

Follow-up Visit to Barking and Dagenham BCU Metropolitan Police Service

BCU Inspection Conducted – September 2009

Follow-up Visit Conducted – November 2010

© HMIC 2011

Follow up/monitoring visits to inspected BCUs Barking and Dagenham BCU – Metropolitan Police Service

Date of Inspection	Lead Inspector	BCU Commander	Date of monitoring visit
21-25 Sept 2009	C/Supt BAINBRIDGE	C/Supt Matt BELL	9-10 Nov 2010

1. Performance information¹

	Original Inspection Performance (November 2008/09- October 2009/10)	Re-visit performance (November 2009/10-October 2010/11)	Change	Notional Contract ¹	Direction
Recorded Crime (TNO) per 1,000 pop	117.93	115.45	-2.48		√
Recorded Crime (TNO) MSBCU position	12	12	No change	<8	n/c
Recorded Crime (TNO) SD rate	19.70%	20.40%	0.70%		√
Recorded Crime (TNO) SD MSBCU position	13	13	No change	<12	n/c
Residential Burglary per 1,000 households	25.62	24.92	-0.70		√
Residential Burglary MSBCU position	13	13	No change	<8	n/c
Residential Burglary SD rate	8.20%	6.90%	-1.30%		x
Residential Burglary SD MSBCU position	15	15	No change	<12	n/c
Robbery per 1,000 pop	4.96	5.00	0.04		x
Robbery MSBCU position	13	13	No change	<12	n/c
Robbery SD rate	9.50%	13.80%	4.30%		√
Robbery SD MSBCU position	14	15	1	<12	x
Vehicle Crime per 1,000 pop	15.10	16.01	0.91		x
Vehicle Crime MSBCU position	14	14	No change	<12	n/c
Vehicle Crime SD rate	3.80%	2.40%	-1.40%		x
Vehicle Crime SD MSBCU position	15	15	No change	<12	n/c
Violent Crime per 1,000 pop	37.95	35.18	-2.77		√
Violent Crime MSBCU position	14	14	No change	<12	n/c
Violent Crime SD rate	23.30%	27.40%	4.10%		√
Violent Crime SD MSBCU position	15	15	No change	<12	n/c

The above table sets out performance against key national priorities before and after the point of inspection. Data used is taken from iQuanta, the police

¹ Performance outcomes required within notional contract

statistics system. The column entitled 'notional contract' comprises the MSBCU² performance outcome requirements. It is colour coded to indicate achievement. The final column, entitled 'direction', indicates the direction of travel for performance since the time of inspection.

2. Significant developments

Detailed below are any significant developments since the original inspection (eg boundary changes, changes to management team, or increase/decrease in staff strength).

- There have been a number of Senior Management Team (SMT) changes in the past four months. A new superintendent, detective chief inspector and two chief inspectors are now in post following sickness and transfers of the previous post holders.

3. Inspection recommendations

Recommendation 1 – Governance Arrangements: Discharged

That the Basic Command Unit (BCU) reviews its governance arrangements to ensure that organisational change is achieved in an inclusive way and to promote sustained performance improvement, with specific regard given to the following:

- In consultation with key stakeholders, the creation and publication of the BCU vision and mission (policing style);
- Proportionate staff engagement by senior managers on key change initiatives being progressed by the BCU;
- The creation of local policies and procedural guidance for staff where force policies, etc require further explanation or interpretation;
- Development of the BCU role of Risk Manager in a way that incorporates organisational and operational threat and risk, making full use of a Risk Register.

Action taken by BCU since inspection

- The Borough Commander has after SMT consultation created and published on the BCU website his vision and mission statement.
- The SMT have met all teams individually and the Borough Commander arranged three meetings for all staff to attend, during which he stated his vision, the BCU priorities (as set in the Control Strategy) and all risk areas identified by HMIC. The SMT has formed a Borough Improvement and Development Group, led by the Superintendent Operations, which is identifying and resolving issues as they arise.

² Most Similar Basic Command Unit.

- The BCU has fully embraced the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) Diversity and Equality Strategy. The Community Advisory Group (CAG) replaced the Independent Advisory Group (IAG) in July 2009; representation continues to grow and meetings take place regularly.
- Local policies are now published on the BCU Forum and Shared Drive after circulation to all staff.
- A Risk Manager is now in place at Detective Inspector rank, who is responsible for the Strategic Risk Register and the daily management of risk alongside other CMU³ functions.

