the north west – Merseyside, Cheshire, Cumbria, Greater Manchester, Lancashire and North Wales – and supports the detection and prevention of crime as well as providing high-visibility patrols of the region's waterways.

To enhance the quality of service provided to victims of sexual offences, the force has worked with partners to establish a sexual assault referral centre. This aims to be a centre of excellence, providing a complete package of help and support tailored to the needs of victims.

The force continues to be involved in a number of statutory and non-statutory strategic partnerships. Through involvement in each of the five local strategic partnerships and crime and disorder reduction partnerships (CDRPs) on Merseyside and the Merseyside Criminal Justice Board, the force has played an active role in aligning policing and community safety priorities and performance targets. With the support of regional government, the force has worked with its strategic partners to ensure a consistency of approach across the respective plans and recently renegotiated local area agreements.

Representative workforce (including diversity)

The positive action team works with communities, groups and agencies across the force area, together with internal departments, specifically targeting under-represented groups to:

- identify people who may be interested in a career within the organisation;
- identify people who may be interested in joining the wider police family in a voluntary capacity;
- mentor and support applicants; and
- promote the concept of positive action.

The team aims to encourage and support individuals through the application process up to the point of assessment, to enable the force to meet its recruitment targets.

During 2007, the force has under the 'True' project, championed by the Chief Constable, encouraged the development of females in the organisation. This has included a number of events to encourage applicants from females to departments where they are under-represented. The force has recently introduced a women's network.

Workforce modernisation

The force continues to review its police staff functions as part of an ongoing exercise to develop the most effective and efficient organisational structures. Initially, communications and marketing, personnel, finance and audit and performance functions have been subject to review.

Members of the extended police family support delivery of neighbourhood policing. PCTSOs and members of the Special Constabulary work alongside police officers, providing reassurance in local communities. The force also encourages the involvement of community volunteers and members of the volunteer cadets, either in office-based roles or in support of non-confrontational operational roles.

Protective services

The force has completed an initial baseline assessment to ensure that it meets the ACPO minimum standards. Where appropriate, a gap analysis and action plan have been prepared. This will be developed further once an ACPO minimum standards 'definition and criteria document' and 'implementation support plan' are made available to forces. This assessment is not mutually exclusive, as most of the protective services workstreams are affiliated to National Policing Improvement Agency (NPIA) doctrines in the form of written codes, guidance or practical advice.

Merseyside Police is also part of a joint team working with Cheshire, Cumbria, Lancashire and North Wales tackling serious and organised crime. It is one of ten 'demonstrator sites' that will aid and promote joint working for the delivery of cross-border protective services and collaborative practices.

Force Performance Overview

Force development since 2007 inspections

The force introduced a revised approach to the way in which it tackles gun and gang-related crime. Its gun crime strategy focuses on the illegal supply of firearms, their criminal use and the criminal use and possession of firearms. The strategy is delivered through a robust approach to enforcement and delivery of education and diversionary packages to deter and prevent young people from involvement with guns and gangs.

This approach has been supported by the appointment of a detective chief superintendent to co-ordinate the efforts of neighbourhood policing teams, matrix and partners. It has led to the creation of a strategic partnership, referred to earlier, specifically to address this issue.

In response to the government's tackling gangs action programme and local concerns, the force deployed an additional 55 officers to neighbourhoods most affected by gun and gang-related crime. In affected neighbourhoods, there is a visible police presence on foot or cycle 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, and a dedicated officer in secondary schools. In addition, the force has created a new gun crime syndicate to target the illegal supply of firearms.

The number of officers involved in the safer schools programme has increased. Located in schools in areas most affected by gun and gang-related crime as well as ASB, they serve to deter young people from involvement in crime. They are supported through ongoing work with partners to implement youth diversionary schemes as well as education programmes, including the national schools education programme, Miss Dorothy.

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In addition, the force has contributed to the development of a school-based internet site known as SHARP (schools help and advice reporting page). This provides a confidential web-enabled reporting system for incidents which occur within the school and local community. It also allows officers to communicate key messages, including the dangers of involvement with guns and gangs.

In March 2008, the force hosted a three-day European Serious and Organised Crime Conference. This brought together experts from various partner agencies across Europe and served as a vehicle to promote and enhance partnership arrangements and to identify and share good practice.

The force continues to lead the way nationally in its application and use of automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) technology. In September 2007, the force opened a dedicated ANPR control room from which ANPR systems and CCTV cameras can be monitored. This enables the force to effectively deploy resources and improve the speed with which it is able to respond to incidents.

Other technologies have been adopted, or are in the process of being implemented, including the fitting of mobile data systems to all appropriate vehicles. Trials of vehicles equipped with a range of technologies supported by fibre optics have proved successful and will be rolled out across the force; trials of facial recognition systems in custody air locks continue. Merseyside was first force in the country to acquire a microdrone to help combat ASB.

The force's drive towards the provision of quality services has led to the recent reorganisation of its training and staff development functions. A new academy approach with dedicated faculties covering aspects of policing activity has been adopted. The first faculty to open – the crime faculty – is now an accredited partner of the University of Central Lancashire. Development of additional faculties continues. More recently, the force received a Queen's Innovation Award in recognition of its programme of support to help student officers with hidden disabilities such as dyslexia.

To improve the quality of service to victims and witnesses, each BCU has created a customer service desk. A dedicated road traffic collision justice unit has also been created in response to the specific concerns of victims of road traffic collisions. More widely, a number of operations have been run across the force to elevate the importance of maintaining contact with victims and witnesses to ensure they are kept informed of progress in relation to their case. Chief officers have also contacted victims directly to gauge public satisfaction with the services provided by the force.

In September 2007, the force's citizen focus team won the prestigious National Customer Service Award, Team of the Year (Public Services and Education.) This recognises excellence in the provision of customer services. The force also received national recognition for its efficient use of energy – the first force in the country to receive the prestigious E.ON energy award, recognising excellence in energy management.

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Major Crime

GRADE	Exceeds the standard – and delivering at the appropriate level for the higher risks being faced.
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Contextual factors

This element of the inspection report details Merseyside Police's capacity and capability to identify and assess the risks from major crime, as well as the response in preventing and investigating these crime types, prioritising those which pose the greatest threat to individuals or communities.

	2006	2007	Change	MSF** group mean
Life-threatening and gun crime per 1,000 population	1.462	0.989	-32.35%	0.784
Number of abductions per 10,000 population	0.000	0.022	Not Applicable	0.004
% of abduction crimes detected/convicted	Not Applicable	66.67%	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Number of attempted murders per 10,000 population	0.271	0.241	-11.07%	0.196
% of attempted murder crimes detected/convicted	54.05%	36.36%	-17.69pp*	69.29%
Number of blackmail offences per 10,000 population	0.322	0.161	-50.00%	0.210
% of blackmail offences detected/convicted	43.18%	36.36%	-6.82pp*	34.98%
Number of kidnappings per 10,000 population	0.556	0.402	-27.70%	0.438
% of kidnapping crimes detected/convicted	48.68%	47.27%	-1.41pp*	45.67%
Number of manslaughter per 10,000 population	0.007	0.015	+114.29%	0.020
% of manslaughter crimes detected/convicted	100.00%	100.00%	Opp*	Not Applicable
Number of murders per 10,000 population	0.146	0.212	+45.21%	0.159
% of murders detected/convicted	105.00%	79.31%	-25.69pp*	90.03%

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Number of rapes per 10,000 population	2.289	1.799	-21.41%	2.541
% of rapes detected/convicted	22.36%	21.54%	-0.82pp*	27.72%

*'pp' is percentage points

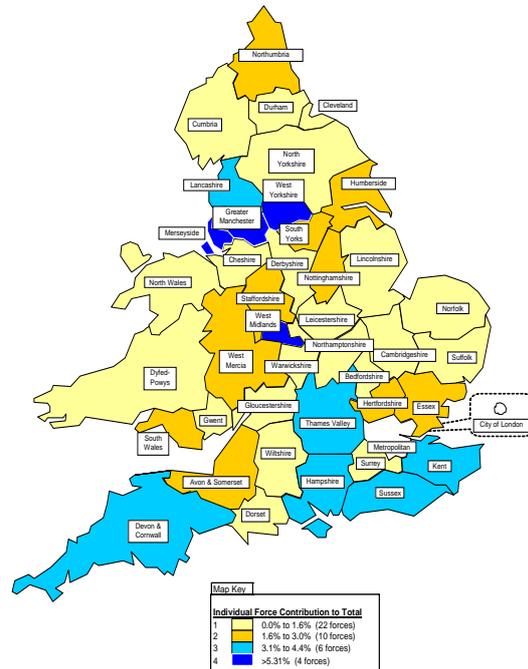
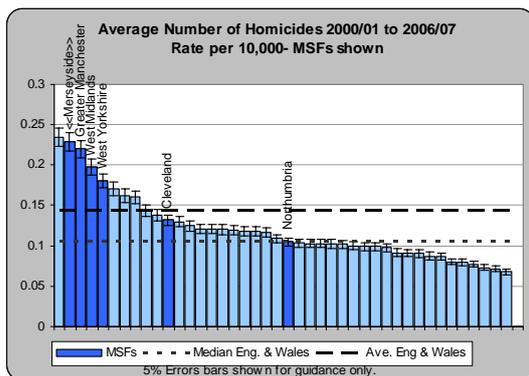
**Most similar family (MSF) for Merseyside is Cleveland, Greater Manchester, Northumbria, West Midlands and West Yorkshire

From the statutory performance indicator (SPI) data contained in the table above, it can be seen that the crime types of attempted murder, murder and life-threatening and gun crime pose a threat to Merseyside Police. The rates of offences for attempted murder (per 10,000 population) and life-threatening and gun crime (per 1,000 population) are in excess of the MSF average and are among the worst in England and Wales; however, it should be noted that both rates fell in 2007. The rate of offences for murder (per 10,000 population) rose in 2007 and is above the MSF average and among the worst in England and Wales.

The SPI data also indicates that major crime investigation in Merseyside Police is less effective than the rest of the MSF group. Merseyside is performing at a level below the MSF average for sanction detections in the categories of attempted murder, murder and rape offences. The sanction detection rates for all three of these crime types fell in 2007, although not significantly for rape.

The National Protective Services Analysis Tool (NPSAT), released in September 2007, revealed that Merseyside faces an exceptional level of demand in respect of the policing response to homicide offences.

Homicides (2001/02 to 2006/07), Contribution to Total, Excl. MPS



In the long term, the force is above the national average and after an increase in 2007 is above the MSF average.

Merseyside is bordered by two other forces, which also indicate raised demand for this crime type.

Intelligence

The force has strong dedicated analytical resources to meet the identified demands from major crime, supplying intelligence products that drive the energies of the force. The force has fully committed to major crime investigation with the requisite staff, accommodation, equipment and funding.

