

**Inspection of the Royal Borough of  
Kingston Upon Thames BCU  
Metropolitan Police Service**

**February 2006**

**Conducted by  
Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary - Central Region**

1. The inspection of the Royal Borough of Kingston Upon Thames (known as a borough operational command unit – BOCU), Metropolitan Police Service was carried out by Chief Superintendent Ian McNeill between 28 November and 2 December 2005: Superintendent Christopher Ward, Detective Superintendent Andrew Rintoul and Chief Inspector Karl Knights assisted him.

## **Force and BOCU Overview**

2. The Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) is the largest and most complex police organisation in England and Wales. It is made up of 32 borough-based operational command units, sharing coterminous boundaries with the London boroughs. It is responsible for policing 620 square miles, with a resident population of over 7.3 million (3.2 million households). It also deals with an additional daily influx of approximately 5.5 million visitors and workers. The MPS is one of the largest public sector organisations in the country and is configured to deliver a range of international, national and pan-London services, as well as local service delivery across the 32 territorial boroughs. In terms of staff numbers, the MPS is around three times larger than the next largest force. Its annual budget accounts for about 24% of the total bill for police services in England and Wales. In addition, the MPS is routinely required to respond to a range of major and critical incidents and events characterised by an ongoing commitment to provide reassurance to the people of London against the backdrop of a heightened terrorist threat.
3. The force headquarters (HQ) is based at New Scotland Yard in central London. The last major restructuring of the MPS took place in April 2000. This involved the dissolution of the area structure and the move to borough-based policing. This was a move entirely consistent with the desire for locally accountable service delivery. The service review, instigated at the new Commissioner's appointment, seeks to align resources with his widened vision incorporating citizen focus and safer neighbourhoods.
4. The Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames is situated in south-west London and is bordered to the west and north by the boroughs of Richmond upon Thames and Wandsworth. To the east, Merton and Sutton border it. The southern section of the borough borders administrative councils within Surrey County. The borough size is approximately 38 square kilometres. There are 14 other MPS boroughs of a smaller geographical size and 17 larger. The overall size of the MPS is 1407 square kilometres, and consequently Kingston borough comprises 2.7% of the total geographical area policed by the MPS.
5. Kingston upon Thames is steeped in history. The oldest of only four Royal Boroughs in England and Wales, its association with royalty dates back to Anglo-Saxon times when in the tenth century seven kings were crowned in Kingston. Kingston today remains an important strategic centre with good transport links that make it popular for employment, commerce, shopping, education, entertainment, recreation and leisure. The borough has both rural and urban areas to police together with a thriving town centre that has one of the largest retail and leisure facilities in this part of the country. There is also a university and a college of further education that cater for a combined student population of around 23,000. Having an estimated total population of nearly 150,000 people of which 15.5% are from ethnic backgrounds, including significant numbers of residents of South Korean and Sri Lankan origin, the borough has a rich and diverse culture.

6. The senior management team (SMT) of the BOCU is headed by a chief superintendent (BOCU commander) and consists of a superintendent, business manager, finance and resources manager, HR manager, forensic manager, senior analyst and four chief inspectors (operations, borough liaison, criminal justice and detective). The BOCU headquarters is located within Kingston town, and it is here that the SMT is located.
7. The Borough of Kingston has five teams of 'core' officers, based at Kingston and Surbiton police stations. Each core team, led by an inspector, provides the main response for emergency and non-emergency calls for service. The current budgeted workforce target (BWT) of the BOCU is 288.6 police officers. The affordable workforce target (AWT) for police staff is 65.84 (excluding communications staff who are financed by, and ringfenced to, 'Metcall'). The AWT for police community support officers is 32. There are currently 22 members of the Special Constabulary. There are also several volunteers who assist the BOCU by performing front office duties at police stations.

## Performance

### Crime and disorder reduction partnerships

8. In accordance with the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, the local authority, police, health and fire service – supported by other key agencies and voluntary groups – have joined together to form a crime and disorder reduction partnership (CDRP). Known as the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames CDRP, the partnership is coterminous with borough borders. The partnership is currently operating under a strategy for the years 2005 to 2008 following an audit of its local population and representative partners. The six main themes of the strategy are:
  - reducing anti-social behaviour and disorder and enhancing public reassurance;
  - reducing overall crime and particularly domestic burglary, vehicle crime, criminal damage, robbery and thefts, thefts of pedal cycles and violence against the person (defined as wounding);
  - drugs, drug misuse and alcohol-related crime;
  - hate crime – domestic violence, homophobic crime and racist incidents;
  - reducing the demand on police in Kingston town centre to release officers and achieve a more equitable deployment across the borough;
  - issues impacting on young people, in particular developing activities so that children and young people will:
    - choose not to take illegal drugs;
    - be safe from bullying and discrimination;
    - be safe from crime and anti-social behaviour in and out of school;
    - attend and enjoy school; and
    - engage in law-abiding and positive behaviour in and out of school.
9. Partnership working is strong within the borough, assisted by co-terminosity. There was unanimous praise for the police from partnership representatives, particularly for the commander and the chief inspector (borough liaison) – partners cited genuine commitment and drive from them both. Work on a partnership level seeks to create community cohesion within the local Korean community, using timely and appropriate interventions. There were very positive comments from partners regarding the introduction and use of the borough's police community support officers (PCSOs). In

particular they praised their commitment to serving the local community. Fire brigade representatives attend the weekly press briefings held by the police and attend at all the launches of safer neighbourhood (neighbourhood policing) teams.

10. HMIC staff attended an impressive joint actions group chaired by the chief inspector (borough liaison), a monthly event which utilises crime pattern analysis data. There were many representatives from partner agencies, who were clearly enthused by the meeting and the relationships that have developed with effective exchange of information regarding partnership activity. The partners at the meeting were very positive about the impact of the safer neighbourhood teams on the community they serve.
11. The BOCU chief inspector (criminal justice) is the strategic lead for persistent and priority offenders (PPOs), and chairs a multi-agency group that provides a joint approach to tackle offending behaviour. There was evidence of joint interventions to stop offending and clearly good relations exist with the Youth Offending Team (YOT). The group has increased the number of PPOs with whom they work from 16 to 25, but there is limited understanding or monitoring of the group's success. The commander needs to ensure that the group is able to fully understand how its work impacts upon offender behaviour, for example by monitoring the percentage of re-arrests and re-offending for offenders.
12. There are commendable examples of good tactical working in the borough, four of which are summarised below.

- **Multi-agency panel**

Borough police take the lead by chairing a multi-agency panel consisting of representatives from Housing, Education, Social Services, Community Safety, Youth Offending Team, Primary Care Trust, and the Youth Service. The panel receives reports from all partners regarding anti-social behaviour related matters and individuals who have come to notice, and considers a range of multi-agency interactions and agrees who should lead in a particular case. In relation to ASBOs (anti-social behaviour orders), the panel monitors activity by individuals who come to notice and each stage and intervention is agreed and documented to inform any subsequent legal proceedings.

- **Norbiton Safer Neighbourhood Youth Committee**

The local team constables identified that youth engagement was key in solving some youth-related problems in Norbiton and consequently set an objective for the establishment of a local youth committee. The team identified an area of four streets that were at the centre of drug dealing and the local youth gang's area of influence, and agreed with partners to focus attention on improving the life of local residents. Increased partnership activity and intensive police patrol has developed the trust of residents and the support of the young people. Funding was secured from the council to improve the environment by clearing rubbish, repairing fences, removing graffiti and improving lighting. Three months after launch the team held the first meeting of the youth committee, initially discussing areas of concern for young people and using their contacts to deliver messages to their friends and contacts. The youth committee was also tasked to engage with the elderly residents of the area, to build bridges and to reduce their fear of crime. The youth committee took the lead in organising a series of events for older residents, including a Christmas party at the local youth centre and an afternoon tea party in a town centre nightclub. Also, police and the youth committee identified that a number of vulnerable young

people were being drawn into contact with crime and anti-social behaviour because of crowded living conditions, which led them to be on the streets after school; their schooling was suffering because they were not completing homework. The committee linked with Cambridge Action Partnership, local residents and schools to find the funding for a homework club for 9–11 year olds in the centre of the estate. This homework club now has over 30 regular attendees and the area is beginning to regain some community cohesion.

- **Youth Disco**

Surveys of young people showed that there was a demand for adult-style events for the 11-17 age group. Borough police also recognised that partnership service providers wanted a forum to engage with young people. The outcome was to jointly organise four concerts each year for up to 1500 young people at a time. Each partner contributed resources in the form of police officers, youth outreach workers, drugs outreach workers, education officers and additional nightclub staff. The events have run for four years and continue to be well supported.

- **Safer Neighbourhood Teams**

There is evidence that the safer neighbourhood teams have been very successful in developing frontline partnership working. Particular examples noted in Chessington include:

- The assistance of council housing officers, who are regularly consulted with and involved in compiling joint letters to local residents.
- There is an impressive use of local environmental rangers. As a consequence of their work graffiti in Chessington has been dramatically reduced and new 'tags' are quickly removed to deter further offences. The team has an impressive record of tackling those offenders caught on London Transport CCTV as part of operation 'Bustag'.
- CCTV is an effective tool in preventing and detecting crime and the team currently identifies over 90% of those caught on CCTV committing offences in Chessington.

13. In summary, partnership working is highly effective and is a credit to police and partnership representatives alike.

## **Performance against operational targets**

14. To allow performance comparisons, similar BCUs are grouped together into 'most similar basic command unit groups' (MSBCU), based, in general, on socio-economic and demographic characteristics. Kingston BOCU's crime reduction and crime detection performance for November 2004 to October 2005 compares favourably with MSBCU average.