Measurable impact

Strengths

- In overall terms staff reported that there had been noticeable improvements in leadership from the SMT. There was a real respect for their management style, approachability and visibility; in particular, the Borough Commander's commitment to three years in post was popular.
- Staff identified that the SMT had regularly engaged with them about change within the BCU.
- Morale across all departments has increased over the previous six months. Staff reported that people enjoyed their roles and wanted to work on the BCU.
- The BCU has clearly recruited progressive new SMT members and middle management, who are both driving change and taking staff with them (through good engagement and visible leadership).
- The BCU has identified managers at Chief Inspector and Inspector rank to leads on action plans that address BCU priorities.
- The creation of the Risk Manager post has proved successful not only in relation to the BCU risk register, but also in terms of the activity stimulated during the DMM.⁴
- Staff reported a good relationship between departments – in particular between the Criminal Investigation department (CID) and Uniform Staff.

Areas for improvement (AFIs)

- The BCU has been slow to push through change and a limited amount of progress was made in the first six months that followed the HMIC inspection. However, the last six months have seen significant improvement, with key personnel in place and driving activity. This needs to be built upon to ensure continued improvement that will be reflected in national data and in comparisons with their MSBCU group.
- The use of e-mails to circulate change, in particular via links to large documents, has proved unpopular and difficult for staff to navigate. This has often resulted in staff failing to digest the information properly.

³ Crime Management Unit

⁴ Daily Management Meeting

Recommendation 2 – Sanction Detection Improvement: Partially Discharged

That the BCU co-ordinates and implements work within an overarching sanction detection improvement plan that improves performance in this area, including activity on:

- Improving the quality of primary investigations through targeted training and robustly managing compliance (using the Daily Management Meetings (DMM) with the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) minimum standards);
- Increasing awareness, understanding and use of cannabis warnings, FPNDs⁵ and TICs⁶ as sanction detection disposal options within the BCU;
- As part of a wider review/benchmarking of workloads within the BCU, ensuring that investigative workloads are realistic, supervised and aligned with the skills of investigators and the complexity of cases;
- Ensuring compliance with Home Office Counting Rules with regard to decisions of ‘no crime’.

Action taken by BCU since inspection

- The DI with responsibility for investigations has personally addressed all teams to advise them on minimum standards of all investigations.
- A Sanction Detection Improvement Plan has been created, outlining practitioner lead, tactics, and progress.
- Standard Operating Procedures for investigations have been re-circulated to all staff.
- The DMM is now structured to the BCU priorities and Control Strategy. Relevant crime and investigative opportunities are reviewed, as well as daily and longer term ‘risk’.
- Sergeants have received ‘best practise’ circulations containing HMIC recommendations on supervision of crime investigations.
- CID teams have been realigned, merging teams and filling vacancies, with the result that workloads are now manageable.

Measurable impact

Strengths

- New staff at DCI and DI level have led to significant changes, creating an environment conducive to maximising the sanction detection rate on the BCU. The Detection Improvement Plan and the realignment of CID posts are two examples of positive steps. Further work (about to be undertaken) in relation to initial investigations, TICs and PPOs⁷ will continue to drive improvement.

⁵ Fixed Penalty Notice Document

⁶ Taken into Consideration

⁷ Prolific Priority Offender

- Staff are very positive about the new leadership and recent direction they are being given. Managers are visible and approachable.
- The core team responsible for TIC opportunities has received training.
- The current CID and Uniform staff workloads have reduced to manageable levels; this has been achieved by robust Crime Management and realignment of CID resources (merging the burglary team with the general CID team).
- Considerable work has been progressed in the area of tackling violent crime: from the BCU Commander down, there has been a concerted effort to reduce offending and increase detections. Domestic violence has been targeted through several initiatives, such as positive arrest policy and the identification of repeat victims. CPS specialists have been brought in to help resolve the issue that fewer charges are brought at Barking and Dagenham than at other BCUs.
- Residential burglary has been specifically targeted from a crime prevention perspective. Along with partners the BCU has conducted a campaign of increased security; this has resulted in a higher 'attempted' rate and a reduced 'complete' offence rate.
- Forensic support across the BCU is currently good, with high attendance rates at crimes such as burglary.