Strengths

- The force intelligence and security bureau (ISB) structure gathers and provides intelligence across a wide range of policing activities. Intelligence is tiered into levels 1 to 3, commensurate with accountabilities for delivery against criminal activities. The ISB structure is further supported by specialist, dedicated, analytical capabilities within the force crime operations unit (FCOU), focusing on homicide, gun crime, Proceeds of Crime Act (POCA) activities and public protection. Major crime investigations are effectively serviced by intelligence assets within the force and are provided with specialist inputs for enquiries covering other countries and force areas.
- The force has improved the force intelligence system (FIS) in response to recommendations from the Bichard Inquiry regarding intelligence in paper records with no search facility available. Training has taken place to enable direct inputting for both police officers and police staff who have access to the FIS. The benefits will ensure that: intelligence is recorded more speedily; intelligence is searchable upon input; the double keying of intelligence is reduced for all staff; there is less duplication; backlogs are reduced, as are the costs of printing and saving intelligence logs.
- The FCOU has further developed the post of a senior crime scene investigator (CSI), belonging to matrix, who evaluates all scenes. In addition, a researcher/analyst conducts mapping and is developing enhanced forensic analysis/mapping around the criminal use of firearms.
- Joint operations with adjoining forces target Merseyside criminals. These operations are managed through the regional intelligence unit (RIU), which is chaired by the ACC (operations support). This collaborative approach is becoming effective, with Merseyside officers working with other forces, eg cash-in-transit offences within forces in the region.
- Analysts are often rotated through the FCOU to ensure that they have an awareness of other specialist areas of the business. This provides opportunities for development and ensures that the organisational systems and practices are being subject to review and scrutiny. There are dedicated analysts for cannabis, sex offenders (child exploitation and online protection), firearms/forensic opportunities using the discharge database, the gun culture, organised crime group (OCG) mapping and Class A drugs.
- National intelligence model (NIM) compliance is subject to a performance matrix and is used as a guide for gap awareness in analysts skills and training needs. Basic command unit (BCU) performance is indicated by a traffic light system to reflect levels of compliance. There are dedicated analysts for reflex, the public protection unit (PPU) and roads policing, as well as having an embedded prison liaison officer to monitor prisoners in jail for intelligence purposes.

- The ISB has trained all the researchers and analysts in force as well as providing training for all new police recruits and police community support officers (PCSOs). Training days are delivered for local authority neighbourhood wardens, fire advocates and the Government Office for the North West (GONW).
- Major crime investigations are undertaken principally by the FCOU and the force major investigation team (FMIT) syndicates and the force can also draw on the matrix teams and other specialist central resources. BCUs deal with agreed levels of major crime within the force policy. There is evidence of significant resources being deployed against major crime, together with good levels of equipment, funding and accommodation.
- The dedicated reflex unit benefited from £738,000 funding and has enabled the force to focus on immigration issues and the criminal activity which is associated with human trafficking. The reflex team consists of both police and officers from the immigration service. It has a dedicated analytical capability and is supported by one immigration analyst and two immigration enforcement officers.

The force seeks and shares intelligence about level 2 and level 3 major crime types through partnerships. This work is assessed to be leading edge and very effective. The force's community impact assessments to evaluate risk following major crime are extensive and can be demonstrated in a number of high profile cases which have attracted national media attention.

Strengths

- The force has strongly embedded effective working practices with the local authority, other agencies and government enforcement agencies. Co-location and intelligence sharing complies with the management of police information (MoPI) and takes place at both BCU and force level to enable effective sharing and cross-fertilisation of information and procedures. Some of the areas identified as good practice are the embedded local safeguarding children professionals, probation staff, immigration officers and local authority neighbourhood managers.
- Intelligence in the force is geared towards clear communication of information and requirements between the ISB and the operational level, including neighbourhoods. There is a well acknowledged system which delivers this to target neighbourhood policing areas on a weekly basis following the weekly operations review meeting (WORM), as well as the areas identified as a priority through the community mapping/monitoring which takes place. This includes gun crime, multi-agency public protection arrangements (MAPPAs) issues and major crime. This is supplemented by local intelligence requirements at BCU level. The dedicated source units (DSUs) task covert human intelligence sources (CHISs) to gather information and intelligence about criminal lifestyles and the finances of target nominals on the BCUs.
- Community impact assessments (CIA)s are carried out on a scheduled, as well as bespoke, basis around major incidents/crimes. Senior investigating officers (SIOs) use them as key tools in managing investigations, involving IAGs and key individual networks (KINs) in the process. The communication and marketing department plays a key role in this activity and provides advice and additional support.
- The homicide prevention strategy includes the intelligence requirements around target, victim and situational profiles. An understanding of theme profiling has identified a developing shift from traditional family gang-related culture to an armed, violent, individualistic, acquisitive culture, showing little regard for behavioural boundaries or for life and property. Having recognised this, the force has put in place a number of force and BCU training, procedural and partnership initiatives to address this change.
- The force has links to police organisations and statutory agencies nationally and within Europe. The force attends north-west surveillance meetings, where tactics, training and lessons learnt are discussed. Cheshire and South Yorkshire have visited the force for best practice in relation to the handling of gun crime intelligence.
- The joint intelligence group is based in Liverpool. Regular updates are received from the joint terrorism analysis centre and ACPO TAM (terrorism and allied matters), which produces weekly documents via the national community tension team.
- The force is progressing partnership arrangements and a closer liaison between community leaders, key individuals and minority groups. The community contact database has recently been reviewed and data cleansed, leaving 182 key individuals identified. The force is active in being able to identify the impact of legislation and

risks which may become apparent, and links with crime and disorder reduction partnerships (CDRPs) and CDRP reviews to ascertain risks.

Work in progress

- There is an ongoing programme of work to raise the profile of counter-terrorism and the quality of intelligence about these matters. This includes police officers and the wider police family, including lecturers at universities, managers in prisons and chief executives.

The FSA has analysed the trends in relation to major crime comprehensively. Consequently, the force control strategy is found to be similarly thorough. Problem profiles for gun and gang crime, homicide, OCGs, including Class A drugs, criminal lifestyle offences and cannabis cultivation, violent crime, specifically commercial robbery/cash and valuables in transit, anti-social behaviour, hate crime, roads policing, immigration-related crime and terrorism are extensive, with links to force and BCU level plans. There is a wealth of evidence that the force understands the threat posed by other life-threatening issues.

Strengths

- The force and police authority have produced a local strategy plan 2006-09, which reflects national and local policing issues, including the Home Secretary's priorities for all forces as set out in the national community safety plan. The local strategy plan explains the 'total policing' philosophy and how it embraces neighbourhood policing, with a focus on serious and organised crime along with the role of support departments. The plan is built on the three pillars of Merseyside Police's total policing and the blueprint for service improvement, which are firmly embedded and integral elements of the successful delivery of the vision – total war on crime, total victim care and total professionalism – strategic priorities and performance targets.
- The force control strategy is focused on violent crime: the criminal use of firearms; OCGs, including Class A drugs, criminal lifestyle offences and cannabis cultivation. Violent crime specifically: commercial robbery/cash and valuables in transit. Anti-social behaviour (ASB), hate crime, roads policing, immigration-related crime and terrorism. There is a homicide reduction policy which features threats and opportunities arising from the prevention of domestic violence, youth culture/guns/drugs as well as the thriving night-time economy.
- The SIA is based on a full understanding of the nature and development of criminal behaviour in Merseyside. The OCG mapping identified the groups operating within force boundaries and those operating in forces nationally. Intelligence has prioritised activities using a threat/harm matrix and targets are allocated to levels 1, 2 and 3 for action. The assets in the FCOU and the matrix teams are tasked effectively at both force and regional tasking and co-ordination groups (TCGs), and concentrate on key areas for disruption, prevention and enforcement. The WORM ensures that the use of resources is maximised and that there is clarity of ownership between BCUs and the centre.
- The embedded PPU's work at a force level and family crime investigation units at BCU level, ensuring that there is a constant overview of potentially dangerous persons within the force. The force has also introduced risk factors around mental health issues to ensure that communities are protected from harm. This was identified as a real strength during the protecting vulnerable people inspection in 2007.
- The force response to gun crime is Operation Embar, which was introduced in 2006. Members of this group are dedicated to and investigate all firearms discharges, injuries and intelligence and they co-ordinate forensic recovery and investigations as well as using the national firearms database. There have been significant savings on forensics by having a dedicated team covering intelligence and investigation. Intelligence flow and source coverage is good, with Operation Embar conducting on average four warrants a week. Significant finds of ammunition and firearms have been recorded.

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- In Knowsley, the force has recognised the increasing numbers of firearms discharges and injuries and has obtained funding for additional officers for the BCU. These will form a 'gun crime unit' and will work with Operation Embar in tackling gun-related crime issues, including discharges. Activity to target gun-related crime is contained in the BCU control strategy and is an intelligence requirement.
- The force has developed community profiling, which has identified a developing shift from traditional family gang-related culture to an armed, violent, individualistic, acquisitive culture, showing little regard for behavioural boundaries or for life and property. Having recognised this, the force has put in place a number of force and BCU training, procedural and partnership initiatives to address this change.

Trend analysis and problem profiles are routinely shared with partners and BCUs. There is a trigger plan for 'hot briefing' whenever a significant change in either the major crime threat or, where the nature of the analysis demands, a fast-time response. Information-sharing protocols with key partners, such as HMRC, the DWP, the UKBA, the SIA, accident and emergency health and the RIU are evident and are highly effective. Weekly operational review meetings chaired by the ACC provide a monitoring of activity and identified risks and threats. The force can demonstrate that it is on track to reach full MoPI compliance by 2010.

Strengths

- There are systematic intelligence-sharing arrangements with all partners in the identification of emerging threats from major and serious crime. Embedded staff from other agencies routinely take part in tasking and co-ordination meetings, which allows ready assessment and agreement of joint activities to disrupt and enforce. The local authority partnerships (both the local strategic partnership and the CDRP) provide good systems for assessing and actioning intelligence.
- MAPPA arrangements are well embedded and effective, with much evidence of robust review and accountability taking place. The force has extended the range of activities to mental health problems because of problem analysis, which reflects both the incidence and location of potential problems. Issues of public safety and the prevention of harm are a high priority within these arrangements.
- A local authority partnership in Knowsley, through the sharing and assessment of intelligence, has agreed a three-year funding programme amounting to £1 million, to enable the creation of a divisional gun crime team, which will supplement Operation Embar at the centre. The risks to public confidence and local reputation were equally considered in this development.
- The local authority in St Helens has agreed grant funding for enhanced ANPR/CCTV capabilities in the area, amounting to £400K, to complement the ANPR strategy and structures aimed at preventing major crime and increasing public safety and reassurance.
- The ability of the force and its partners to 'hot brief' is enhanced through the existing structures and relationships with key agencies. This has enabled quick and comprehensive responses to emerging threats/problems through the additional use of memoranda of understanding and service level agreements, which are in place. Some good examples of this were evidenced through the FCOU and activities around immigration, the PPU and the POCA. Further examples were evidenced through the responses to gun crime and cash-in-transit offences.
- The force uses and complies with the serious crime analysis system. The force also uses the centralised databases for both information upload and skills referrals to ensure that skills and investigative techniques remain at high levels of competence.