**Figure 1 – Kingston’s crime reduction and detection performance November 2004 to October 2005**

	<b>Performance Nov 04 to Oct 05</b>	<b>% Change from same period the previous year</b>	<b>MSBCU group mean</b>	<b>MSBCU group ranked position</b>
<b>Recorded crime/1000 population</b>	101.79	-5.51%	105.95	6 out of 15
<b>% Recorded crime detected</b>	25.63%	+8.23% pts	25.2%	6 out of 15
<b>% Recorded crime sanction detections</b>	16.48%	+3.59% pts	18.46%	10 out of 15
<b>Domestic burglaries/ 1000 households</b>	7.86	+2.03%	16.55	2 out of 15
<b>% Domestic burglaries detected</b>	19.92%	+1.02% pts	15.75%	5 out of 15
<b>% Domestic burglary sanction detections</b>	19.12%	+0.42% pts	14.83%	4 out of 15
<b>Recorded robberies/ 1000 population</b>	2.02	+13.83%	3.33	5 out of 15
<b>% Robberies detected</b>	17.11%	+1.37% pts	15.12%	6 out of 15
<b>% Recorded robberies sanction detections</b>	13.82%	-1.17% pts	12.71%	9 out of 15
<b>Recorded vehicle crime/ 1000 population</b>	8.55	-0.08%	15.28	2 out of 15
<b>% Vehicle crime detected</b>	4.98%	-2.25% pts	7.66%	9 out of 15
<b>% Vehicle crime sanction detections</b>	3.97%	-2.8% pts	7.13%	9 out of 15
<b>Recorded violent crime/ 1000 population</b>	25.56	-1.89%	26.21	7 out of 15
<b>% Violent crime detected</b>	46.98%	+19.70% pts	43.65%	4 out of 15
<b>% Violent crime sanction detections</b>	23.27%	+5.63% pts	26.24%	10 out of 15

*Source - The statistics used in the following section come from, the Annual Statistical Returns, quarterly statistical returns, CRIMSEC 3, the Home Office Statistical Bulletin HOSB and iQuanta.*

15. Overall, Kingston BOCU is performing above its MSBCU average (Figure 2). The one area of concern is vehicle sanction detection rate, which is low and deteriorating.

Figure 2 – Overall Performance Summary of Kingston BOCU (November 2004 – October 2005).

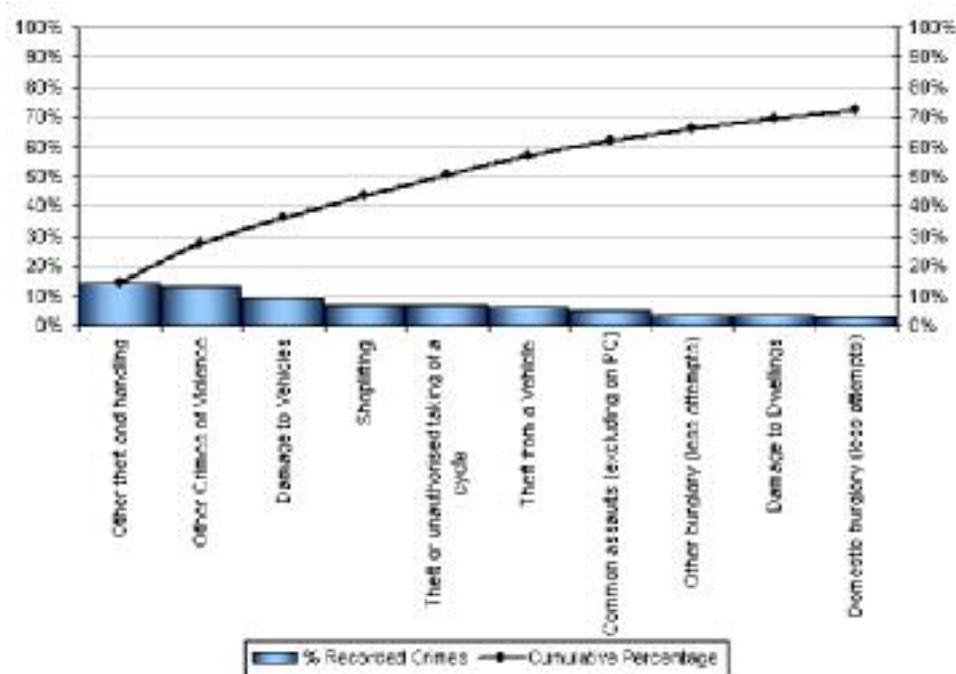
<p><b>Good – Getting Better</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Total crime per 1000 population</li> <li>• Vehicle crime per 1000 population</li> <li>• Violent crime per 1000 population</li> <li>• % Total crime detections</li> <li>• % Domestic burglary detections</li> <li>• % Domestic burglary sanction detections</li> <li>• % Robbery detections</li> <li>• % Violent crime detections</li> </ul>	<p><b>Good – Getting Worse</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Domestic burglary per 1000 households</li> <li>• Robbery per 1000 population</li> <li>• % Robbery sanction detections</li> </ul>
<p><b>Poor – Getting Better</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• % Total crime sanction detections</li> <li>• % Violent crime sanction detections</li> </ul>	<p><b>Poor – Getting Worse</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• % Vehicle crime detections</li> <li>• % Vehicle crime sanction detections</li> </ul>

Source – iQuanta data

• **Total Crime**

The total number of offences in Kingston during the twelve month period ending October 2005 is down 5.5% on the previous 12 months. Levels of total crime compare favourably with the MSBCU average and the BOCU is currently ranked sixth out of 15 in the MSBCU group. ‘Other theft and Handling’ offences currently make up the largest proportion of crime in Kingston (Figure 3).

Figure 3 – Analysis of recorded offences by crime type



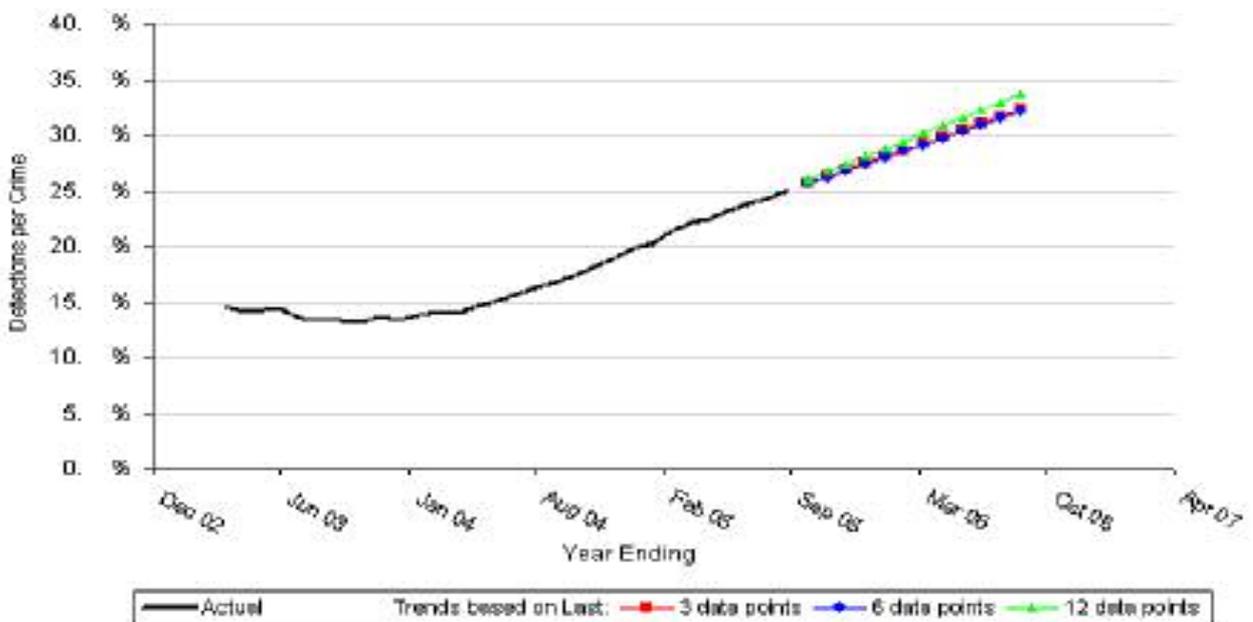
Further analysis of crime types indicates that while theft and handling offences are high volume, there has been a reduction of 8%. There has also been a significant improvement in levels of fraud and forgery, with a significant 35% reduction (330 fewer offences) in cheque and credit card fraud.

Figure 4 – percentage change in recorded crime categories

	Year Ending October 2004	Year Ending October 2005	% Change
Theft and handling	6693	6130	-8.41 %
Violence against the person	3496	3354	-4.06 %
Criminal damage	2899	2886	-0.45 %
Fraud and forgery	1235	876	-29.07 %
Burglary	956	1072	12.13 %
Drug offences	330	387	17.27 %
Robbery	267	304	13.86 %
Sexual offences	149	180	20.81 %
Other offences	152	96	-36.84 %

The total crime detection rate has improved significantly year on year and is now broadly in line with the MSBCU average. This improving performance has been sustained throughout the year with both long and short-term trends indicating improving performance (Figure 5). At the time of inspection, the overall BOCU detection rate stood at 25.1% and the sanction detection rate was 17.2%, rising from 14 % for the year 2004/05.