Areas for improvement (AFIs)

- There is a need for policy and/or a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for staff to refer to when dealing with suspected false reports of crime. Staff reported difficulties in interpreting the Home Office Counting Rules as to when a report should be completed.
- The Total Notifiable Offences (TNO) Action Plan has contributed to the overall reduction in crime on the Borough. However, the process is not understood by staff across the BCU and requires reinvigorating and targeted activity within the areas of concern identified.
- The initial supervision of volume crime investigations by first line managers should be reviewed, in order to ensure a robust process is followed that confirms (or otherwise) that all potential opportunities have been explored. This type of supervision is not always taking place – particularly for volume crime.
- Further development of TIC detections needs to be undertaken. There is a core team that targets opportunities, but this needs to be expanded to ensure that all officers consider this method of detection and know where to seek advice and/or what to do. There has been no training for any other staff, and there was a general feeling that detections were being missed.
- The use of FPNDs⁸ as a disposal and detection method is under-used. Clear direction to staff on this subject is required and this needs to follow force policy. This could potentially increase detections and reduce abstraction to custody.
- Generally staff across the BCU had little awareness of the Sanction Detection Improvement Plan. It is recognised that this is a recently

⁸ Fixed Penalty Notice for Disorder

implemented document: but it now needs to be embraced by all managers to ensure that the BCU attains the improvement it desires.

- The BCU has no apparent detection targets and all staff were unaware of any such targets (and indeed of the current sanction detection rate). The Improvement Plan identifies that individual officers will be given such targets.
- Staff expressed concern over the Youth Triage System. There was uncertainty regarding the handover process and little feedback was received about individual cases.
- Police Community Support Staff felt that they required more training on scene preservation, as they were uncertain as to what should or should not be done.

Recommendation 3 – Developing Performance Management: Partially Discharged

That the BCU builds upon the good work of the AIMS⁹ process by constructing and implementing a wider performance management framework that includes:

- Accountability for BCU priorities among individual members of the SMT, and the creation of delivery plans for each priority;
- The development of team-based performance indicators and, where appropriate, targets that concisely reflect the team's contribution to BCU priorities;
- Local and targeted risk-based inspection and audit activity;
- Dynamic links with learning and development, and the proportionate application of professional standards and interventions.

Action taken by BCU since inspection

- The BCU Performance Management Framework is based around meetings at which performance data is scrutinised, and senior staff (from the BCU Commander down) are held accountable by managers and partners.
- The BCU has identified priorities and responsibilities for individual members of the SMT; these are to be uploaded onto the website.
- The Detective Chief Inspector has implemented the Integrated Offender Management process, which monitors performance within suspect fields.
- Training is now to be brigaded in the MPS, and a central Training Needs Analysis is underway.

⁹ Active intrusive Methodical Supervision

Measurable impact

Strengths

- BCU priorities have been shared between the SMT, and a delivery plan created to ensure improvement.
- The BCU has had a large number of new senior and middle management staff in post during the past six months, and an appropriately intrusive management style is developing.
- There is an expectation (and intrusive supervision to ensure) that positive police action takes place when officers and staff attend incidents. This is managed at and during deployment.
- A hierarchy of meetings has emerged from the new managerial staff that seek to improve and manage performance,. These include the revamped Daily Management Meeting, the Victim Offender Location Time meetings, the Borough Improvement Group and the Active Intrusive Methodical Supervision meeting (to name but a few).
- Stop and Search data now sits with the Chief Inspector responsible for Partnerships. This data is reviewed with partners at Community Advisory Group meetings.

Areas for improvement (AFIs)

- The AIMS¹⁰ process has not been implemented in the constructive manner suggested in the recommendation; had this taken place, many of the following AFIs would not have been necessary..
- No individual team-based performance indicators have been agreed. Targets have not been set, and PDRs¹¹ are not always linked to the BCU priorities.
- It is recognised that within the area of criminal justice the BCU had hoped to have had an Integrated Prosecution Team in place by now; but this has been delayed due to available resources and funding.
- Sickness management is not consistent across the BCU and a robust policy on this topic is only in its infancy within the Professional Standards Unit. Staff indicated that there is little incentive to keep levels to a minimum.
- Unsatisfactory performance has not been managed robustly and is only just being reviewed by the Professional Standards Unit. Staff across the BCU generally welcomed the potential for this form of supervision to be implemented.
- There is no targeted self-inspection template or audit activity across the BCU. Such inspection work is left to individual managers to do in an ad hoc manner, with little SMT steer.
- The MPS quality callback work does not appear to be in place at all. Implementing this would not only assist in assessing levels of satisfaction with the service, but also help to identify opportunities to

¹⁰ Active, Intrusive and Methodical Supervision

¹¹ Personal Development Review

improve systems and processes, as well as being a means of challenging and congratulating staff.