Work in progress

- The information exchange protocols are being reviewed to ensure compliance with MoPI. The force arrangements to ensure compliance, under a team headed by a chief inspector, are on track to achieve full compliance.
- Knowsley BCU is currently negotiating with the local authority for the establishment of a combined joint intelligence group to tackle crime at all levels throughout the

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district and will combine the analytical capacity of the force with the local authority and establish protocols for the exchange of information and data around the MoPI guidance.

- Matrix has a reactive investigation arm to investigate all firearms discharges across Merseyside. The team now develops education and harm reduction programmes, working with partners. Co-ordination of the effort across specialist teams, BCUs, communities and partner agencies is achieved through this fourth arm, working alongside a weekly JAG and a quarterly strategic MAGG. A further number of officers are in areas identified as having a higher risk of gun crime. The CDRP is providing some funds for equipment and officers in schools will provide advice on the prevention of gun and knife crime. The IAG has been consulted and is offering its support. The gun crime unit will work closely with the aims of Operation Embar but working more at level 1 within neighbourhoods.

In respect of major crime, the force profiling of vulnerable locations and communities is wide-ranging, with evidence that the impact of OCG activity is clearly understood. As a result, future risks and threats across the force area are identified well in advance.

Strengths

- The force has enhanced community profiles. Initially conducted with the introduction of neighbourhood policing, they contain information on hidden communities and, through the briefings and tasking by the ISB, have included the profiling of criminally active nominals. The FCOU and matrix teams conduct both overt and covert operations to enhance these profiles. The WORM enables appropriate intelligence to be fed back to neighbourhood policing level to further refine their intelligence collection. PCSOs have been particularly valuable in dismantling barriers with previously hard-to-reach groups.
- Any change in neighbourhood profiles, which indicate a heightened tension, is identified through the systematic reviewing process and reports are forwarded to the national community tension team and an overview is forwarded to the ISB.
- Neighbourhood policing profiles are reviewed monthly by the community relations department, which will dip sample for quality assurance. Currently, the department is working on the 2001 census data in respect of community cohesion and mix but is aware that the 'real' levels of immigration are approaching 7%.
- The rich diversity of communities across Merseyside is profiled also with partners' data, including the Border and Immigration Agency, to understand the mobility and changeability of populations in each BCU. The neighbourhood management structures, particularly in Liverpool, allow a broad understanding of community needs. This is strongly supplemented by the IAG membership and structures.
- The community relations department is progressing partnership arrangements and a closer liaison between community leaders and key individuals. The community contact database has recently been reviewed and data cleansed, leaving 182 key individuals identified. The aim is to increase this database with 30 individuals per month.
- The force strategic assessment takes full cognisance of these profiles and allows a shared agenda with partners to address prevention, partnership development as well as enforcement issues.
- There is a dedicated MAPPA co-ordinator, jointly funded by the probation service and the police, who is embedded within the PPU. The MAPPA co-ordinator has developed a network of initial exchange of information and protocols to enable those engaged with the MAPPA process to exchange information and intelligence more rapidly, leading to quicker identification of the need for early intervention in emerging suspicious behaviour.
- The co-ordinator has access to the probation service offender risk assessment system (OASys) and can risk assess potential threats using their systems. He can cut across bureaucracy and target the agency, holding it to account over a specific issue. All high-risk offenders are assessed for MAPPA eligibility on BCUs.

Work in progress

- The force has established hate crime units in each BCU, dedicated to the investigation of all reported hate crime incidents. The teams are progressing initiatives, which will enhance third party reporting and reporting from other specified locations such as places of worship. These initiatives are already having an impact on increasing the numbers of people coming forward to report hate crime incidents, which is seen as a success by the force. The recent development of hate crime coordinators in each area has led to the setting-up of surgeries in mosques, for example.

The force strategic risk register is reviewed quarterly by the DCC, who oversees the force risk management group. Each identified risk has a current and effective action plan. Each action plan is strategically owned by the portfolio ACC and managed by one lead manager. Each mitigating action has a timescale, which is monitored for progress by the force risk manager. The force's top risks are reviewed by the force risk management group and exception reporting is presented to the chief officer group meetings bi-monthly.

Strengths

- The issue of risk is managed through a strategic risk management group, chaired by the DCC and supported by the force risk manager, who is responsible for the corporate management of risk. The force risk manager ensures that staff are aware of risk management requirements. Areas and departments maintain local risk registers. The register is 'scored' against individual risks and these are quality assured by the force risk manager. A risk management group meets bi-monthly to consider corporate risks. The force has a risk management strategy and policy. Risks are monitored bi-monthly and reviewed to ensure the appropriate grade of priority is necessary or, if actions have been taken, to reduce or manage the risk. Advice may be sought from the IAG on strategy and policy, where appropriate. The Chief Constable is kept updated regarding the strategic risks to the organisation at six-monthly intervals.
- The force is active in being able to identify the impact of legislation and risks which may become apparent, and links with CDRPs and CDRP reviews to ascertain risks.
- Following the publication of *Delivering Safer Communities. A guide to effective partnership working*, the force is actively progressing the development of a level 1 strategic assessment in partnership with the CDRP within its boundaries and the level 2 strategic assessment will be produced with identified partnerships at a cross-border level.
- The risk management process includes the police authority, which has an overarching responsibility and exercises some governance on the risks identified.
- The risk manager reports to the head of the strategic development department and is responsible for the identification and assessment of risks within the organisation. The risk manager maintains the force risk register with local risk champions, who raise possible risks to the organisation, and represents the force at the risk management forum, which is attended by risk managers from other forces.
- The force has developed a risk assessment process to assess threats and risk based on NPIA guidance. The risk register contains an assessment of all risks to the organisation, conducted through a process that weighs operational and reputation impact, current capacity and capability, likelihood and budgetary capability. For example, the nomination of Liverpool as the European Capital of Culture, football stadium developments, and tourism impacts have all been considerations in the past 18 months for major and organised crime issues.

Work in progress

- To enhance further the current levels of understanding, the force is working with the NPIA doctrines for the assessment of risk across a range of issues and the ISB is

profiling the threats to the organisation/communities in terms of capacity and capability.

Area(s) for improvement

- The force risk manager attends a risk management forum, which is attended by risk managers from other forces. However, there is no forum or conduit for information sharing between local authorities and what plans they may be contemplating over the next five years, which may directly or inadvertently change the risks associated with the force and its delivery of policing services.

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The force is creating ways of collaborating with all other forces in its region to provide the same level of access and interrogation of intelligence systems across the region. Some of the operational databases are searchable from surrounding forces such as Lancashire. The recommendations from the Bichard Inquiry have been exceeded and there is an effective PPU with embedded links to partners and other agencies with co-location in certain areas.

Strengths

- The force works with the RIU and collaborates with neighbouring and other forces in identifying criminal activities based in Merseyside but operating outside the force boundary and provides assistance in both intelligence and specialist resources to assist forces to deal with the threat posed by Merseyside-based nominals.
- Intelligence is shared across the region. Current activity takes place around key nominals identified through the regional TCG process and then developed into packages by the individual forces under the stewardship of the RIU. The FIS provides the main body of information for officers. Additionally, access to internal force systems is enabled through CORVUS, which provides a search capability across core systems.
- There are electronic intelligence links to surrounding forces, the Serious Organised Crime Agency (SOCA) and British Transport Police. The force also has a detailed memorandum of understanding with key Scottish forces and the Scottish Drugs Enforcement Agency.
- The force has invested in new servers to ensure that the Home Office Large Major Enquiry System (HOLMES) has the capacity to hold information and is exploring software opportunities which will digitally record interviews. The FCOU and HOLMES staff can draw off intelligence from HOLMES for input onto the FIS. Some ISB analysts are being trained for this also, but cannot be live unless authority is given by the SIO in charge of the HOLMES enquiry.
- The ANPR back office function works to national standards and shares intelligence. other forces. The development of the Lightning 3 control centre is a model for the future which will enable the bringing together of dynamic intelligence, surveillance and real-time audio/visual information to gold commanders and SIOs. Sponsored in part by funding from GONW, there are potential learning points for any future regional systems around the development of intelligence.
- There are good partnership arrangements in place and co-operation between the regional asset recovery team, the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), the Department for Work and Pensions, the Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform, and Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) to ensure that action is effective in impacting on targets and confiscating assets from the proceeds of crime. These arrangements are covered by memoranda of understanding which embrace both intelligence and operational activities.
- There are working protocols with the Assets Recovery Agency and the force has trained a proportionate number of staff as financial research intelligence analysts. Each of the BCUs has that capability within the intelligence units.
- The force is actively engaged in the intelligence management, prioritisation, analysis, co-ordination and tasking (IMPACT) and IMPACT interim police local exchange

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projects. The force has electronic access to Lancashire Constabulary's Sleuth briefing system and shares information with local authorities and the UKBA.

Work in progress

- The police authority continues to seek opportunities for collaboration on a regional basis and supports initiatives which will see crime being tackled by regionally based resources targeting criminals both inside and outside the force boundaries. A nominated chief superintendent was exploring developments for collaboration.
- Knowsley BCU is currently negotiating with the local authority for the establishment of a combined joint intelligence group to tackle crime at all levels throughout the district and will combine the analytical capacity of the force with the local authority and establish protocols for the exchange of information and data around the MoPI guidance.
- There are plans for HOLMES information to be accessible to the confidential unit with access to PIMS and its database.

Area(s) for improvement

- Notwithstanding the practical difficulties in dealing with local authority, government agency and other force systems, there are obvious advantages to be gained by the development of systems and sharing of intelligence across the region. The force should consider as a regional partner what can be done to progress such developments.

The force has a case review policy that is always applied, ensuring that current major crime cases are reviewed in accordance with ACPO guidance; the policy is highly effective. The ACC (support services) leads on the management, review, scrutiny and governance of all major crime enquiries, providing an intrusive but supportive role which is subject to daily overview. The case review team links with the crime faculty to ensure that organisational learning is captured and promulgated through training and development opportunities.