Figure 5 – BOCU detection rates

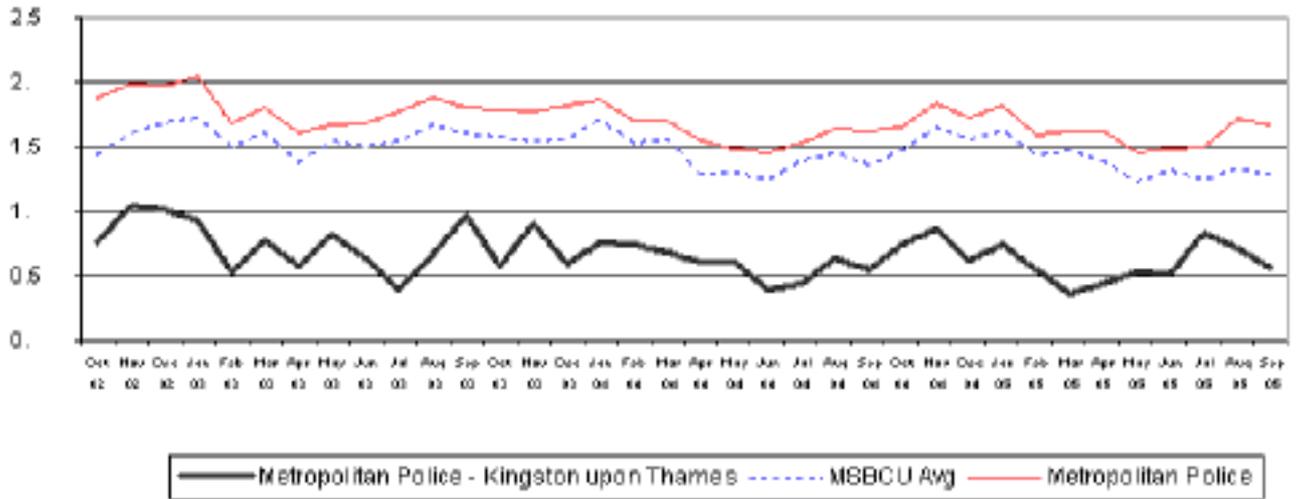


Projection - Detections per Crime - Metropolitan Police - Kingston upon Thames BOCU-WI Crime-01 Apr 05 - 03 Sep 05

- **Burglary**

Domestic burglary rose 2% year on year, but is well below the MSBCU average, placing Kingston second in its MSBCU group.

Figure 6 – Percentage change in incidence of burglary per 1000 households 2002 - 2005



Comparison Chart - Crime per 1000 Households Metropolitan Police - Kingston upon Thames Domestic Burglary 'Most Similar' BCU: 01 Oct 2002 - 00 Sep 2005

It should be noted that, while domestic burglary remains relatively stable and comparatively low, there has been a 23% increase in non-domestic burglary, although levels remain below the MSBCU average. The burglary detection rate is relatively unchanged on the previous year but remains comparatively high, with Kingston ranked fifth in the MSBCU group.

- **Robbery**

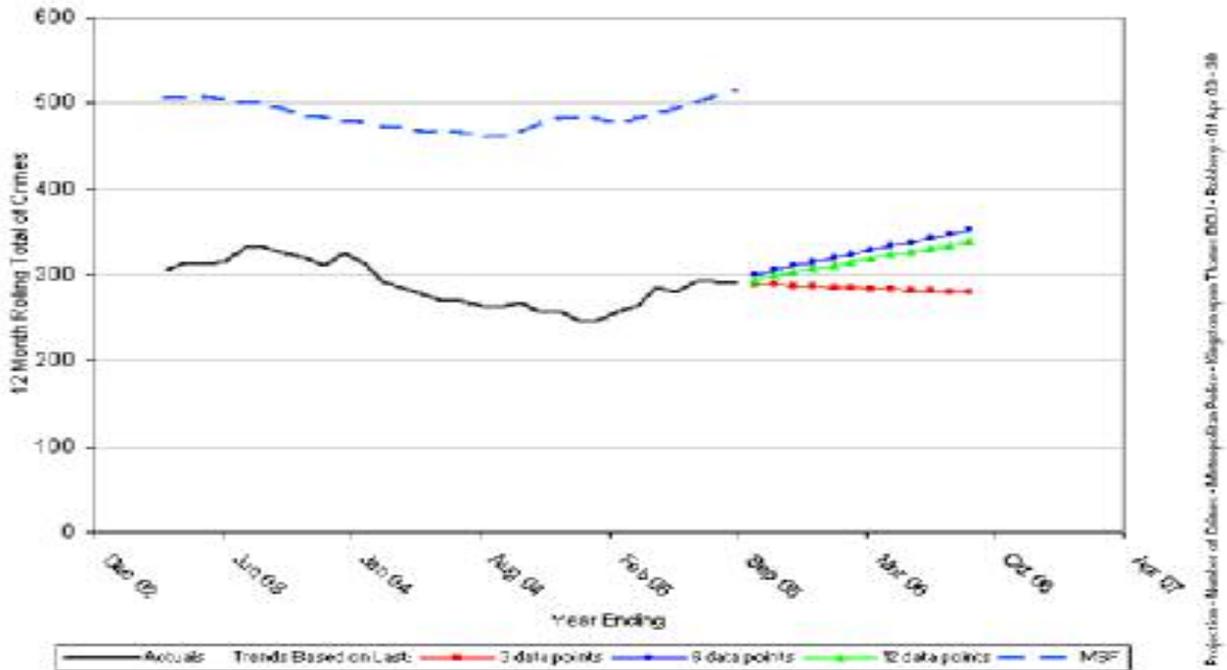
BOCU robbery rates rose by almost 14% year on year although per 1000 population this offence remains comparatively low in volume, ranked fifth in the MSBCU group. There has been almost no change in the small number of recorded robbery of business property but a 14.6% increase in robbery of personal property (Figure 7).

Figure 7 – BOCU robbery rates

	Year Ending October 2004	Year Ending October 2005	% Change
Robbery of personal property	246	282	14.63 %
Robbery of business property	21	22	4.76 %

The trajectory of robbery levels (Figure 8) suggests that the rise in robbery levels has levelled out in recent months whilst the MSBCU average continues to rise.

Figure 8 – BOCU robbery trends



Both the robbery detection and sanction detection rates remain above the MSBCU average and there is no significant year on year change. At the time of inspection the robbery sanctioned detection rate stood at 17.8% against a BOCU target of 7%.

• **Vehicle Crime**

There was no change in the overall level of vehicle crime in Kingston for the year ending October 2005 and the current level remains comparatively low, ranked second in the MSBCU group. However, a breakdown of vehicle crime constituent offences reveals reductions in ‘theft of’ vehicle offences but a rise in ‘theft from’ vehicle offences (Figure 9).

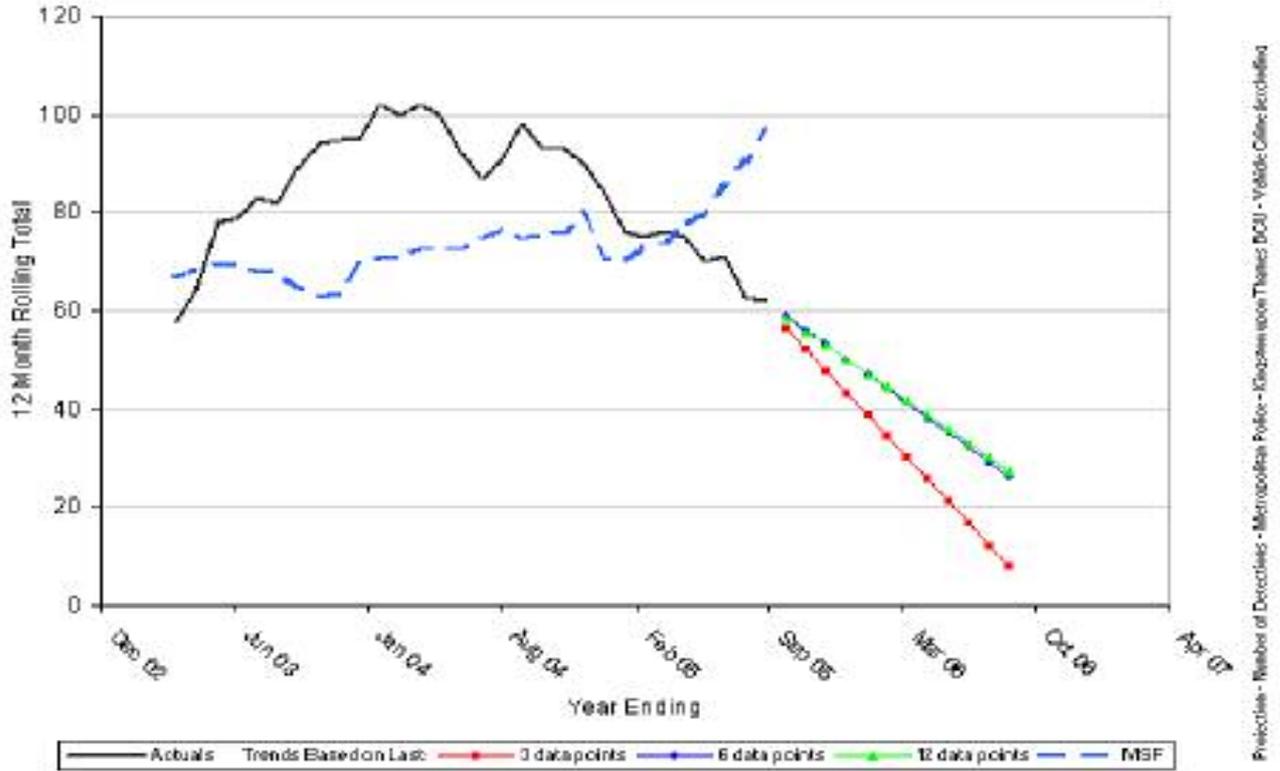
Figure 9 – BOCU vehicle crime levels, 2004 -05

	Year Ending October 2004	Year Ending October 2005	% Change
Theft from vehicle	820	955	16.46 %
Theft or unauthorised taking of motor vehicle	444	310	-30.18 %
Aggravated vehicle taking	21	19	-9.52 %

The vehicle crime sanction detection rate is a concern as they are falling; there was a deterioration in the number of vehicle crime detections compared with a rise in the MSBCU average (Figure 10). The BOCU recognises that it faces significant challenges in this area, with only twelve persons arrested this year to-date for theft from motor vehicle offences; at the time of inspection, the sanction detection rate was 3.7%, significantly lower than the BOCU target of 7%. The BOCU has undertaken significant analysis, particularly in developing offender profiles, and Safer Neighbourhood initiatives are resulting in a reduction

of offences being recorded. The commander is pragmatic about resourcing and vehicle crime is not a priority, and does not receive the dedicated investigative resources applied to burglary and robbery. The Borough does, however, have plans to develop further source information and Automatic Number Plate Recognition system (ANPR) operations.