Recommendation 4 – Increasing Capacity through Improved Resource Leverage: Discharged

That the BCU increases operational capacity through improved resource leverage within a wider plan that includes action in the following areas:

- Tighter fiscal controls over manoeuvrable elements of the devolved budget to ensure overall budgetary compliance;
- A comprehensive review of the BCU resource disposition across all key units that makes use of benchmarking techniques to assess workloads, skill requirements and establishment levels for staffing and skills;
- Application of workforce modernisation options within MPS policy and appropriate use of staff on restricted/recuperative duties;
- Increased use of telephone investigation, conditional deployment for Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT) staff and the application of current MPS policy dealing with single patrolling.

Action taken by BCU since inspection

- The BCU has adopted a variable shift roster, to replace the inefficient 12-hour shift system. This has enabled the BCU Commander to better match resources to demand and has led to manageable workloads within CAD deployment and Investigation allocation. In July 2010, a complete review of all demand and resource allocation was undertaken; as a result, a structural reorganisation is being developed in conjunction with partners and Territorial Police Headquarters.
- The Single Patrol deployment is robustly managed across the BCU, with intervention by managers (including the BCU Commander) where appropriate.
- A skills audit of the CID has been undertaken and new posts identified and filled.
- The BCU will be moving to a new, purpose-built Headquarters site (Fresh Wharf) next year. This marks the start of an exciting new era for the BCU, which will see resources co-located and lead to far greater efficiency.
- Partnership funding has secured three additional police officer posts within one estate; this is on top of a Sergeant and five Constables within a park area.

Measurable impact

Strengths

- The BCU has managed most of the elements under this recommendation, and the recent appointment of the Senior Human Resources Advisor (SHRA) as the SMT lead for the bespoke Leverage Delivery Plan will further complement the success to date.
- The BCU is on target to come in on budget, despite a 10% 'claw back' during this financial year. Overtime is strictly managed with all staff reflecting the view that there is little or no overtime available.
- The Telephone Investigation Bureau is dealing with a greater number of cases, currently 32% of all reports. This has clearly reduced workloads for investigators and contributed to manageable allocations to officers.
- As mentioned above, workloads are now manageable: this was consistently reported by both CID and Uniform officers investigating crime.
- The BCU has reduced the number of days owed to officers and staff by managing overtime across all departments.
- Income generation has been increased by recovering full costs from the policing of Dagenham and Redbridge Football and various local shows.
- There has been a significant increase in the number of Special Constables, with 80 officers now regularly serving; these staff are deployed both locally and centrally.
- The BCU has just employed a Senior Human Resources Advisor (SHRA), who will be conducting further skills audits across all departments.
- Restricted and recuperative officer numbers are managed and have reduced from last year's figures.

Areas for improvement (AFIs)

- Sickness management is not consistent across the BCU and a robust policy is only in its infancy within Professional Standards. Staff indicated that there is little incentive to keep levels to a minimum.

Recommendation 5 – Development of Key NIM ¹² Processes: Partially Discharged

That the BCU further develops key NIM processes that enhance proactive opportunities and interventions with a particular focus upon:

¹² National Intelligence Model

- Clarifying the purpose of the Daily Intelligence Meeting (DIM) relative to the DMM and ensuring that it becomes a more inclusive process;
- Improved understanding of policy regarding use of the MPS intelligence platform (CrimInt Plus) and increased submission of quality intelligence;
- Enhanced offender management activity with priority given to improved PPO interventions and the management of operational risk for violent offenders (MARAC¹³);
- Improved partnership-tasking arrangements to commission, co-ordinate and review problem-solving interventions with linkage to the TTCG¹⁴ processes.

Action taken by BCU since inspection

- The BCU has restructured the DMM so that it now focuses on the identified priorities, and unnecessary attendance and wasted preparation time has reduced. Partners also attend, key crimes and daily 'risk' are reviewed, and action taken.
- A new process with partner participation called 'Victim Offender Location Time' (VOLT) meetings now take place. These feed the DMM and TTCG, as well as targeting crime, anti-social behaviour and offender management processes.
- The BCU has introduced a 'Total Notifiable Offences' (TNO) reduction plan, and identified plan owners.