Strengths

- Merseyside has a major crime review policy, which complies with national guidelines. Undetected offences of homicide, attempted murder, stranger rape abduction/kidnap (including product contamination), blackmail (including product contamination), fatal road traffic collisions and offences of terrorism are subject to review procedures.
- The DCC has line management responsibility for the case review team and provides it with the relevant cases, which will be subject to review. The force has introduced a policy regarding how the case review team will discharge its responsibilities and manage the review process.
- The serious crime review team was initially set up as a team of three, which has now expanded to deal with the identified cases reviews this, includes its own investigation capacity. The team have considerable experience in the investigation of serious crime.
- Category A and B murders are automatically referred to the FMIT, with category C murders being dealt with at BCU level. Investigations are reviewed as per guidance at 24 hours and seven days and the force is fully compliant with the major incident room standard administrative procedures (MIRSAP) and the murder investigation manual (MIM).
- In addition to these procedures, the major crime cases are reviewed weekly at the operational support meeting, with SIOs providing updates on progress for discussion around any requirements for further actions, support to the SIO etc.

Work in progress

- The case review team's responsibility is to review live investigations as per MIRSAP; however, as the team's capacity increases, it will begin to review 'cold cases'.
- The force has identified 42 undetected murders going back to 1974 and the team is concentrating on researching these unsolved cases. There are issues, which frustrate the work of the case review team, in particular securing the necessary evidence and documentation which were generated by the original investigation. It would appear that there is no documentation which has catalogued exhibits from cold cases and identified the location of such evidence for future reference.

The force tasking and co-ordination process functions cohesively to deliver suitable responses to manage major crime threats. Documentation examined reveals an exceptional understanding of historical, current and predicted demand.

Strengths

- The force tasking and co-ordination meetings conform to NIM requirements for scheduling and process.
- Activities have been prioritised against both BCU and specialist crime assets. Level 1 belongs to BCUs and concentrates on enforcement against volume crime and disorder, together with a responsibility for prevention and disruption. Level 2, which is categorised as ‘turf wars’, falls to the matrix teams (disruption, covert and firearms) as a responsibility. Level 3, which focuses on major, serious and organised crime, is the responsibility of the FCOU. Notwithstanding, there is a fluid deployment of assets at each level, dependent on outcomes from force and BCU TCG meetings.
- Meetings are informed by good intelligence products, which are based on current force and regional trends, historical events, developed packages and changes in tensions identified within different communities. There is also an analysis of signal crimes, which vary between areas, to identify causation factors and emerging threats.
- Commanders are kept updated on the targeted activity of specialist units tackling gun crime incidents and which may cause displacement to other areas of the force. Activity and displacement risks are reviewed through fortnightly tasking and co-ordination meetings. Any displacement is quickly identified on a daily basis. In addition, daily management meetings ensure that any operations taking place are documented to ensure there are no blue-on-blue situations.
- Neighbourhood policing profiles are reviewed monthly by the community relations department, which will dip sample for quality assurance. Any change in profiles, which indicates a heightened tension, is identified through the reviewing process; reports are forwarded to the national community tension team and an overview to the ISB.
- The mapping of OCGs and the increasing numbers of ‘street level’ gangs are seen as a risk and activity to deal with this type of criminality is contained in the control strategy.
- At BCU level, interviews with divisional commanders and intelligence unit staff revealed a good degree of satisfaction with the current arrangements in terms of communication, intelligence products and joint working on key nominals. One BCU intelligence unit had put several intelligence packages to the force TCG for action at level 2 (drug trafficking and prolific burglars) which have had positive results.
- Operation Embar has set high standards of investigation for any reported gun crime, makes appropriate links to OCGs and executes warrants as a result of intelligence received. This group is dedicated and investigates all firearms discharges, injuries and intelligence and it co-ordinates forensic recovery and investigations as well as using the national firearms database. There are links with level 1 up to level 2 for, for example, firearms discharges, which may involve surveillance and overt or covert operations. BCU commanders are fully briefed and aware of ongoing activities.

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- The professional standards unit (PSU) is NIM compliant with two-weekly intelligence updates and monthly tasking and co-ordination processes. The department's confidential unit, which is intelligence-led, looks at phone billings, email accounts and personal bank accounts as required.
- Meetings are provided with confidential information from the confidential unit, the head of which has an overview of all overt and most covert intelligence feeds across the force, which enables informed decision making for proposed deployments.
- Minutes are kept of all decisions to resource operations or to defer them. There is a sound rationale recorded and these minutes are open to examination. Decisions minuted in the confidential parts of the TCG are restricted, in accordance with force policy. The outcomes of each operation are agreed and similarly recorded.

Work in progress

- The force is developing its abilities to use more open source intelligence in identifying and managing emerging trends and threats. It has used social networking sites such as YouTube to focus on activities across Merseyside and to begin to use education and prevention tactics through the same media. The change in culture around criminal gangs and the use of firearms was evident from the footage which was available. Much intelligence was available around specific incidents, which reflected the need to adopt particular policing styles in line with the Chief Constable's total policing philosophy. Linked to further developments around fast-time mobile phone analysis and portable data sources, this is providing the force with an opportunity to keep up to date with community changes and cultures.

Area(s) for improvement

- Interviews with some officers revealed a level of intelligence overload which, while they recognised its importance as the big picture, required them to spend increasing lengths of time in digesting it. The force may wish to consider whether there is a more appropriate way of further targeting relevant intelligence in more meaningful ways.

Due to appropriate and comprehensive training, the force's awareness of diverse community needs during major crime investigations is acute. The force uses the IAG to advise on approaches during major crime investigations and CIAs are routinely used to assess impact on communities. The community relations department has a network of 'key individuals', whose expertise, knowledge and influence can be used by an SIO in dealing with particularly sensitive enquiries.

Strengths

- The FMIT has its own dedicated training officer and each of the team has had an input on ethnic minorities and cultures, which are evident within the force and how these issues can be best managed during a major investigation.
- In the evidence-gathering process for the initial crime investigators' development programme (ICIDP), this has been streamlined and officers input evidence onto the NICHE123; in this way, the core competences can be identified within the NICHE report, which saves officers' time when referring to evidence to prove a competence. Trainee detectives have a tutor detective assigned who acts as a mentor and coach. The detective sergeant is responsible for over-viewing the process and the completion of the annual performance development review. This includes all elements of diversity and community awareness.
- The force has recognised the changes in the population, with the greatest increase in the number of Eastern European workers in the force area. This is attributed to the large volume of building work and investment in the city following Liverpool's nomination as the European Capital of Culture for 2008. It is aware of the top 10 languages being used in the force area and has the necessary arrangements to ensure that this does not inhibit lines of communication with identified facilitators within the communities.
- The force contributes to the FLAC database and has a number of officers who participate in the scheme, which is a national scheme dealing with policing issues and their impact on faith, language and culture.
- The resources of the community relations department are now an integral part of the investigation of both major and serious organised crime, with SIOs referring actions to the unit, in particular around community contacts and CIAs.
- The community relations department is progressing partnership arrangements and a closer liaison between community leaders and key individuals. The community contact database has recently been reviewed and data cleansed, leaving 182 key individuals identified. The aim is to increase this database with 30 individuals per month.
- SAMM, 'Support after Murder and Manslaughter', works with the force in providing education and an awareness of the dangers, in particular around gun crime. It works with firearms officers and in schools, raising awareness through role-play. This is also linked to the homicide reduction strategy.
- There is evidence of the good use of IAGs for satisfaction and confidence, effective interactions with newly appointed area hate crime co-ordinators and community relations departments and the use of neighbourhood profiles to assist investigations.

Work in progress

- The force has set up hate crime units in each BCU, dedicated to the investigation of all reported hate crime incidents. The team is progressing initiatives which will enhance third-party reporting and reporting from other specified locations, such as places of worship. These initiatives are already having an impact on increasing the numbers of people coming forward to report hate crime incidents and are seen as a success by the force.
- The recent development of hate crime co-ordinators in each area has led to the setting-up of surgeries in certain places of worship.

Prevention

The force has an IAG and a network of key individuals who are always used to maximise the contribution of partners in the management of major crime investigations.

Strengths

- The IAG is now an established group within the force and meets regularly to advise the force on the appropriateness of policy and procedures. The force uses the IAG during investigations and as a way of assessing impacts on communities and the development of strategies for tackling locally based problems.
- The community relations department assists the IAG to produce an annual report and review of the activity of the group for the information of chief officers. This provides an opportunity to quantify the impact of its involvement with the force and, in particular, its engagement by the force in the investigation processes.
- There is evidence of the good use of IAGs for satisfaction and confidence, effective interactions with the newly appointed area hate crime co-ordinators and the community relations departments and the use of neighbourhood profiles to assist investigations.
- The head of the community relations department attends gold pivot meetings to offer advice and assistance and has access to IAG members to assist in advising SIOs on particular community issues and how an investigation will impact.
- The community relations department has embedded relationships with a large number of diverse groups across Merseyside and is able to access and communicate with key members and minority communities on an informal as well as a formal basis.
- The force is developing links with the national gun crime initiative headed by the previous DCC and identifying common links, which are replicated in areas where gun and gang crime appear to have developed into risks to communities.
- SAMM, 'Support after Murder and Manslaughter', works with the force in providing education and an awareness of the dangers, in particular around gun crime. It works with firearms officers and in schools, raising awareness through role-play. This is also linked to the homicide reduction strategy. The force has developed links with the Desmond Tutu Foundation, which is again targeting children, with investments in diversionary schemes away from gun and gang-related criminality.
- The force has a partnership arrangement with the Community Foundation, a national organisation but regionally based in Merseyside. The foundation works within communities and raises financial resources from the private sector aimed at tackling community problems and issues. It guarantees to match fund investment from the police aimed at tackling local issues. In Merseyside, the main thrust has been on gun crime-related issues, gang crime issues and youth diversionary schemes in targeted areas.
- The CPS has assigned a dedicated firearms prosecutor to take on prosecutions. There is a homicide reduction policy which features prevention measures for domestic violence, youth culture/guns/drugs, as well as the thriving night-time economy.

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- The force has been awarded the Criminal Justice Award for Witness Care for the level of support offered to victims, their families and potential witnesses.

Work in progress

- The IAG membership is currently reviewing an offer for individual members to be security vetted to a higher level to enable them to participate in tactical meetings around major crime investigation. This is an individual choice; IAG members were generally supportive of the offer but needed to consider its impact on the group if some members wished to exclude themselves.
- The force is actively pursuing opportunities to educate young people in the dangers associated with gun and gang-related crime and has excellent relations with the 'Miss Dorothy.com' initiative. A chief inspector is currently seconded to the national team, which is involved in raising awareness of these issues through education. The Miss Dorothy initiative targets children in the primary school environment and supplementary information is provided to secondary schools through the 'watch over me' videos. These issues are being pushed by the 'young persons' task force' within government. The aim of the Miss Dorothy.com initiative is delivered by teachers in the primary environment; however, certain parts of the programme are delivered by community-based officers and officers receive the appropriate training to enable them to deliver the appropriate message at the right level.
- There is currently a project being run in partnership with the Home Office in a BCU to find ways of building up confidence in the community. There is an ex-community police officer working with a small number of streets/families to deal with their issues quickly by assessing their need and fast tracking them to the appropriate agency (victim support, domestic violence counsellors etc). The neighbourhood policing teams will need to make positive links with witness protection.