Figure 10 – Vehicle crime detections



• **Violent Crime**

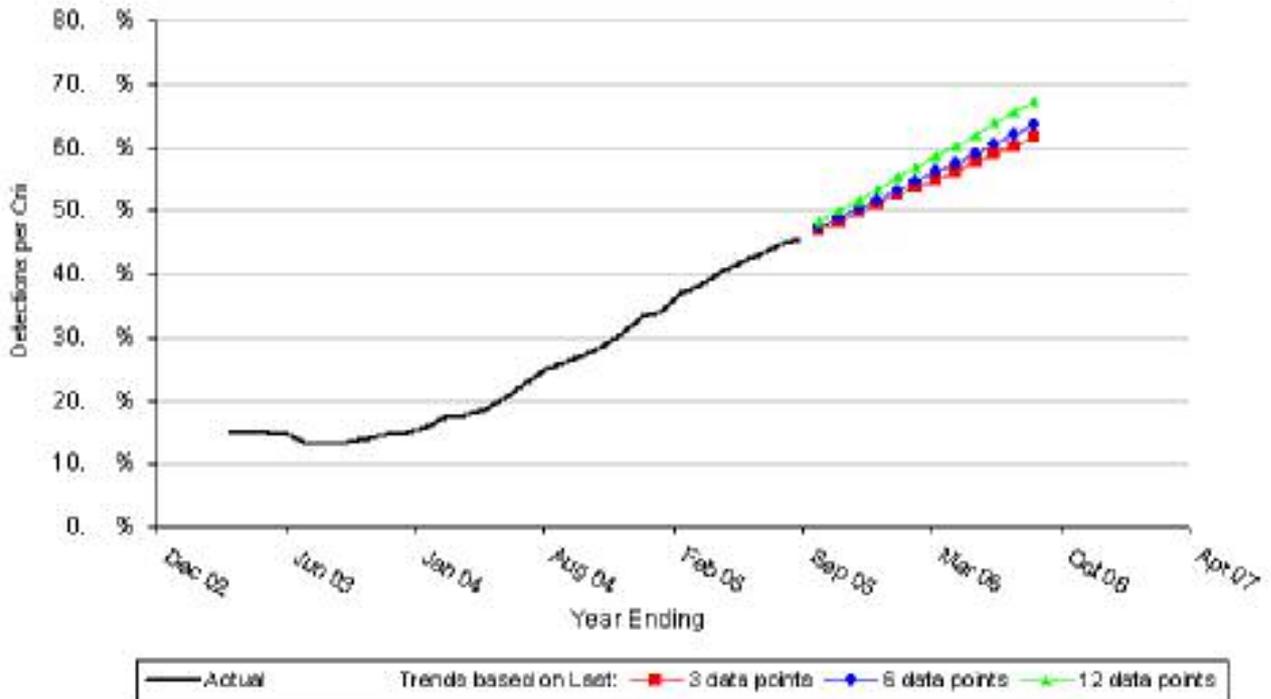
Violent crime fell slightly between 2004 and 2005, and remains just below the MSBCU average; the overall improvement in violent crime is largely due to reductions in less serious violence offences (Figure 11).

Figure 11 – Violent crime incidence, by type, 2004 - 05

	Year Ending October 2004	Year Ending October 2005	% Change
Less Serious Violence	3406	3269	-4.02 %
Robbery Of Personal Property	246	282	14.63 %
More Serious Violence	90	85	-5.56 %
Indecent Assault On A Female	76	68	-10.53 %
Other Sexual Offences	37	72	94.59 %
Rape	36	40	11.11 %
Robbery Of Business Property	21	22	4.76 %

The violent crime detection rate has improved significantly year on year and is now above the MSBCU average; short and long term trends indicate continuing improvement (Figure 12).

Figure 12 – Violent crime detection rates, 2002 with trajectories to 2006

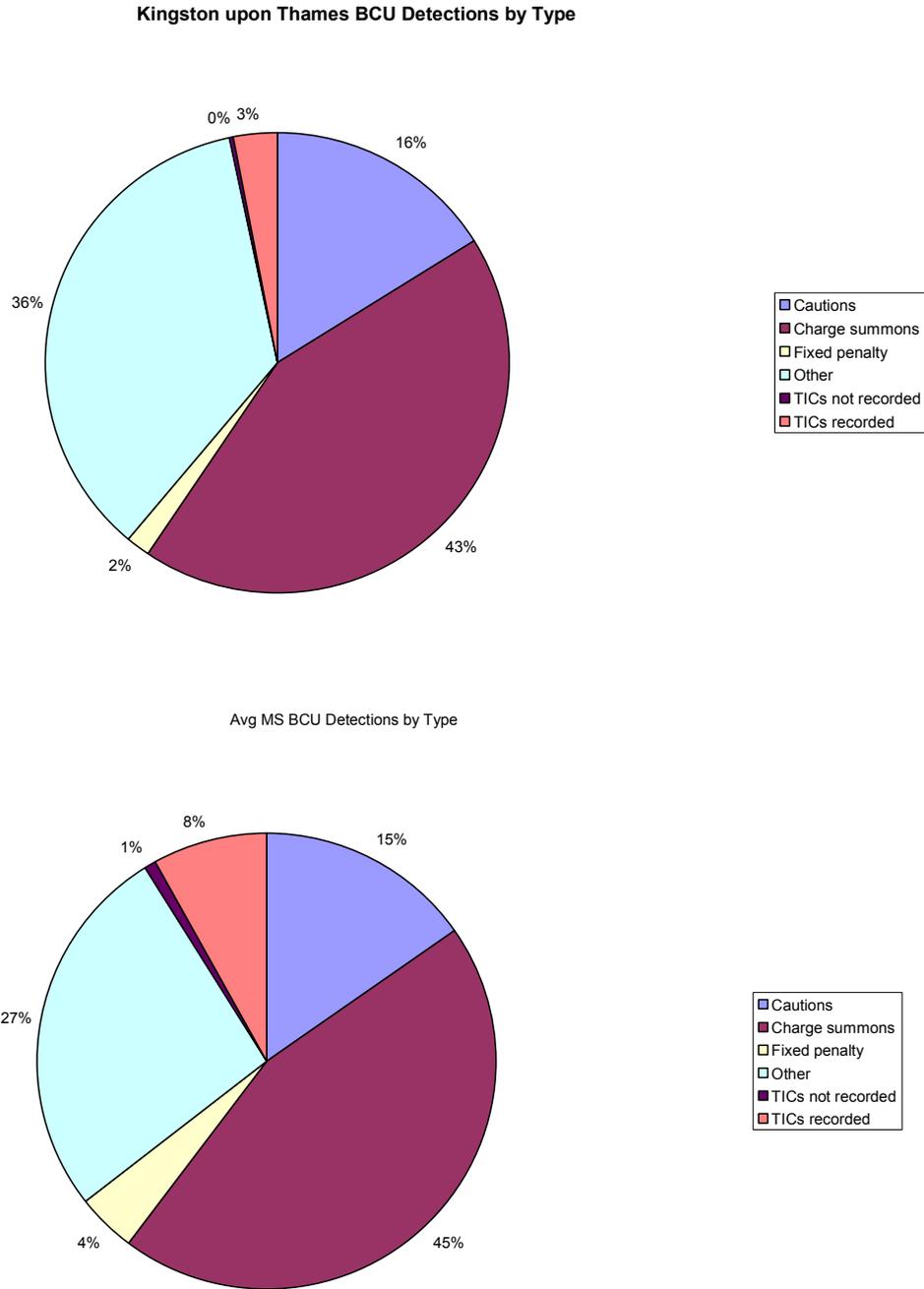


Projection - Detections per Crim - Metropolitan Police - Kingston upon Thames BOCU - Market Crime-01 Apr 06 - 00 Sep 06

- **Detection by type**

A breakdown of overall detections by type, compared with the MSBCU average, shows that Kingston has a much greater proportion of administrative detections (36% compared with 27%) and very few ‘offences taken into consideration’ or TICs – 3% compared with 9% (Figure 13). The TIC rate, in particular is a further area of concern, which again the BOCU acknowledges. The BOCU does well with burglary TICs in comparison with others and this may be as a direct consequence of the dedicated investigation team. The MPS has introduced a drive to secure further TICs, a campaign known as ‘Wipe the slate clean’, and the BOCU is developing tactics to improve TIC rates. One specific tactic is writing to prisoners explaining the significance and value of having further offences taken into consideration whilst they are in custody. The BOCU has also briefed staff on how to obtain TICs.

Figure 13 – BOCU and MSBCU detections by type



16. With the exception of vehicle crime detection levels and TICs, generally the BOCU is performing well against MSBCU averages. The commander believes that this

performance is born of intrusive management and a team approach, with a pride in its performance. At the time of inspection, Kingston had the highest arrest rate per officer and the highest incidents per officer rate within the MPS.

17. Also of significance is the excellent performance in recently published public satisfaction levels. The BOCU is currently top in the MPS and consequently has been asked to provide a summary of how the BOCU is achieving its relative success. The commander identifies the following factors;
- Commitment, support and experience of the BOCU SMT
  - Personality driven – right people for right job
  - Innovative tactics by officers
  - An engaged local media (providing good news stories)
  - The creation of effective safer neighbourhood teams.

