



Inspecting policing
in the public interest



Anti-social Behaviour Inspection Report

Metropolitan Police Service

The Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) experiences a relatively higher level of anti-social behaviour (ASB) and a higher level of crime per head of population.

Our ASB review

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

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

What works?

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

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

This is how the Metropolitan Police Service is performing in these areas.

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

Generally, only neighbourhood policing teams (known as Safer Neighbourhood Teams in the Metropolitan Police) are briefed about ASB in their areas. There is no evidence that response or CID staff receive any specific briefing about local, emerging or continuing ASB issues, including detail about repeat or vulnerable victims. However, there was an exception in one borough visited where a weekly summary of ASB-related incident reports had recently been prepared for circulation to all their staff. The inspection also found that information about Acceptable Behaviour Contracts and Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs) are generally communicated to all staff in the borough.

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

All boroughs visited as part of the inspection have some kind of regular meeting at which police resources are allocated to particular problem areas or issues. Some of these meetings include analysis of ASB incidents, so resources can be targeted at incident hotspots; but most do not focus on meeting the needs of repeat or vulnerable victims of ASB, or have processes in place to identify them consistently in the first place. In some boroughs, ASB is regularly discussed in daily management meetings and action is taken. In one borough visited, decisions about ASB action are made with partners - the Joint Action Group - to put more resources into solving problems.

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

Safer neighbourhood teams are in place and do have resources and tools available to assist them with tackling ASB. Action taken to plan and solve problems is managed and recorded in a standard format.

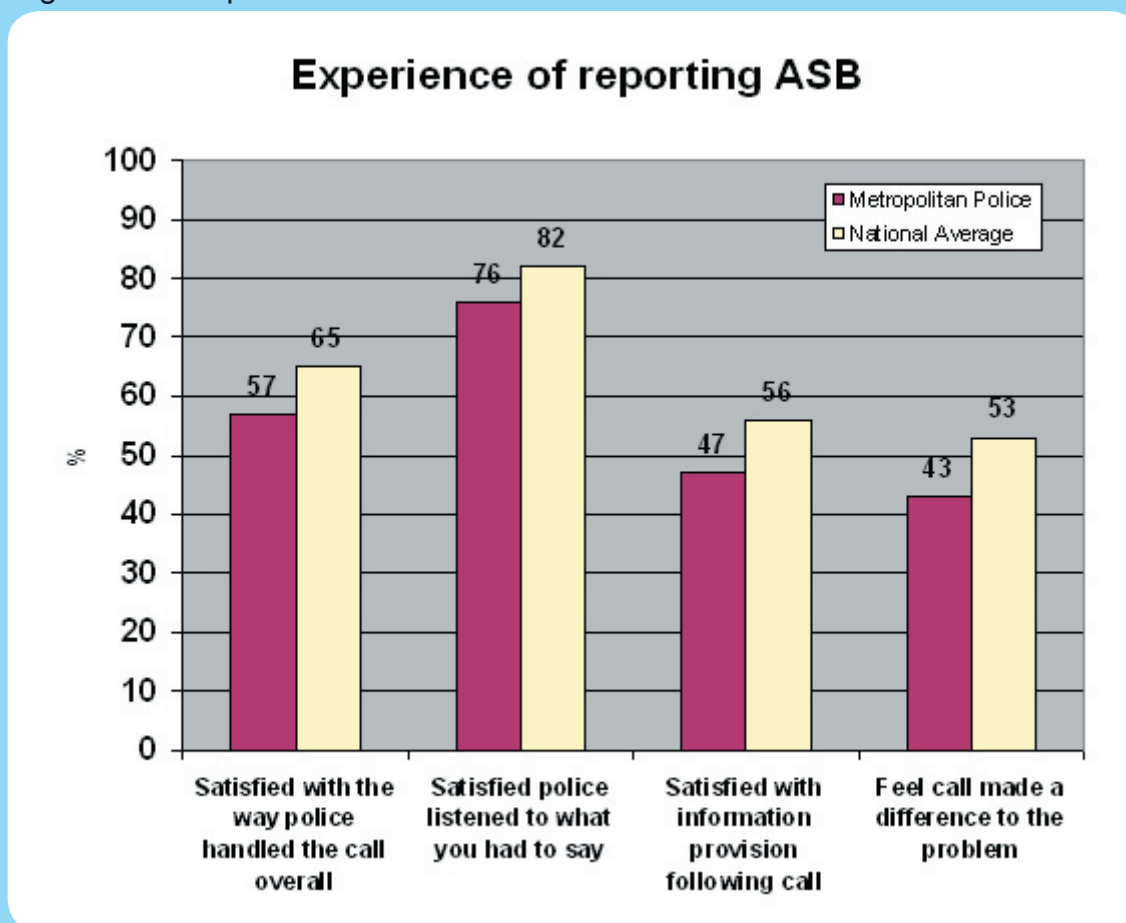
This offers evidence of effective, long-term ASB problem solving and proper supervision. However, the tools and resources available are not always used in favour of other less effective methods. Similarly, there is little evidence of recording and monitoring the resolution of short term problems. Access to all this information is only available locally and not monitored at force level. Police ASB co-ordinators are now in place and help Safer Neighbourhood Teams to solve long-term ASB problems in a more structured manner, sharing good practice to deliver better services to the public.

Is ASB a priority for the force?

ASB features as a force priority in the policing plan and other relevant force documents. The amount and type of resources devoted to tackling ASB is unclear as not all activity by the police is recorded. Most boroughs include ASB as a priority, but not all have developed written plans to improve how they deal with it. The level of commitment to combating ASB varies between the boroughs.

Results of the victim satisfaction survey

We surveyed 406 people who reported ASB in the MPS during September 2009. They were asked a range of questions about their perceptions of ASB generally and their experience in reporting ASB to the police.



Other results from the survey show that respondents in the MPS area were far more likely than the national average to feel ASB was a big problem in their area and to be dissatisfied with how their call to the police was handled overall.

They were more likely to be dissatisfied with how they were treated and taken seriously when reporting ASB.

They also felt less informed about what was being done by local services to tackle ASB in their area and less likely to feel their call made a difference.