Area(s) for improvement

- Health authorities will notify police in the case of gunshot injuries but Merseyside needs more disclosure of sanitised information in relation to knife crime. This lack of information is inhibiting progress among the partnerships attempting to tackle the issues.

Effective contingency plans are in place to minimise the impact of any escalation of a major crime incident. The inspection teams found that ‘golden hour’ principles were fully understood and tested by call management staff and first responders.

Strengths

- The force has structured its responses around levels 1, 2 and 3, both in intelligence and related assets which can be deployed. The FCOU consists of a number of syndicates in the FMIT and syndicates in the operations unit, which deal with level 3 crime, organised criminality, criminal assets, hi-tech crime, witness assistance and dedicated intelligence. The creation of the matrix teams for covert and disruption tactics, has increased the force’s capacity and capability of deploying immediate specialised responses to known and developing risks. The Operation Embar team has prepared a briefing document for all first responders, which outlines key actions to be completed at the scene.
- In tiering its responses around three levels, the force ensures that there is an immediate, specialised response to any major incident/crime. Homicide is categorised into A, B and C and each receives an initial response before an initial review is conducted to transfer ownership, as appropriate. This enables BCUs to carry on day-to-day business uninterrupted and for a highly effective initial management of the enquiry. During the inspection, there were three such incidents and the system worked extremely well.
- This system is extended to other areas of major crime, with syndicates of the FCOU and matrix picking up incidents of serious sexual offences, gun crime, cash in transit, serious domestic violence and public protection issues.
- The force has a designated business continuity manager, who oversees the development and regular maintenance and testing of business continuity plans in accordance with the requirements of the Civil Contingencies Act 2004. Merseyside works to the *ACPO Emergency Procedures Manual* and the *Home Office Counter Terrorist Contingency Planning Guidance*.
- Call management staff are all trained to professionalising the investigative process level 1 standards for initial response under the national occupational standards. The initial response has been tested, using the national kidnap and extortion unit and child rescue alert procedures. Relevant ICIDP training emphasises the golden hour principle and the force arranges frequent lectures/talks on relevant issues through the new crime faculty. Documented on-call systems are available to the force control rooms; these are regularly reviewed. Operators receive training in the initial identification and response to major incidents. They are assisted by available aides-memoire.
- The Lightning 3 control room provides a centralised, purpose-built operational facility for the management of a critical incident, with dedicated stations for key operational positions and providing the SIO with the support necessary to manage an ongoing incident, in particular ‘proof of life’ situations. This is supported by a range of IT, audio/visual, intelligence, ANPR, CCTV and technical capabilities together with on-call trained operatives. Main police stations provide facilities to allow the specialist teams to quickly establish initial rendezvous, management and briefing.

Work in progress

- The FMITs have identified the need, in conjunction with the crime faculty, to maintain investigative skills levels on BCUs and to provide future SIOs. The investigators in the FMIT are experienced detectives and they have identified that the role is becoming less attractive to officers as the matrix team syndicates are more appealing, due to the nature of work undertaken. This is further exacerbated by issues surrounding special priority payments and the costed training plan. Trainee investigators receive an attachment as part of the ICIDP. The head of the FCOU is examining the practicalities of attachments outside of ICIDP for existing detective officers to ensure a skills gap does not develop and/or the role is hard to fill in the future.

The threats from precursors to major crime offending are analysed extensively and the force has sufficient capability to react to such changes, using both specialist operational teams and BCU resources. Targeted police activity can quickly be deployed to identified risks, using matrix disrupt techniques, Embar and force crime operations resources.

Strengths

- Crime and the precursors are included in the strategic assessment and a strategic problem profile has been produced regarding threats to life. In addition, the ISB monitors activity around signal crimes and identifies any changes in trends/threats.
- These are also included in the level 2 tactical assessment, and all level 2 major crime operations are monitored through this process. The WORM monitors ongoing major crime issues and events, in addition to the daily updates to the ACC (operations support).
- Operation Embar was established in 2006 to thoroughly investigate gun crime. There have been significant savings on forensics by having a dedicated team for firearms discharges, intelligence and investigations under Operation Embar. The operation has set high standards of investigation for any reported gun crime, makes appropriate links to OCGs and executes warrants as a result of intelligence received.
- The force has developed a gun crime strategy, which focuses on an 'end-to-end process', with partners being involved at all levels. The strategy has a structure to enable services to be delivered at strategic and tactical levels. There is a political, national and local will to get this situation sorted out and, indeed, the public and media in Liverpool have already got the 'Unite' campaign.
- Community profiles have been completed across the BCUs and they are alert to signal crimes such as firearms, firework incidents, fire-bombing incidents and feuding between OCGs involving firearms. These are all risk assessed before being reported to the WORM.
- The ISB prepares problem profiles on a range of major crime types which are used to identify developing issues in each BCU. The analysis of these profiles is used to inform the 'Big Wing' force initiatives which take place monthly in one BCU and involve enforcement and disruption activity against identified crime types, including drugs, violence offences and alcohol abuse. Operation Hawk is used at BCU level as an enforcement and disruption tactic. This is centred on the level 1 and level 2 drugs market, where forensic intelligence is gathered.
- The force PPU structure includes intelligence assets which work with the BCU-based teams to provide a range of information around sex offenders, potentially dangerous persons and mental health issues. These draw on partner data and systems, giving a comprehensive threat/risk assessment for each BCU. The force PPU is able to provide additional surveillance and specialist assets to manage any developing threats. There was evidence of effective activity in this area, with a number of persons traced and returned to detention in appropriate circumstances.
- PCSOs are active in neighbourhood projects which target unlawful behaviour and raise awareness of support mechanisms available to victims. They gave examples of reducing the incidents of domestic violence and running initiatives which also involved other agencies, such as 'job centre plus'.

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- CORVUS assists in identifying locations and persons involved in previous reports of domestic violence. CORVUS automatically downloads data and forwards it automatically to the IMPACT initiative and the remainder is used to populate force performance systems.
- Champions are identified in neighbourhoods who will work with the FCOU. This provision provides an awareness of the complex nature of their work and how the four strands of domestic violence, child abuse, missing persons and public protection officers link together. It allows them to return to the divisional intelligence units with some awareness of how to assist officers and to develop a more comprehensive analysis of neighbourhood issues.
- The Wirrall family safety unit was set up to provide a co-located, multi-agency point of access for individuals and their children, experiencing domestic abuse and violence.
- A web-based inter-agency monitoring database alerts all agencies to high-risk cases that require referral and immediate intervention. High-risk cases form the business of the monthly multi-agency risk assessment conference (MARAC). The unit uses the same checklist for risk indicators, as recommended by co-ordinated action against domestic abuse, and gold and silver risk cases are referred to the unit.
- The homicide reduction strategy includes domestic violence and there are established systems to enable early identification, intervention and resolution of threats to potential victims. The inclusive MARAC processes and the working practices of the BCU units with key partners provide a range of effective options in preventing risk of harm.
- The hate crime units in each BCU are dedicated to the investigation of all reported hate crime incidents. The team is progressing initiatives, which enhance third-party reporting and reporting from other specified locations, such as places of worship. These initiatives are increasing the numbers of reports being received.

Work in progress

- There has been an increase in information coming into special branch (SB) from staff and the public, due to publicity of national and international events. The race hate co-ordinators in areas are in the process of being vetted, so they can be fully briefed on the national/regional picture to assist them in their role. The force is reviewing the impact of new emerging communities on levels of crime.
- There is an ongoing programme of work to raise the profile of counter-terrorism and the quality of intelligence. This has started with police officers and the wider police family; also included have been lecturers at universities, managers in prisons and chief executives.
- The ISB is in the early stages of a results analysis from homicides that have occurred and reviewing what the force could have done better, if anything, to intervene before a death occurred.
- Merseyside has identified gun crime linked to OCGs as well as to young people in particular locations being involved in gang activity. The ISB, through the use of open source intelligence locations, has been developing the use of YouTube, not only as

an information source, but as a conduit for delivering key messages to young people with whom it would not normally connect.

- The force has identified a proliferation of firearms coming into the area from, as yet, unidentified sources. These include adapted weapons, a high proportion of shotguns and some military equipment. There is little information coming from SOCA to identify international sources. The force is in the process of developing intelligence around these weapons and an initiative with the Ministry of Defence.

Area(s) for improvement

- The ACC (operations) chairs the performance meetings, involving all operational arms of the force, within which the delivery of performance around missing from home and domestic violence is discussed. The ACC (operations support) is dealing with policies around public protection without a clear auditable connection to the ACC (citizen focus) portfolio, which links to victim confidence and satisfaction, albeit there is evidence that these issues are reviewed at weekly chief officer team meetings. A separate performance meeting is chaired by the DCC for support services departments. The force should ensure that the links between the ACCs' portfolios are clear and auditable, so that impact and activity in one portfolio area can be risk assessed against other linked responsibilities.

The policy covering threats to life is fully accessible to staff and thoroughly understood and implemented. Examples of joint/regional/cross-border/multi-agency operations abound.