### **Accountability mechanisms and performance management**

18. The BOCU commander sets the direction for policing by firstly engaging the SMT in regular conference sessions where key objectives are discussed. Three main issues at present are:
- *Resilience* – This is a relatively small borough in terms of resource levels and every resource is critical. The commander believes that the BOCU struggles with all the external requests put upon it – for example, having the capacity to deal with the introduction of all force models and requests to a ‘Rolls Royce’ level. The BOCU is increasingly examining methods of sharing resources and capabilities with neighbouring boroughs, (especially Richmond) and a chief inspector has been tasked to look in detail at these issues. There is little doubt that efficiency gains could be made through this approach.
  - *Business Community* – It is clear that the BOCU has forged strong relationships with the local business community. The creation of a business improvement district (BID) has resulted in a 1% precept of local businesses that funds rangers and the extended police family, including a ‘graffiti patrol’. This was the first such scheme in the country and could be an area of good practice.
  - *Developing disparate communities* – And in particular, the town centre and university. The university wants to raise its civic profile and be involved more in the local community. There are opportunities for this to happen, for example some joint forensic faculty work. There are 23,000 students currently at the university. Another disparate community is the large number of Koreans now living in the borough. This has a big impact upon the SMT which is frequently involved in senior delegation visits (the commander sees this as potentially a national responsibility). There appears to be an under-reporting of crime within this community that currently that the BOCU is trying to address.
19. The BOCU has a business progress plan which sets out the priorities for each SMT lead, with milestones and key events. The business manager has six key areas of responsibility as part of her portfolio – health and safety; finance and resources; communication and corporate change; workforce development; asset management;

and business planning and continuity. These themes are reflected in the business plan, which is subject to monthly review and for which the commander holds her responsible. However, detective inspectors had not seen the plan and were unaware of the specific contributions required from them in December.

20. There is a strong performance accountability external to the BOCU. Monthly 'Link' BOCU meetings are chaired by a territorial commander (ACC equivalent rank), primarily to support the BOCU but this is evolving and becoming more performance driven. There is also a 'Like' borough meeting, known as crime control strategy meetings, each month chaired by the deputy assistant commissioner (territorial policing); this forum is more challenging and performance review more integral. There is a potential tension between the two meetings (potential of dual tasking for example) but this conflict is managed as the BOCU commander attends both. The territorial policing tasking and co-ordination meeting is bi-weekly and uses national intelligence (NIM) products. There is also an MPS meeting which takes place every month.
21. Internal accountability within the BOCU is strong in some areas. The BOCU undertakes a compstat process (intrusive review of performance using computer-generated data) on a five-weekly cycle chaired by the superintendent, at which the five 'core' team inspectors and sergeants are held to account for the performance of their teams over a range of indicators.
22. The five duty officers (patrol inspectors) manage a core team each and are accountable for team performance, managing demand, critical incidents and custody issues such as PACE reviews. It is clear that relations and communications between them and safer neighbourhood managers are good. They are held to account formally via the five weekly meeting (compstat) with the superintendent (operations). Duty officers were positive about the value of this meeting and felt that daily briefings and tasking were good. However, there is little proactive work by their teams. Duty officers capture relevant information regarding incidents of note, missing persons etc via a template document, which they use for handover to other duty officers. This document is then reviewed at the daily meeting. They were satisfied with the level of training they receive to deal with firearms and critical incident issues.
23. While internal accountability was generally satisfactory, some improvements are possible:
  - The compstat process generally only applies to the five 'core' teams and the safer neighbourhood teams. A similar review has only recently been introduced for CID and there are still other areas not subject to this type of scrutiny – for example, the accountability for performance applied to the core teams does not extend to police staff (except PCSOs).
  - There are inconsistencies in the way that constables are held to account for performance. Some officers have arrest, detection and intelligence targets which are monitored in monthly meetings with line managers, whereas other officers do not. Some uniformed teams (core and safer neighbourhood teams) had quantifiable targets, but colleagues within the case progression unit (CPU) and CID did not.
  - Inspectors on the borough feel that there is a need for clarification and consistency from the SMT about individual targets.

- Uniformed staff question the accuracy of performance data used at the compstat meetings, such as the number of stop and search forms submitted.
24. While there is effective use of performance data and comparison with other MPS BOCUs, there is a stark absence and a lack of knowledge of Home Office iQuanta data to assess the BOCU performance against its MSBCU group. Accountability and comparison within the MPS may be a main driver for BOCU performance, but it is essential that the managers understand how the Home Office compares and assesses performance. It is also potentially a way of identifying good practice in similar BCU/BOCUs.
25. Consequently, these two lead to a recommendation regarding accountability and performance monitoring.

#### **RECOMMENDATION 1**

The BCU commander should ensure that the present internal accountability framework is extended so that the performance of all staff is consistently measured against agreed targets. Also, the SMT should extend its monitoring of performance to capture those comparisons – within MSBCUs – used by the Home Office as part of the Policing Performance Assessment Framework (PPAF).

### **Reassurance and visibility**

26. The BOCU has implemented a specific Korean communication strategy, with the appointment of a Korean liaison officer, regular meetings with Korean embassy staff, briefings to and by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (North & South Korea Section) and dedicated liaison with local Korean community and church groups. Access to police services for the community – the largest Korean community in Europe, making up an estimated 10% of the borough's population - is ensured through the provision, with the local authority, of a 'One-Stop Shop' staffed by Korean speakers in New Malden (the area of the borough with the highest concentration of Korean residents). The media and communications officer provides a dedicated point of contact for the six Korean-language newspapers and two internet news stations based within the borough. Korean police have visited the BOCU twice, while two Kingston officers undertook a cultural familiarisation and liaison visit to South Korea in 2004.
27. HMIC is impressed with the overall structure in place to deliver neighbourhood policing. The BOCU currently has eight safer neighbourhood teams that cover two-thirds of the borough and are based around communities rather than ward boundaries. Each team is led by a sergeant and contains two constables and three police community support officers (PCSOs). There are four community officers in the remaining wards not covered by the teams. The neighbourhood teams aim to target their resources on issues that affect the community and provide a contact point for advice on any policing matter. Predominantly, they deal with quality of life issues. There are plans to increase the number of safer neighbourhood teams to 16 and the BOCU has a plan covering issues such as the location of the new teams and accommodation.

28. The teams' activities and external accountability is driven by ward panels that comprise residents, head teachers, local councillors and neighbourhood watch co-ordinators. Panels meet every three months to decide on neighbourhood priorities, using mapping exercises (use of laminated maps at the ward meetings where community members place pins on a map to identify problem and locations). This information is then analysed and acted upon by the safer neighbourhood teams and maps are reviewed at the next meeting to determine if the issue has been resolved. There is also a significant use of volunteers to run the front office at New Malden police station – a base for two such teams. There are regular community newsletters drafted and published by the teams.
29. The teams consider that the BOCU daily meetings (and Wednesday theme meeting in particular) are the times when their performance is called to account. This is supported by a compstat process that is described as 'robust' and not 'brutal'. However, constables within the teams were not aware that they were measured on the number of problems that they solved. The commander may wish to consider this issue (particularly in light of the earlier recommendation).
30. HMIC found very few abstractions of safer neighbourhood officers and this almost certainly stems from a strong lead and directions by the SMT. A recent inspection from HQ of the borough teams detailed an 89% compliance with the Metropolitan police safer neighbourhoods model. Sergeants were positive about the integration of PCSOs and, as a consequence of this alignment, they are well supervised by the safer neighbourhood sergeants. There is evidence that they are being deployed appropriately to incidents to reduce demand on other officers. In summary, the borough is a good practice model for implementation of the safer neighbourhood strategy.
31. The PCSOs interviewed during the inspection were smart, enthusiastic, committed and knowledgeable about their role. They were aware of the BOCU priorities and how their work impacted on these, knew the local PPOs and it was clear that their daily activity is tasked. They regularly saw their inspector and chief inspector (the PCSO 'champion'), and are robustly held to account through the performance development review (PDR) process, regular team meetings and one-to-one interviews with their sergeant. All had relevant objectives within their PDRs and had to provide monthly information relating to progress against these. All had received problem-solving training and could discuss such work with HMIC. They received recognition for good work from their immediate supervisors as well as 'well done' e-mails from the SMT.
32. Town centre PCSO patrols made over 130 detentions in the last year and they are recognised as valuable by the local business community, who are considering sponsoring another post. All PCSOs were satisfied with the level of equipment they had, and the only minor concern was the length of time it took to receive new clothing. In short, morale is high and the PCSOs are a credit to the borough.
33. The BOCU has a new post of media and communications officer, who has made a very positive impact, both internally with BOCU staff and externally with partners. The post will drive local media links and focus on internal issues such as the recent upgrade of the website. Relations with the council media officer are good and, when appropriate, joint press releases are issued. The officer attends the daily meeting and is able to identify opportunities for good news stories and occasionally a need to react to negative issues. Positive media coverage is measured on the number of press releases and column inches within local media releases.

34. The inspection identified some concerns around poor understanding of different roles within the BOCU. Some operational constables ascribe limited value to the worth of PCSOs and Special Constabulary. These rather negative views contrast with positive views elsewhere, but some officers commented that they felt that PCSOs were rushed into the organisation and there is some confusion about what they can and cannot do. Officers on the core teams are not fully conversant with the work of the officers on the safer neighbourhood teams, and ring fencing of these officers has caused some resentment. Views were expressed that neighbourhood officers could assist response teams more by undertaking some appropriate taskings. And yet, core team officers were not aware of the excellent satisfaction rates that the borough is achieving. The commander is urged to review these issues and consider whether further marketing of the work of different teams within the BOCU, and the contribution that they make, would raise awareness and promote mutual respect.