Measurable impact

Strengths

- The TNO reduction plan has contributed to an overall reduction in crime on the Borough.
- Work has begun (through the VOLT meetings) around Organised Crime Groups, in order to identify, target and challenge gang culture on the BCU. Innovative steps to reduce offending are taking place, such as meeting the families of gang members and seeking and gaining support to alter behaviour.
- BCU and Ward problem-solving priorities identified and managed via F302 documents have increased considerably (from 47 to 89 documents).
- The BCU has implemented an Event Planner Process that informs all key NIM processes, identifying key dates and demand.
- A clear process for dealing with suspects identified by forensic evidence exists; officers are supervised to ensure the dockets are actioned within specified time constraints.

¹³ Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference

¹⁴ Tactical Tasking & Co-ordination group

Areas for improvement (AFIs)

- The Daily Intelligence Meeting (DIM) is not an inclusive process; there are limited attendees beyond the BIU¹⁵ and, as such, valuable contributions are lost. It follows that the Daily Management Meetings will be without the same information.
- Intelligence flows have actually decreased, to less than two CrimInt Plus entries per officer per month. PCSO staff identified that they were in some cases unsure what was worthy of recording, and that they had varied knowledge of CrimInt Plus and therefore requiring training.
- The quality of taskings from the Borough Intelligence Unit (BIU) was deemed by many staff as poor. Staff did not always understand the relevance or purpose of the taskings.
- The BCU has no current Prolific Priority Offender (PPO) Officer, and the management of PPOs is ad hoc. Although the BCU clearly directs activity in targeting PPOs through the VOLT, TTCG and DMM meetings, the offenders are not subject to co-ordinated PPO management by Police and/or Probation Services to ensure that their pattern of offending stops. The general attitude from those interviewed was that PPO coordination work was not popular.
- The problem-solving processes are not understood by staff as a necessary tool to manage problems and eliminate recurrence. Unless the issue was a BCU or ward profile problem and a F302 document was completed, problem-solving techniques were not apparently applied.

4. Monitoring assessment and follow-up action

Have all recommendations been accepted and acted upon?

All recommendations have been accepted. Progress towards their full implementation has been driven and coordinated by the SMT, and affected staff are engaged whenever possible. In summary, Recommendations (1) and (4) have been fully discharged by the BCU, and Recommendations (2), (3) and (5) are partially discharged with further work required.

Has the remedial action/implementation plan led to demonstrable improvement?

Yes. The implementation of the BCU action plan along with strong leadership from the SMT has created a momentum of change that has led to positive performance outcomes. These changes must now become embedded and enhanced yet further, with more work required to complete the implementation of Recommendations (2), (3) and (5). This will help to achieve sustained performance improvements for the BCU, and to maintain the momentum during the months ahead.

¹⁵ Borough intelligence Unit

Under the leadership of the BCU Commander, Barking and Dagenham BCU has become a more efficient and effective organisation, and one at which staff enjoy working. As identified, the changes made in accordance with the recommendations have been positive. However, with limited SMT support and despite his best efforts, the BCU Commander did not have sufficient capacity to take forward many of the HMIC findings during the first six months, and consequently most work has been implemented during the six months that preceded this revisit.

With numerous staff changes now complete, the BCU Commander has SMT and middle management capability to complete the implementation of the outstanding recommendations. The BCU expects to co-locate at the new, purpose-built Fresh Wharf Resource Centre in 2011, and this will enable further improvements to be made. There is a unified leadership and a strong sense of corporacy amongst the reconstituted SMT, who should be congratulated for their hard work thus far.

This momentum of change must now be maintained and the outstanding recommendations discharged. Staff at Barking & Dagenham BCU and HMIC are positive about the prospects for the BCU and the SMT are confident in their ability to make further improvements in the months ahead.

Has performance in relation to national/local targets improved? If not, are the reasons for deterioration understood and being addressed?

Yes, in overall terms. However, comparative national directional targets have remained unchanged against their MSBCU peers.

Total Notifiable Offences have reduced, as has residential burglary and violent crime. Robbery and vehicle crime have seen small increases. Nine of the ten specified notional contract outcomes remain unchanged, with robbery slipping slightly. There remains further work to ensure improvements in MSBCU position. As mentioned above, progress has gathered momentum in the last six months, and the BCU is now in a strong position to build upon the momentum already in place, with capable leaders driving change.

A detailed summary is set out in Section 1 within this report.

Have any problems arisen since the Inspection that are likely to affect performance and merit further scrutiny by HMIC?

No.

Other than notification of monitoring outcome to regional office (lead staff officer), is any further action required by HMIC Inspection team?

No.

Recommendation for HMI?

Sign off agreed.