Strengths

- There are effective systems to manage Osman warnings proactively. The force policy provides a framework for local arrangements, which are reviewed on a weekly basis. Intelligence is managed by a single point of contact in the ISB, which links effectively to BCU operational intelligence units. Osman warnings are well used and policy and processes are strong.
- The ACC (operations support) maintains an overview of all Osman warnings and issues around the management of the threat-to-life policy. Systems are in place to assess risk and determine control options. An officer of inspector rank is allocated responsibility for ensuring Osman warnings are given and a central registry of Osman warnings and threat assessments is kept in the ISB at headquarters (HQ), which is accessible to the force incident managers in the control room. The threat assessments are reviewed for links to firearms offences.
- Osman warnings are an integral part of the witness protection role and these are robustly managed and reviewed in consultation with the ISB. Witness protection is based on the threat rather than the crime, and then the risk versus threat is calculated. There are good links to BCU intelligence units.
- SIOs are trained for 'crime in action' (extortion and kidnap) and the Lightning 3 control room provides the facilities to manage this type of incident with full technical support.
- There are sufficient teams of three negotiators, with co-ordinators who review the hours worked and the experience of the teams and try to spread out the demands of the role. All negotiators are inspector rank and above and trained to national standards. There is a fully equipped force negotiator vehicle.
- A homicide prevention strategy has identified and prioritised three risks – domestic violence, the night-time economy and gun crime. A central registry of threat assessments is held in the ISB and are all reviewed for any links to firearms.
- The force gun crime strategy focuses on an 'end-to-end process', with partners being involved at all levels. The strategy enables services to be delivered at strategic and tactical levels. There is a political, national and local will to reduce the incidents of gun crime and this is supported by the local media.
- Operation Embar was established in 2006 to thoroughly investigate gun crime. There have been significant savings on forensics by having a dedicated team for firearms discharges, intelligence and investigations under Operation Embar. The operation has set high standards of investigation for any reported gun crime, makes appropriate links to OCGs and executes warrants as a result of intelligence received.
- Gun crime and the criminal use of firearms are a standing item at the regional TCG meetings and available intelligence is considered concerning any cross-border or regional issues. The current issue for consideration is the mapping of supply lines and the provenance of recovered weapons. The forensic examiner attached to Operation Embar has identified enhanced techniques for the examination of scenes linked to the criminal use of firearms and was responsible for mapping the activities

of armed drug dealers. The operation on them was successful in recovering a number of weapons and substantial assets.

Area(s) for improvement

- The force incident manager does not always receive information regarding the issuing of an Osman warning to an individual, even though it is relevant to the role.

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The force has a witness protection capability, supported by dedicated covert resources. It operates to a policy that is promulgated to and understood by all staff. The force is wholly collaborating with other forces and partners. The ‘total policing’ concept has ‘total war on crime’ and ‘total care for victims and witnesses’ at its core. The force has been recognised nationally for its care for witnesses and has been awarded the National Justice Awards 2007, presented by the Attorney General, Baroness Scotland. The FMIT and the witness assistance unit have won the category ‘outstanding achievement in caring for witnesses’.

Strengths

- The force operates under the ‘total policing’ concept, which has ‘total war on crime’ and ‘total care for victims and witnesses’ at its core.
- Within the FCOU, there is a witness assistance unit which is adequately staffed and operates effectively. They are all vetted to security cleared and run with covert identities and are based at a covert location. They have all signed a statement of expectation for a minimum of three years and succession planning is being considered. All the staff in witness protection are given mandatory four-monthly counselling sessions.
- There is a process for selecting whether or not a witness is taken under the unit’s responsibility. The detective superintendent in the FCOU decides if witnesses fit the criteria to be protected status. Witness protection is based on the threat rather than the crime, and then the risk versus threat is calculated.
- There are number of individuals who are ‘active’ protected witnesses with the unit. There are several hundred in total but some are dormant. The cases are reviewed every 12 months and there has just been a review of all witnesses under SOCA guidelines. Some witnesses break the contract and are taken off protected status.
- Osman warnings are an integral part of the witness protection role and these are robustly managed and reviewed in consultation with the ISB.
- In the National Justice Awards 2007 presented by the Attorney General, the FMIT and the witness assistance unit have won the category ‘outstanding achievement in caring for witnesses’, awarded for the Liam Smith murder investigation.
- There are regional witness protection meetings and there are informal agreements with surrounding forces for assistance as required. If the unit relocates a witness, the host force will be informed and maintained via a covert police national computer marker.

Work in progress

- Witness protection is now on a statutory footing in legislation due to the Serious and Organised Crime Act recently being made law. Merseyside is currently rewriting its witness protection policy, which will include training for area teams (overt) as well as training in changing identities (covert). A detective inspector gives inputs to SIO development days and it is planned to give awareness training to all new probationers.
- The witness protection unit will be looking for growth in the coming year due to increasing demand or there will be a scoping out for a regional unit, which will provide a more structured collaboration.

The force has an extensive system to monitor the impact of preventative and enforcement activity. There is evidence that the broad range of community policing assets are fully used to help understand levels of harm in the community. Neighbourhood policing teams are fully aware of the risks which may be evident throughout their communities in regard to organised crime, terrorism and radicalisation. They were fully cognisant of the 'rich picture' and the need to understand communities in partnership with other agencies and stakeholders.

Strengths

- The force 'total policing philosophy' brings with it a range of tactics and meetings for providing reassurance and confidence in Merseyside communities.
- The range of tactics employed runs from large-scale warrant execution in key areas to multi-tiered disruption and enforcement around key nominals or to 'Big Wing' type operations which involve large numbers of officers from across the force, utilising ANPR and intelligence to target areas and seize vehicles and property and make arrests. It can also include very local neighbourhood level disruption and enforcement against drug dealing or organised criminality.
- The HQ intelligence unit collects community intelligence in order to capture activity and form the rich picture of the force around key criteria. This is then tasked out to the BCU-based intelligence units for further development. Similarly, BCU-based units can provide packages to HQ intelligence for development around key issues of community intelligence linked to major crime, gun crime or counter-terrorism.
- BCU intelligence units are staffed to deal with community intelligence, with some partnership analysts in place, jointly funded. BCU intelligence units are also linked to neighbourhood policing teams through the development of packages around repeat victims of domestic violence and property-based crimes, which form part of the total policing strategy concerning victim care.
- Before targeting an area or group of individuals, the intelligence outlines the threat and harm their activities are creating. This incorporates a number of both quantitative and qualitative indicators. It also includes an assessment of the general opinion of residents in that area, gleaned from KIN meetings, regular force surveys, the IAG and local authority sources. Intelligence submitted by neighbourhood officers, PCSOs and partners operating at that level is an integral part of the operation.
- The operation having taken place, the force and local authority partners ensure that the area is secured by increasing levels of neighbourhood policing, improving the fabric of the area in terms of lighting, housing clearance and tenancy enforcement, and media and marketing ensure that residents are aware of the events which have taken place.
- An assessment of the strength of the impact is then deduced from hard indicators around variations in crime type, calls for assistance and general impressions of residents gleaned through informal and formal contacts with the force. The costs associated with the intervention are monitored through the force finance representative, who attends the operational review meetings. The debrief which follows such operations is used to identify learning points and develop tactics for future operations.

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- There was evidence of good intelligence development between partner agencies, which, via the tasking and co-ordination process, went to BCUs (level 1) for problem solving. There was evidence of good links to BCUs, particularly with counterfeiting offences.
- There are well-defined processes when serious offences are committed via pivot meetings, disruption tactics, intelligence gathering and reassurance in the community.
- There was evidence of tasking through the CDRP for ASB, with good support via local authority wardens. A successful strategy was developed this year to combat Halloween/Bonfire Night nuisance, which has had good results.
- There was evidence of good use of IAGs for satisfaction and confidence, effective interactions with newly appointed area hate crime co-ordinators and community relations departments, and the use of neighbourhood profiles to assist investigations.
- The FMIT has its own dedicated training officer and each of the team has had an input on ethnic minorities and cultures, including students and travellers, which are evident within the force and how these issues can be best managed during a major investigation.
- In Knowsley BCU, the last 12 months have seen a refinement of the tasking and co-ordination process, with constant development of tactics. This has focused on the prioritisation process about risk/harm to communities and threats.

Work in progress

- The IAG feels that publicising a greater awareness of its role may attract other interested people to come forward and would enhance its reputation, both inside and outside the force.
- The force has set up hate crime units in each BCU, dedicated to the investigation of all reported hate crime incidents. The teams are progressing initiatives, which will enhance third-party reporting and reporting from other specified locations, such as places of worship. These initiatives are already having an impact on increasing the numbers of people coming forward to report hate crime incidents, which is seen as a success by the force.
- There is currently a project being run in partnership with the Home Office and a BCU to find ways of building up confidence in the community. There is an ex-community police officer working with a small number of streets/families to deal with their issues quickly by assessing their need and fast tracking them to the appropriate agency (victim support, domestic violence counsellors etc). The neighbourhood policing teams will need to make positive links with witness protection.
- A force-wide gun crime unit that will include a team of officers from across the force for a minimum of 12 months will be working in identified BCU's to combat the threat. The CDRP is providing some funds for equipment and has officers in schools with advice on the prevention of gun and knife crime. The IAG has been consulted about this tactic and is offering its support.
- There is a realisation that success in any operation can look very different, depending on the differing perspectives of the partners involved. Because of the

high levels of partnership working around major and serious/organised crime, Merseyside Police is examining different ways of looking at PIs, specifically in agreeing at the outset what outcome is required, and how can it be done with partner agencies in a different way. Correspondingly, different communities will assess risk/harm in different ways and this reinforces the way in which neighbourhood policing responsibilities link intrinsically into tackling serious/major criminality in the force.

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The force demonstrated that professional standards issues were always considered in operational planning. There is a comprehensive security policy in place and in use to ensure that staff are appropriately vetted, commensurate with exposure. The PSU is NIM compliant with two-weekly intelligence updates and monthly tasking and co-ordination processes. The PSU has its own confidential unit, which is intelligence-led. The force is aware of the risks associated with improper disclosure of information and maintains a compromise database. Any instances are reported nationally and the PSD has processes in place to be alerted to any suspicious circumstances where improper disclosure is a consideration.

Strengths

- The police standards unit (PSU) is primarily engaged as a counter-corruption group and looking for serious malpractice. There are effective links with the work of the professional standards department (PSD), which manages misconduct allegations.
- The PSD is made aware of all FCOU operations and informed of all officers who are being engaged in major crime and serious/organised crime investigations. If an SIO is starting an operation, there is a system in place (operational security strategy) to notify the PSU of the target nominal(s). The SIO will appoint a security officer for the operation, whose role is to liaise closely with the PSU as the operation progresses. The matrix disruption officers have signed contracts about their own professional standards and modes of dress and professional standards around what they do.
- The force operates an independent 'Safe Call' system, set up for staff to notify allegations against other staff in a confidential manner, which protects their anonymity. This has had a number of calls this year.
- The professional standards unit (PSU) has an operations section, supplemented by auditing, vetting, intelligence and system security sections, which all report to the DCC. They are all in 'off-site' premises. The PSU can conduct surveillance and there are service level agreements with other forces to loan equipment and purchase Smart equipment as required.
- There are comprehensive and robust vetting systems in place, which ensure that staff are properly vetted before being employed in key areas of the force. The PSU has the facility to run enhanced checks against individual officers. If threats or harm are identified, then disruption can be an option to remove levels of access. Management vetting can be in the form of ethical interviews. There is a drug testing policy in place across Merseyside Police and proactive testing of compliance with policy by the PSD. Presentations are given to all new staff joining the force about professional standards/anti-corruption.
- There are detailed systems in place to maintain the integrity of systems and the sensitivity of the intelligence products. The confidential unit audits the PIMS database and checks the handling sheet against the database to ensure there is accuracy of recording and a check with the controller for the integrity of the process.
- The PSU is NIM compliant with two-weekly intelligence updates and monthly tasking and co-ordination processes. It has its own confidential unit, which is intelligence-led.
- The force has invested resources into being able to identify risks and the potential for corruption among officers. The force works to try and reduce the risk for individuals who may be more prone to corruption.