### **Intelligence-led policing**

35. HMIC identified significant issues in relation to application of the national intelligence model (NIM) and other intelligence matters. In particular:
- NIM processes do not demonstrably impact on the BOCU business planning cycle. There is an acknowledgement of corporate and local priorities, but the NIM control strategy is not aligned with resource allocation, HR, training or the estate strategy.
  - There are significant knowledge gaps in the SMT around the implementation of NIM and the products required for an efficient and effective NIM process; intelligence does not overtly drive the tasking and co-ordinating process.
  - Staffing of the borough intelligence unit (BIU) to meet the requirements of NIM appears low but this may be more about clarification of responsibilities of the existing staff rather than actual resource levels.
  - The existing strategic assessment and analytical recommendations are police-driven with little or no input from partner agencies. The revised strategic assessment will have a more inclusive approach, due for completion by January 2006. Both the current strategic and tactical assessments were not predictive.
  - There is evidence that the system for monitoring and assuring the flow and actioning of intelligence through the BOCU did not consistently have SMT oversight. In particular the development, exploitation and handling of covert human intelligence sources (CHIS) intelligence would benefit from greater SMT direction and more intrusive and systematic monitoring. A territorial policing detective inspector controls the CHIS, but the handlers are BOCU officers supervised by the detective inspector (intelligence). It is thus possible that he may not know what they are being asked to do and assess their effectiveness. Also, the system for monitoring CHIS intelligence has no target timescales set for action (these could be any period from 24 hours to a month).
  - The terms of reference and links between the morning intelligence meeting and the 10am daily briefing require greater definition as neither discharge the

function of the NIM daily tasking and co-ordination meeting. There were examples seen where issues raised were 'lost' between these meetings.

- BOCU requests for support from the level 2 TTCG meeting have declined recently. Two possible explanations were provided. The first related to the extent to which level 2 resources have been made available previously and the second was a need for clarification from TP HQ concerning the exact content requirements of a request for level 2 resources. Very recently these matters have been discussed between TP and BOCU, but CID officers believe that support from centralised specialist units such as the specialist crime directorate (major incident/murder enquiry type of team) was not always good.
  - Duty officers (inspectors) value the daily briefing but argue that its quality was not as good at weekends and that briefing content remained the same – “often it’s just the date that changes”. This may be a capacity issue within the BIU, but it is significant that briefing standards dip at peak demand periods.
  - The case progression unit (prisoner handling function) is staffed by probationary constables rotated through the unit on three month attachment. Arresting officers hand over their prisoners to the CPU who stated that, when their sergeant is not on duty, inexperienced officers have little guidance. The BOCU may be missing opportunities for intelligence interview / CHIS development.
  - The tasking and co-ordination process is evolving. The meeting attended was retrospective in nature, as the tactical assessment was a limited temporal analysis of historic data. There was no evidence of recent problem profiles or other NIM products being utilised to help, anticipate and plan for future crime trends. Additionally, the meeting had a negligible intelligence input on offence or offending patterns. There was no mention of recent or potential prisoner releases onto the borough or surrounding BOCUs and the only reference to the dedicated source unit (officers who handle informants) tasking was in relation to the arrest of three PPOs already circulated as wanted. There was no intelligence presented to the meeting concerning the borough priority crimes and only limited information concerning PPO activity. Additionally, there was a limited identification of the borough’s intelligence gaps (this was constrained to further crime pattern analysis only) and no determination of the borough’s short or long-term intelligence requirements.
  - There is no evidence of results analysis of the tasking and co-ordination meeting and therefore the BOCU is not in a strong position to identify which tactics or deployments have worked well and those which have not.
  - There are gaps in the attendance at the tasking and co-ordination meeting – for example, the forensic manager does not routinely attend.
36. Intelligence is described as the lifeblood of any police organisation and there are opportunities for intelligence provision to be improved. Consequently, these issues form a further recommendation.

## RECOMMENDATION 2

It is recommended that the BCU commander instigates an urgent review of NIM intelligence functions of the BOCU to ensure that systems and processes are being deployed fully and effectively.

### Crime investigation and recording practices

37. There are clear terms of reference for the burglary and robbery investigation team, which investigates all screened-in burglaries and robberies; interviews and processes all such prisoners and ensures that all reports are correctly and ethically recorded in accordance with Home Office and MPS directions. The team comprises a detective sergeant, three detective constables and three trainee detectives. The impact upon burglary and robbery figures is evident in the fact that, since this team's introduction (May 2005), robbery detection rates have risen from 4% to 18% and currently are among the highest in the MPS.
38. More generally, some critical points emerged in respect of CID work.
- Both uniformed officers and CID staff consider that working relationships could be better. Some uniformed staff commented that CID officers very rarely attend briefings and there is a perception that CID officers are elitist. It is clear that work needs to be done by the borough to address this silo mentality.
  - CID staff interviewed stated that basic enquiries are not being completed before being handed over to CID, and evidence exists of disagreements between staff over who will deal with particular cases. One example highlighted concerned a case of affray that was passed between departments over several weeks.
  - The borough has recently introduced the post of office manager within the CID. Part of the role is to examine crimes forwarded from the crime desk and screen them to ensure that the initial investigation complies with minimum standards of investigation. If this is not the case, the crimes are returned to the uniformed officer to complete these initial steps. This raises the questions about the level of training being provided to frontline staff on undertaking initial levels of investigation, what level of initial supervision is taking place and why these issues are not being picked up at the time by the supervisors on shift. If the training aspect and the initial quality assessment were addressed then the need for this role would diminish. It may also be that this role will and is already impacting on the relationships described above.
  - It was clear that some CID officers are under considerable strain presently. The remit of what crimes the CID will deal with appears very wide and consequently there are large workloads for CID officers and often friction as discussed above. There appears to be an urgent need for the borough to undertake a review of CID workloads and staffing levels, and in particular the demarcation between the uniformed and CID functions. Such a review could also examine and clarify the remit of enquiries that CID should deal with and ensure that supervisors are involved in work allocation.

- CID performance accountability is developing. There are reviews at the CID meeting (held approximately every six weeks) and CID has recently been subject to two compstat-type meetings led by the superintendent. However, CID performance monitoring is limited by a failure to use appropriate performance indicators, at team or individual level. These indicators could include detections and intelligence logs, and contributions to an increase in TICs.

### RECOMMENDATION 3

It is recommended that the BCU commander instigates a review of CID workloads, terms of reference and relationships with other BOCU departments to ensure that CID is working efficiently and in partnership with other teams.

39. There is a large quantity of performance data used on a monthly basis within the criminal justice unit (CJU), which indicates a major improvement in the execution of outstanding warrants. In August there were 205 outstanding warrants, but by the time of the inspection this figure had been reduced to 150. This improvement has come from a more proactive approach, with warrants being allocated to safer neighbourhood teams, more robust weeding of outstanding warrants and writing to offenders requiring them to surrender themselves to the police. Performance could be further improved by the allocation of arrest time targets to warrant categories – eg Category A warrant – 7 days; Category B – 14 days etc. HMIC understands that the MPS is considering this issue at present, but the commander could take immediate action.
40. The BOCU is a force pilot for issue of fixed penalty notices (FPN) for disorder to 10-15 year olds. Under this scheme the onus for payment is placed upon the parent or guardian of such youths. Once a suspect is arrested and bailed, a decision is then made regarding enforcement after discussion with the YOT; each case is taken on its own merits. This is a new process and to-date only ten such notices have been issued, but is potentially an effective practice.
41. Nonetheless, the BOCU acknowledges that it could make more use of FPNs for disorder, as submission rates are currently low. There has been a steady decline after a significant number were returned from the standards unit and some had been spoilt. There is some confusion among operational officers as to whether there needs to be an independent witness to an offence under section five of the Public Order Act or if a police officer witnessing the conduct alone would suffice evidentially.

### Use of forensic, DNA and scientific techniques

42. A forensic audit was conducted as part of the inspection which examined the management and recording of DNA samples and fingerprints, methods of the procedure for managing crime scene identifications, and identifying any links to the intelligence system and crime analysis. The results of the audit are detailed below.
43. The BOCU has one 24/7 custody suite based at Kingston with a throughput of 5000 prisoners per year managed by a dedicated custody manager (inspector). The

custody sergeant and constable jailer are not dedicated and are taken from the duty group. There are only two police staff jailers and consequently core teams are often without their services. The day-to-day management of the DNA and Livescan procedures are performed by a member of the prisoner handling unit, which is managed by the custody manager.

44. DNA 1 samples (original samples taken from prisoners) are stored in a freezer within the sergeant's office in the custody suite. At the time of the inspection there were 20 such samples in the freezer and all were one day old and awaiting transfer to the forensic services. Samples are collected on a daily basis, and there were visible instructions for the completion and the storage of the samples. Management of the samples was good – problems are highlighted by the custody manager and the learning fed back through training days.
45. Overall there are good processes and security arrangements with the management of DNA samples, but a disappointing lack of knowledge among managers on current performance in relation to the DNA samples. This performance data is published monthly on the MPS website and should be checked by the BCU regularly. At the time of inspection the DNA rejection rate for Kingston was 3% (MPS target 2%) and the DNA administration error rate was 55% (MPS target 10%), and the borough is currently ranked third worst in the force in this area. The majority of the administration errors emanate from relatively simple issues such as the failure to seal exhibit bags. The commander is urged to ensure that monitoring of performance in this area becomes more robust.
46. The detective sergeant within the crime management unit (CMU) is given responsibility for day-to-day management of forensic 'hits' (identifications of suspects). The detective inspector (reactive) oversees this process, which builds in a certain amount of resilience. Information on the movement of the forensic docket is kept on a spreadsheet which is regularly monitored and reviewed at management meetings, and at tasking and co-ordination meeting when necessary. At the time of inspection there were 33 outstanding dockets on the system, which is not a large figure in itself. The BOCU fast-track policy is adhered to in relation to dealing with PPOs and there was evidence that forensic identifications were being allocated to the most appropriate unit to effect the arrest – for example, burglary and robbery case identifications are forwarded to the BRIT team. BOCU managers are acutely aware of the opportunities that these identifications bring to maximise detections. However, the BOCU does not monitor its performance against the MPS seven-day policy (hit allocated and suspect dealt with or circulated as wanted within seven days), and there is some confusion over the accountability for handling fingerprint/DNA dockets and the required timeliness for action. The lack of a robust and intrusive monitoring system means that the progress of these dockets is left to the enthusiasm and knowledge of individual officers in pursuing a suspect. This leads to inconsistencies both in terms of performance and service delivery. HMIC also found that a docket can take up to two weeks to emerge from the CMU, and is simply a follow up to an e-mail message in any case. Some officers wait for the docket before actioning, particularly volume crime offences, while some do not. Again these are issues that the commander is urged to consider.
47. HMIC examined 50 custody records at random to ensure that the BOCU was taking DNA samples from all prisoners as appropriate. In all fifty cases, either a sample had been taken or had already been taken on a previous occasion. The BOCU is congratulated on this result.