Enforcement

Governance arrangements for major crime investigations are wholly effective, with appropriate use made of IAGs and community membership of gold command support groups.

Strengths

- There are rigorous performance and operations management processes, which are performance driven, reviewed by ACPO (the ACC (operations support)). The ACC (operations support) holds WORM meetings to look at progress on ongoing investigations and decide on resource allocation for the next week. These are documented decisions and based on risk or harm to communities in Merseyside.
- The police authority is updated monthly by ACPO on the progress of ongoing investigations and unsolved cases. This was described as a scrutiny of the force and its officers and was a robust challenge to how the force was managing investigations and resources, including financial assets.
- The IAG is used by SIOs as a source of reference and reassurance when they are developing policy for an investigation.
- The IAG engages with specialist units such as matrix to offer advice on ongoing operations and in particular CIAs of operations in neighbourhoods. There was evidence of good use of IAGs for satisfaction and confidence, effective interactions with newly appointed area hate crime co-ordinators and community relations departments and the use of neighbourhood profiles to assist investigations.
- The head of the community relations department attends gold pivot meetings to offer advice and assistance and has access to IAG members to assist in advising SIOs on particular community issues and how an investigation will impact.
- The force has acknowledged the role that finance plays in the management of major and serious crime investigations and the head of finance is part of the management and gold group structure.
- The command team applies effective scrutiny to the performance of major investigations at an individual, team and departmental level. People are held to account for the progress of investigations. If a chief officer has concerns regarding their capacity and competence to deal with a particular investigation, then consideration will be given to them being removed from the enquiry or provided with the appropriate level of support. Evidence was given of a case where this has happened in recent times at superintendent level.

Work in progress

- The Merseyside Police Authority has agreed to finance an additional 20 new police officers to be deployed in the areas affected most by gun crime. The authority has approached the Home Secretary, asking for matched funding.
- Some IAG members felt that they would voluntarily offer themselves for enhanced vetting if this would assist the force in dealing with the more serious offences around gun, gang and organised crime. They also believed that a greater awareness of their role may attract other interested people to come forward and would enhance their reputation, both inside and outside the force. This would result in much broader

representation to underpin major investigations. Other members of the IAG identified that the issue of vetting had to be an individual decision and could limit the extent to which they felt they could participate in assisting the force. Many issues for members are sensitive and confidential in nature and therefore, understandably, they were reluctant to accept enhanced vetting. The force is working to try and reassure members and resolve this tension.

- Police authority members are not yet vetted to the requisite level, but this is being actively considered and if they are, they will be integral members of the gold group.

The ACPO lead and/or the head of crime are fully trained and competent in the management of linked and series crime. These officers are supported by staff who have undergone comprehensive training and testing in critical incident command, CIAs and policing in partnership.

Strengths

- The ACC (operations support) is fully trained in accordance with the role. The role is supported by the FCOU, the head of which, together with SIOs, is fully trained and accredited in the management of linked and serious crime and accredited to tier 3 standards.
- The FMIT consists of a number of syndicates, each headed by an SIO, and these teams have received high levels of training to be able to discharge their roles effectively. They receive regular SIO update training and have access to the force crime faculty, within which regular refresher training takes place.
- In particular, there are actions to identify an ongoing training and awareness programme for all staff in the identification of a critical incident, the development of response plans to ensure that they are regularly rehearsed, a programme of regular review and inspection of the management of incidents requiring a firearms response and the ability to co-ordinate a casualty bureau and MIRWEB. The training also includes the application of a critical incident review policy to evaluate the effectiveness of the police response, the identification and initiation of debriefing processes for post-incident learning and the consistent application and use of CIAs following major crime or critical incidents.
- Key learning points arose from previous investigations which have framed the way in which the FMIT deals with the impact on, and reassurance within, communities. This has been particularly evident in recent investigations, where high levels of communication, partnership working and reassurance have allowed the force to maintain progress in the investigation.
- The crime faculty aims to provide officers with a safe environment where they can learn and develop the techniques necessary for the investigator and courses range from the ICIDP to the SIOs' development programme (SIODP). Many of the scenarios envisaged are based on an operational theme, with challenging situations to test and provide the individuals with the necessary skills in the management of a major crime investigation from scene investigation, forensic considerations and the investigation plan to the formulation of policy as the scenario evolves.

The force performance in the identification, assessment and management of major crime is monitored through a regime that reviews each operation in terms of outcomes, cost, inputs and outputs. Operations are regularly reviewed by an ACC to ensure resources are being used effectively and efficiently and that the demands of the enquiry are equally matched by the skills dedicated to the investigation.

Strengths

- The ACC (operations support) holds a weekly operational review meeting to look at progress on ongoing investigations. It provides an opportunity to rigorously review the progress of investigations, challenge SIO investigation policy and decide on resource allocation for the next week. These are documented decisions and based on risk or harm to communities in Merseyside.
- Homicides are reviewed at 24 hours in addition to seven and 28 days, and the force is fully compliant with the MIRSAP and the MIM. Every murder is reviewed by an SIO from the FCOU for consistency. If BCUs pick up a category C murder, then reviews are carried out by the FCOU with assistance and guidance as required.
- In addition to the ongoing operational reviews of cases, the force has introduced a policy regarding how the serious crime review team will discharge its responsibilities and manage the review process. The serious crime review team initially was set up as a team of three, which is now increasing and includes its own investigative capacity. The DCC has line management responsibility for the team and provides it with the relevant cases, which will be subject to review.
- The force, as part of its structured debrief processes, identifies organisational learning points from cases, court decisions, legal challenges and legislative changes. The crime faculty provides a focus for disseminating the learning in this area, as well as changes to policy and procedures. The MAPPA and MARAC arrangements which involve mental health issues and the investigation of elderly abuse have resulted in the creation of jointly staffed PPU units.
- The force reviews and evaluates the costs and resources invested in all large major enquiries and the head of finance is an integral part of the review process. Finance plays a key role in the pivot process and is also part of the gold pivot process. The finance department has been proactive in ensuring that the force recovers financially from the assistance and aid provided to other forces as a result of counter-terrorism operations.
- Forensic services has been provided with timely management information which has allowed the head of department to make decisions based on outcomes not on process. The forensic manager has a monthly 'top spend' spreadsheet. This monitors costs and ongoing costs of investigations, which are then fed into the review meetings.

Work in progress

- The force is actively pursuing the creation of a costing regime based on real costs with partners and surrounding forces.
- The FCOU is considering introducing a dedicated CSI for level 2 operations (suitably vetted) because of the benefits this can bring to an investigation. A document entitled *Forensic Support to Level 2 Covert Investigations* was produced for the

inspection team; this demonstrated a number of operations where this role had made a difference.

Performance Management and Resilience

The inspection teams found a strong investigative capability in force to meet the predictable major crime investigation demands. There are effective collaborative agreements with SOCA and the security services and specialist resources are deployed as appropriate. These are considered adequate to counter normal and extraordinary levels of need. Force procedures to manage human resources provide effective support to the specialist investigation team and its capability and capacity issues.

Strengths

- The force has structured its responses to major crime around three tiers of activity, which involve the FCOU with the most complex/serious cases, matrix teams to intervene and disrupt crimes involving the criminal use of firearms and BCUs to tackle the volume crime and ASB issues. Sitting within the Chief Constable's total policing philosophy, the force has adequately resourced its commitment to the 'war on crime', 'care for victims' and 'professionalism' to ensure that the impact on business continuity is minimal by effective, well organised and trained responses to incidents.
- The ACC (operations support) can deploy a number of specialist units to identified problems. The operational support unit consists of personnel involved in matrix teams, Operation Embar, roads policing, air support and associated units. The FCOU consists of personnel involved in the FMIT, target operations, HOLMES, the PPU and witness protection, together with asset recovery, criminal enterprises, hi-tech crime, abusive images and a specialist intelligence cell servicing investigations. The ISB consists of personnel covering SB, crime and support operations and scientific support. This represents a considerable investment.
- Each BCU has a requirement to dedicate a percentage of their establishment to the investigative process. The BCU-based vulnerable persons units also have a responsibility for deaths in care homes, industrial accidents etc. The change in legislation introducing issues of corporate responsibility and investigative responses has been profiled and is part of a developed training input through the crime faculty. Access to specialist advice is available 24/7 through the different arms of the FCOU.
- During the inspection, there were three homicides and a number of major crimes, which provided an opportunity to examine in real time the effectiveness of the arrangements. They were found to operate well. The inspection team visited one BCU commander immediately after the morning briefing, some six hours after a murder and 45 minutes after an armed cash-in-transit incident to find that BCU business was barely interrupted because of the responses from the FMIT and other centrally based resources.
- The Dedicated Surveillance Unit has sufficient technical capacity to be effective. This Unit retains the full ownership of this deployment capability. All the field intelligence development officers have been trained in level 2 surveillance and BCUs have limited surveillance capacity of their own, if required.
- The Dedicated Surveillance Unit provides teams of staff for surveillance.. Merseyside has provided surveillance training to other forces. The DSU has also worked on the surveillance of sex offenders, for which there are a number of requests.

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- The head of the HOLMES team attends both national and regional user meetings to ensure that the force is well positioned on developments in HOLMES capacity. The force has invested in new servers to ensure that the HOLMES system has the capacity to hold information and is exploring software opportunities which will digitally record interviews. The force has taken on the NMAT system and has tested the CAS web system; it tested their capability in a joint collaborative approach between three forces, which took place in November 2007.
- All SIOs are trained to the required standard. For crimes in action (kidnap), there is a new control room, which will service the needs of SIOs. There is a weekly negotiator call-out log prepared which gives a summary of the jobs that have required a negotiator to be called out, which negotiators were involved and the result of the log and how it was resolved.
- There are teams of negotiators with co-ordinators. There is an on-call rota held in force communications. The main areas of work are suicide intervention and pre-planned firearms operations. Negotiators are inputting details onto INTL about repeat offenders and other intervention work is being done to prevent further calls to the police. There is a force negotiator vehicle and memoranda of understanding with surrounding forces for collaboration with negotiators as required.
- There is a good family liaison officer structure in the force, with the co-ordinator sitting in the FMIT. This ensures that the capacity of the force to provide this support is regularly reviewed and that capacity and succession planning are managed according to demand.
- The FMIT has its own dedicated team of PCSOs to assist in the investigative process. Each team member was provided with training and the necessary skills to conduct house-to-house enquiries. The team has had much success and was well received in the investigation process. All operations currently ongoing by the various special operations teams are communicated to the force incident manager through the IT system and this is backed up by a paper record held within the force incident manager's command room, with a wipe board identifying the operations and the number file to refer to.
- The crime faculty provides courses from the ICIDP to the SIODP. Many of the scenarios envisaged are based on an operational theme, with challenging situations to test and provide individuals with the necessary skills in the management of a major crime investigation. Barristers have provided an input into training sessions to ensure that staff have sufficient awareness of the complexities of the legal system and how they present evidence..
- There is strong evidence of good partnership working with HM Court Services, SOCA, the UKBA, the CPS and HMRC. The force is currently identified as the best performing for cash confiscation and forfeitures and the largest drug seizure by a single force. It also has a good record of firearms seizures and homicide conviction and detection rates.
- The force regularly provides expertise to other forces in the region. While there are no formal protocols in place, the role of the FCOU lends itself to spending much time operating outside Merseyside boundaries in tackling level 3 criminality. The force has made provision for this and there is a long-standing arrangement within the region. The demonstrator bid to create a north-west crime squad, aligned to the RIU, will be formalising much existing practice with new resources.