48. Managers and operational officers hold the borough’s forensic officers in high regard; the forensic manager, senior forensic practitioner and six staff (three of whom are relatively new). The forensic manager is located on the BOCU, but has dual accountability to the local commander and the specialist crime directorate at New Scotland Yard. Despite the potential for conflict this arrangement works well. Forensic officers are measured on (among others) scenes attended, forensic recovery and (unusually) detection outcomes. The latter is significant and is not always the case across the country. Generally team performance is good compared with other MPS BOCUs, particularly on scene attendance rates detailed (Figure 14 below). The exception to this is comparatively low fingerprint identification rate (15% in the period April to October 2005).

*Figure 14 – BOCU forensic intervention (attendance rates)*

	April – September 2005	MPS target	MPS ranking
Domestic Burglary	88%	85%	4 <sup>th</sup>
Motor vehicle crime	31%	10%	1 <sup>st</sup>
Robbery	11.6%	8%	11 <sup>th</sup>

49. Generally the forensic awareness displayed by operational and call handling staff is good, aided by training given to all probationers (a one-day attachment), inputs to training days and liaison with CID, PCSOs, BIU and analysts. Deployment of forensic officers is through an ‘open list’ on the command and control system and the senior proactively checks incidents to ensure that no opportunities to attend crime scenes are lost. The only problem identified was accommodation – a small office, necessitating hot desking, The BCU has plans to resolve this situation in Spring 2006 as part of its accommodation strategy.

## Managing demand

50. The five ‘core’ teams provide the bulk of the BOCU’s ability to respond to calls from the public. Current shift patterns allow for a double shift on Friday and Saturday between 10pm and 2am. This extra capacity is used to police the town centre, concentrating on the significant demands that the night-time economy brings to the BOCU. Duty officers, applying strict criteria for deployments, actively manage the extra shift.
51. The inspection team interviewed several special constables. Some spoke of good relationships with regular officers, duty officers spoke highly of some special constables, equipment was good and officers benefit from monthly inputs from the training team. But, the general theme is that specials generally want to provide a better service to the borough than they feel currently able to.
52. Currently there are 22 special constables and the profile is inexperienced with a high percentage of new in service officers. Morale is problematic and several officers spoke of being on the verge of leaving. Several issues may be preventing them from contributing more fully.

- First, the borough divisional officer who oversees the special constables should be the link to the SMT, but the individual is rarely seen and hence officers feel that they currently have 'no voice'; consequently, they feel that they are not represented within the borough at SMT level.
  - Second, specials are deployed predominantly in the town centre, creating a perception of silo working. Other boroughs have incorporated specials into safer neighbourhood teams, whereas Kingston's special constables are mainly deployed on foot in the town centre and have little if any contact with the core teams.
  - This pattern of deployment means that generally officers are dealing with similar issues each shift, or they attend incidents to find that regular officers are already dealing. Specials feel that, as a consequence, they are becoming de-skilled.
  - Both special constables and duty officers commented that colleagues are often unsure of when specials would be working; apparently duties are being forwarded to the duty office but not passed to the CAD (communications) room or duty officers. Special constables stated that there had been a drive to get them to nominate duties a month in advance but they considered this to be unrealistic.
  - Some specials commented positively on receiving the BOCU induction pack but not all recent recruits had received it.
  - There is little tasking of specials and no link to the tasking and co-ordination meeting; with no special constables attending T & CG meetings.
53. The lack of BOCU gaolers is problematic, with only two to support five core teams. Consequently there are inconsistencies of support and often regular officers are performing such duties. There was little evidence that they were able to assist officers by completion of Livescan (taking of fingerprints), photographs and DNA from arrested suspects. The BOCU should consider the extension of the gaoler's role, particularly in the areas identified above. It is clear that efficiency gains could be made in this area – operational officers would be released back to the street and there would be no need to train all BOCU officers in use of Livescan equipment.
54. There was little knowledge of a force/BOCU single-crewing policy, and as a consequence single crewing (mobile patrol or foot patrol) rarely occurs. It would not be popular amongst operational officers but may assist in managing demand. The BOCU currently has plans to examine this area and there are discussions ongoing regarding 'proximity patrols' (officers patrol singly but close to each other – eg, for example either side of the same street). The maximum use of every BOCU resource is required to meet demand and provide enhanced reassurance, particularly in this BOCU where resources are at a premium.

#### **RECOMMENDATION 4**

It is recommended that the BCU commander reviews tactics to reduce demand on frontline officers. This should include a review of single crewing, jailer duties and role and ensuring that the Special Constabulary is fully utilised and integrated into borough policing.

## Leadership

### BCU management team

55. The chief superintendent (BOCU commander) has 29 years police service and has a diverse policing career. Some of her previous roles have included being a personal protection officer for a member of the Royal family and community relations officer in Southall, which has a large Asian population. In 2003 she was promoted to chief superintendent and seconded to the Home Office as part of the Police Reform programme, returning Kingston as BOCU commander.
56. The superintendent (operations) has 27 years service and again has a diverse police career. He has worked at several BOCUs; as a staff officer to an assistant commissioner and within the directorate of professional standards. He was posted to his current position in June 2003.
57. The crime manager (DCI) has 24 years police service. He has served in a variety of roles, the majority of which have been CID-based. In 2001 he served as a detective inspector within the MPS specialist crime directorate and in 2004 was seconded to a Police Reform team, compiling the MPS response to the formation of the Serious and Organised Crime Agency. He was posted to Kingston in his current role in 2004.
58. The safer neighbourhoods/partnership/community chief inspector has 30 years police service; some of his previous roles have included detective sergeant within the central drug squad and a detective inspector within Special Branch, specialising in surveillance, close protection and border duties. The chief inspector operations has 22 years police service, has served in several MPS BOCUs and has been in Kingston since 2001. The chief inspector (criminal justice unit) has over 21 years police service. His varied career has included being detective chief inspector within Special Branch, and detective chief inspector with the National Criminal Intelligence Service (posted to Europol).
59. The BOCU business manager is a member of police staff and has 25 years service with the MPS. She joined as a clerical assistant and has undertaken a variety of roles since, specialising in HR within the central personnel department and working as a personnel manager for an operations unit that included 1100 staff. She was transferred to Kingston in 2000 and was promoted to business manager in 2004. She is a member of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development.
60. The BOCU forensic manager is also a member of police staff and has 20 years service within the MPS. He started his police career as a crime analyst and subsequently joined the fingerprint bureau in 1987. He qualified as a Home Office fingerprint expert in 1992 and was promoted to his current post in 2003.
61. The acting finance and resource manager is a member of police staff, with two years service within the MPS. Prior to this post she worked in the education sector, as a finance and administrative officer in a primary school. She is a qualified accounting technician and is currently studying for a Professional Certificate in Management under the Open University. The HR manager is a member of police staff and joined Kingston and the MPS in March 2005. Previously she worked in retail for 24 years, much of which was in the areas of HR and training. The acting higher analyst for the BOCU joined the MPS in 1985, and has worked at several BOCUs. She was promoted to analyst in 2003 and has been temporarily promoted to higher analyst since February 2005.

62. The BOCU thus has a very experienced SMT, as the commander and other SMT members have previous experience within the BOCU before their current roles. Duty officers, in particular, were very positive about SMT visibility and communication. They described an open door style of communications and regular contact via the daily and compstat meetings. Operational officers and police staff also view the SMT as approachable and were visible around the borough. The safer neighbourhood teams are content with the level of support of the BOCU commander and SMT. However there were some dissenting views; while some officers see the SMT as supportive (for example, positive comment was made about the superintendent visiting the BRIT office regularly), others describe a 'blame culture'. Whilst these views were very much in the minority, they need to be considered.
63. The borough has recently produced a draft communications strategy, which should improve internal communication but could be enhanced by the inclusion of 'key messages' specific to Kingston BOCU. Generally, communication structures are good although sometimes meeting schedules slip (for example, the regular BOCU management team meeting has not occurred for some time). There is a BOCU news sheet (just restarted with the introduction of the communications post); commendation ceremonies are held once a year and there is evidence of personal visits to teams from SMT to say 'well done'. SMT members address training sessions and use these opportunities to reinforce key messages on performance and to discuss the policing plan. There is a two-weekly minuted SMT meeting.
64. In addition to SMT members setting local priorities, the BOCU recently introduced engagement with inspectors and police staff equivalents through a process of planning days and workshops (twice per year at a venue away from the police environment) to encourage further 'buy-in' from middle managers. The most recent event included a facilitated process entitled '24 hours at Kingston' to discuss what happened at hourly intervals throughout the day so that participants could identify what cause/effect their actions had on other sections. This is potentially an area of good practice.
65. BOCU police staff feel informed about the strategic direction of the BOCU and the immediate priorities that stated that the commander acknowledges good work and good performance both individually and by team.
66. The business manager invited the MPS leadership team to undertake some diversity focus groups among first line managers and supervisors, both police officers and police staff. Unprompted feedback from this team supported the view that generally morale on the BOCU is fairly high.
67. Police Federation representatives have a good relationship with the SMT, and a formal scheduled meeting takes place quarterly, chaired by the commander and including all Federation and support staff representatives. Participants regard this as a worthwhile forum to discuss relevant issues, and spoke positively of a genuine 'open door' policy they feel comfortable in raising issues with the SMT.
68. The BOCU has some input into succession planning; whilst the BOCU commander does not directly select managerial positions, (this is done by a central panel), the commander does have an input into the selection process. While it is paramount that equal opportunities practices are adopted, it is also important that each command / management team has a balance of skills.