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- The FMIT has its own dedicated training officer and each of the team has had an input on ethnic minorities and cultures, which are evident within the force area and how these issues can be best managed during a major investigation.
- The force makes use of a drone for covert and overt intelligence collection and for surveillance. It has a number of fully trained operators of the Micro Drone and some of these officers are in the ASB taskforce. The drones are available for use by BCUs to gather evidence, as a deterrent or in relation to the prevention and detection of crime. The drone can supply both video and still images.

Work in progress

- The FMIT has a number of teams, which deal with category B murders and also with major crime, aggravated burglary and crime in action. There are some issues being resolved regarding the profiling of budgets and the impact that an increase in investigations has had on the available resources.
- The crime faculty is developing the range of courses available for both established criminal investigation department (CID) supervisors and those new to the role. This will provide the necessary skills and refreshment of existing skills to ensure that those involved in the investigative process are appropriately skilled. In addition, a course will be delivered to neighbourhood policing constables and sergeants in investigative skills to enable a more proactive approach to tackling level 1 criminality and identifying the possible links to level 2. A full review and evaluation of the skills provided during the course will be undertaken at the three-month stage to ascertain any improvements to performance. This process may benefit from a CPS input to measure the quality of the evidence and possible reduced discontinuance of cases.
- The scientific support manager has arranged forensic awareness training and seminars regarding case submissions, what needs submitting and what should not be submitted. This has also included PCSOs. For future succession planning, the force is looking to recruit forensic CSIs direct from universities and provide resilience and succession of forensic capability for the force.
- The force is currently reviewing the performance of handlers and developing a succession plan. It needs to assess the risks associated with one handler being involved with a CHIS for a lengthy period and what safeguards are present to protect the handler and the CHIS.
- Concerns were expressed that, due to the high levels of demand, the resilience at detective superintendent as SIO is under some pressure due to the current high workloads and abstractions. Alternatives were being explored which would redress the balance in the short term.
- Initial crime scene preservation has been identified as an opportunity for learning in the force. The crime faculty has been approached to provide more training in this area, as well as refreshers for the critical incident managers in the force.
- Some specialist units expressed concerns over the distribution of experience across the force and between BCUs and specialist departments. Concerns were also raised over delays in releasing officers to specialist posts once they have successfully applied. A relatively new mechanism has been introduced between the superintendent personnel and the head of the FCOU to oversee the balance of skills and experience.

Area(s) for improvement

- Officers are aware of the competitive nature of departments in the force, with matrix, Embar and the FCOU offering opportunities for development. Officers felt that the fact that officers within the units did not attract a performance payment has a detrimental impact on attracting experienced investigators into the specialist units. Linked to that issue, the significant amount of overtime available to BCU-based investigators was a consideration for officers who may be considering applying to join the specialist units.

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Specialist and covert investigations are resourced through a robust infrastructure that is proven to be highly effective. Elements of covert capacity and other specialist resources are available to surrounding forces, delivered through written collaborative agreements, which are thoroughly tested. The inspection found evidence of proactive and reactive use of these assets across a wide range of offences.

Strengths

- The clear focus and prioritisation of responses to major crime are effectively managed through the TCG processes and the WORMs undertaken by the ACC (operations support).
- The FCOU and force operations structures provide a strong response capability to specialist investigations. The ACC maintains an overview of the effectiveness of the responses and re-prioritises, as appropriate, the use of resources in line with the published policies and procedures. The role provides an overview of activities both within force and at a regional level.
- Holding the heads of units to account on a regular basis, there is clear evidence of good budgetary, personnel, system and training management taking place. Results analysis enables an accurate assessment to be made of the outcomes of training and system investments.
- The confiscation enforcement team engages in attacking criminals operating at all three levels of criminality but will prioritise its actions on individuals who have been identified by the courts as having substantial assets to seize.
- Matrix and Embar have sufficient resources to finance these units and a tight overview of the management of finance in the force has ensured that budgets are being balanced with little or no overspend. An example provided was that the ISB has now moved from a position where there was a projected overspend to a balanced budget.
- Each of the specialist assets in the FCOU was examined for evidence of proactivity and found to be performing extremely well. The results provided by the criminal enterprise team, the criminal assets team, target operations, the hi-tech crime unit and the PPU were impressive for their innovation, partnership working and results-focused work schedules. Enhanced, in some cases, by embedded staff from other agencies, there was a level of enthusiasm, commitment and pragmatism which has not been found elsewhere.
- A number of operations were produced which tackled immigration crime, use of the POCA and international drugs trafficking, usually in partnership with other key enforcement agencies who were equally supportive of what was being achieved. BCUs raise the awareness and profile of the POCA and the intelligence units track the criminal lifestyle of target nominals.

Work in progress

- The crime faculty is planning to develop the range of courses available for both established CID supervisors and those new to the role. This will provide the necessary skills and refreshment of existing skills to ensure that those involved in the investigative process are appropriately skilled. In addition, a course will be delivered to neighbourhood policing constables and sergeants in investigative skills to enable a more proactive approach to tackling level 1 criminality and identifying the

possible links to level 2. A full review and evaluation of the skills provided during the course will be undertaken at the three-month stage to ascertain any improvements to performance. This process may benefit from a CPS input to measure the quality of evidence and possible reduced discontinuance of cases.

The force has a full-time and dedicated case review team that is always deployed when current and historical major crime cases are reviewed, in accordance with ACPO guidance. Case review work is highly effective (Refers to impact on cases).

Strengths

- The DCC has line management responsibility for the serious crime review team and will provide it with the relevant cases, which will be subject to review. The force has introduced a policy on how the team will discharge its responsibilities and manage the review process.
- The serious crime review team initially was set up as a team of three, which has now expanded and includes its own investigation capacity. They have considerable experience in the investigation of serious crime.
- Category A and B murders are automatically referred to the FMIT, with level C murders being dealt with at BCU level. Investigations are reviewed as per guidance at 24 hours and seven days.

Work in progress

- The force has identified 42 undetected murders dating back to 1974 and is concentrating on researching these unsolved cases.
- There are issues, which frustrate the work of the serious crime review team, in particular securing the necessary evidence and documentation generated by the original investigation. Other agencies are sometimes not in a position to provide information, which may have been disposed of through a destruction policy
- Initially, the serious crime review team's responsibility was to review live investigations as per the MIRSAP; however, as the team's capacity increases, it will begin to review cold cases.

Area(s) for improvement

- The serious crime review team is represented at the north-west review meetings, where discussions take place around new developments in forensic investigation capability and the sharing of experience and good practice. However, the team states that there is no national champion for this type of investigation.

The inspection found evidence that the force is fully compliant with relevant ACPO standards of the MIM and MIRSAP.

Strengths

- Merseyside is fully compliant with both the MIM and MIRSAP. Compliance is documented in the force policies and in the reviews which take place of each incident. This policy details the FCOU and BCU responses to MIRSAP staffing recommendations and lists responsibilities for maintaining staff trained in relevant specialisms.
- Evidence in relation to compliance with the MIM is available for every major crime investigation.

Area(s) for improvement

- Where possible, the FMIT complies with the MIRSAP; however, given the volume of investigations being conducted, often it has to take on more than one responsibility. Each team has sufficient supervisory and operational investigative skills.

Appendix 1: Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations

A

ACC	Assistant Chief Constable
ACE	attacking criminal economies
ACPO	Association of Chief Police Officers
ANPR	automatic number plate recognition
ASB	Anti-Social Behaviour

B

BCU	basic command unit
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C

CAT	criminal assets team
CDRP	crime and disorder reduction partnership
CET	Criminal Enterprise Team
CHIS	covert human information source
CIA	community impact assessment
CID	criminal investigation department
CPS	Crown Prosecution Service
CSI	crime scene investigator

D

DCC	Deputy Chief Constable
DSU	dedicated source unit
DWP	Department for Work and Pensions

F

FCOU	force crime operations unit
FIS	force intelligence system

FMIT force major investigation team

FSA force strategic assessment

G

GMP Greater Manchester Police

GONW Government Office for the North West

H

HMI Her Majesty's Inspector

HMIC Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary

HMRC Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs

HOLMES Home Office large major enquiry system

HQ Headquarters

I

IAG independent advisory group

ICIDP initial crime investigators' development programme

ISB intelligence and security bureau

J

JAG Joint Agency Group

K

KIN key individual network

M

MAGG multi-agency governance group

MAPPA multi-agency public protection arrangements

MARAC multi-agency risk assessment conference

MIM murder investigation manual

MIRSAP major incident room standard administrative procedures

MoPI Management of Police Information

MSF Most Similar Force(s)

N

NIM national intelligence model

NPIA national policing improvement agency

NPSAT national protective services analysis tool

O

OCG Organised Crime Group

P

PCTSO police community and traffic support officer

PCSO police community support officer

PNC police national computer

POCA Proceeds of Crime Act

PPO prolific and other priority offenders

PPU public protection unit

PSD professional standards department

PSU professional standards unit

R

RART regional asset recovery team

RIPA Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act

RIU regional intelligence unit

S

SARS suspicious activity reports

SB Special Branch

SCDA	Scottish Crime and Drugs Agency
SDD	strategic development department
SGC	specific grading criteria
SIA	strategic intelligence analysis
SIO	senior investigating officer
SIODP	Senior Investigating Officers' Development Programme
SOCA	Serious Organised Crime Agency
SPI	Statutory Performance Indicator

T

TCG	tasking and co-ordination group
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U

UKBA	United Kingdom Border Agency
UKHTC	United Kingdom human trafficking centre

W

WORM	Weekly Operations Review Meeting
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