## **Self-review and learning**

69. Staff in Kingston are positive about the training provided to all staff, including police staff and specials. The borough has undertaken a training needs analysis to identify specific training needs, in line with BOCU priorities. Borough staff with specialist skills are used to provide internal training, which is not only effective but an economic method of delivery. There were some examples of training being used for income generation such as the 'Stay Safe' (personal protection) training delivered to the local university. However, there is little direct linkage of training to the strategic priorities or the national intelligence model. The training sergeant collects all requests for training and completes a training needs analysis; a training schedule is completed but it does not appear that training is then prioritised for delivery. This is an area for management consideration.
70. The BOCU has a training attendance protocol whereby if officers fail to attend training the unit informs the officers line manager and SMT head. Training attendance data is reviewed at a meeting chaired by the superintendent. However, trainers interviewed believed that the BOCU still has persistent non-attenders (particularly within CID). HMIC urges the commander urgently to review this situation, not least to ensure that all operational officers have received refresher officer safety training.
71. The 'Street Duties' unit, led by a sergeant, develops probationers on the borough, and provides structured and monitored development. Probationers and their tutors are often tasked via the tasking and co-ordination meeting to assist with specific BOCU problems, while at the same time developing themselves. As officers move into a new building, probationer officers will have their own office to provide a better learning environment and enhance their status.

## **HR and diversity issues**

72. During inspection there were many positive comments (from police officers and police staff) about the impact of the new HR manager and her team; officers are content with the level of support available to them and there is ample evidence that the HR manager is actively assisting middle managers.
73. The BOCU has created an excellent and informative induction pack for new staff, which provides contextual information as well as highlighting policing priorities and identifying key health and safety issues. This is an area of good practice. It is clear that health and safety matters are taken very seriously – the top ten hazards have been identified and practical advice on minimising these risks circulated to staff.
74. The borough, and especially the HR manager, actively uses family-friendly policies to help staff balance work/life issues; these are well advertised and there is a good take-up of the various facilities available.
75. The borough commander is showing her commitment to faith issues by some early work to introducing a faith notice board and setting a process in motion to introduce a quiet room at Kingston police station.
76. As part of this inspection, HMIC conducted an audit of personnel development reviews (PDRs), and at the specific request of the SMT extended questioning during interviews to evaluate the impact of PDRs within the BOCU. Some 51 PDRs were selected at random – all had objectives set and the compliance rate (number of

PDRs completed on time) was very high. Probationers’ reports were detailed and well evidenced, reports on police staff were comprehensive and well prepared. Overall, there was clear evidence that PDRs were being handled conscientiously at all levels. They contained SMART objectives, supporting narratives with relevant evidence and had followed the requisite timescales. However, during interviews it was apparent that there are variations in the way that staff valued them and the process. Duty officers were positive regarding PDRs – they saw them as difficult to manage but gave examples of objectives linking to performance and of them being used to develop officers. However, below supervisory level both police officers and police staff do not value PDRs and there are credibility issues as a consequence. Operational officers see them in the main as an administrative burden – a ‘paper exercise’. This finding is not unique to this BOCU but merits consideration.

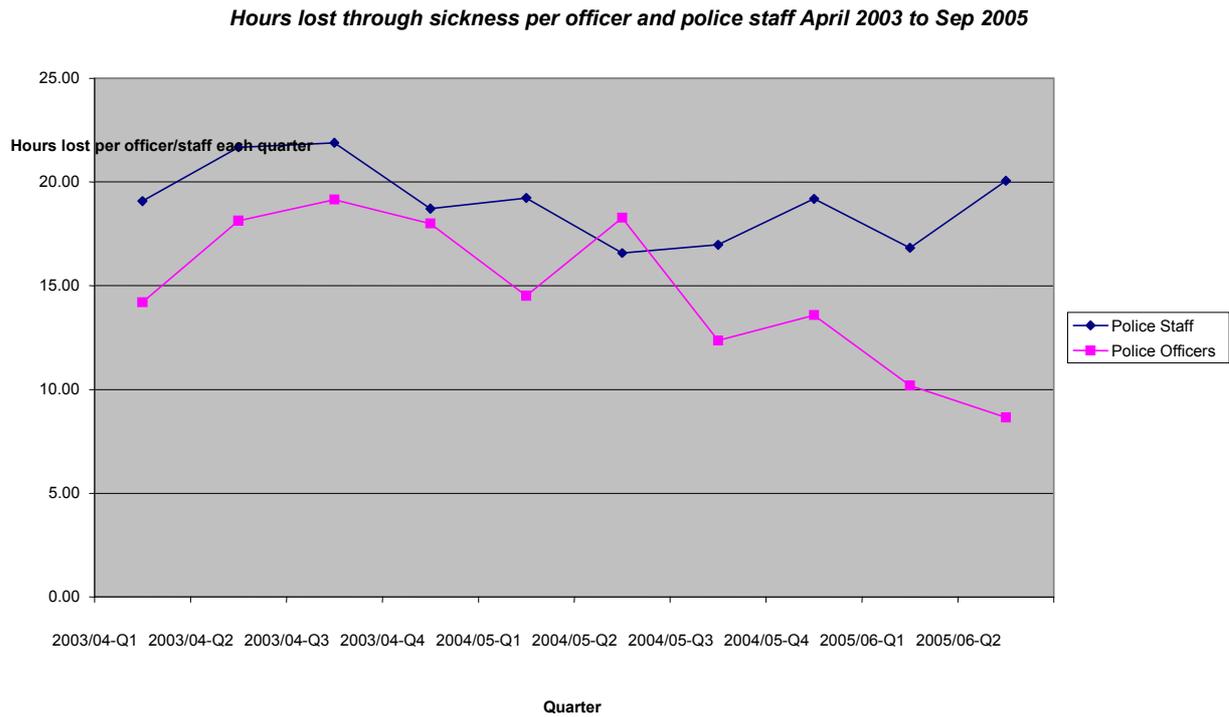
### Attendance management and sickness statistics

77. For the year 2004/05, both police officer and police staff sickness levels were comparatively low, with Kingston ranked sixth and second respectively in the MSBCU group (Figure 15). The BCU has made significant reductions in both officer and staff sickness, with both down by over 20% year-on-year and reducing at a faster rate than the MSBCU average. More recent figures show that the levels of police staff sickness have remained stable and there have been further significant reductions of police officer sickness (Figure 16).

*Figure 15 – BOCU sickness rates compared to MSBCU averages.*

	<b>Kingston upon Thames BCU</b>	<b>MSBCU average</b>	<b>MSBCU rank</b>
Hours lost through sickness per police officer for 2004/05	56.03	62.00	6 out of 15
% Change in hours lost compared with the same period the previous year	-20%	-8%	
Hours lost through sickness per support staff for 2004/05	63.60	77.64	2 out of 15
% Change in hours lost compared with the same period the previous year	-22%	+3%	

Figure 16 – Hours lost through sickness per officer and police staff April 2003 – September 2005



78. Overall, sickness reduction is excellent and the BOCU is to be commended. It is apparent that strong management and intervention have achieved these reductions. The HR manager has attendance management as a PDR objective and personally conducts some home visits. The BOCU is not afraid to ‘spend to save’ in this area, with referrals to specialists, particularly on orthopaedic issues. A monthly meeting reviews long-term individual sickness and there are removals of rights to self-certification if appropriate. Also, promotion and specialist posting are not supported if the individual has a poor sickness record. Appreciation letters are sent to all staff who have had no sickness absences in a 12-month period.

## Conclusions and recommendations

The borough operates in a diverse policing environment, with both urban and relatively rural areas to police. It faces significant demands from its night-time economy, and has one of the largest range of retail and leisure facilities in this part of the country. Given this context, the BOCU performs well in terms of reducing and detecting offences, when compared to other MPS BOCUs and its MSBCU family. For the period November 2004 to October 2005 there was a 5.5 % reduction in overall crime and a rise in both recorded and sanction detection rates. It is significant that the BOCU compares well against other BOCUs on arrest rates, while having a high level of incidents per officer.

There are many good aspects of Kingston's performance. Partnerships work is consistently strong across all the agencies seen and in particular the work of the safer neighbourhood teams is impressive.

Overall, the inspection provides assurance that the BOCU provides an effective service to residents and visitors to the borough. The BOCU can further enhance the performance, structures and working environment if attention is paid to several key areas.

- First, accountability mechanisms and performance information pertinent to all ranks and departments can be developed to ensure consistency across the BOCU. Also, the commander should ensure that the SMT fully understands and regularly monitors performance in the way that the Home Office will judge it – that of comparison by MSBCU in addition to internal measurement against link or other MPS BOCUs.
- Second, the commander should instigate an urgent review of the BOCU's deployment of NIM and intelligence functions to ensure that systems and processes are delivering optimal outcomes.
- Third, the commander should instigate a review of CID workloads, terms of reference and relationships with other BOCU departments to ensure that officers are working efficiently and in partnership with other teams.
- Fourth, greater effort is needed to reduce demand on front-line officers. This should include a review of single-crewing, jailer duties and role and ensuring that the Special Constabulary is fully utilised and integrated into borough policing.

## Summary of good practice

- It is clear that the BOCU has forged very strong relationships with the local business community. A business improvement plan levies a 1% precept on local businesses that is used to fund rangers and the extended police family including 'graffiti patrols'. This is the first such scheme in the country and could be an area of good practice.
- The borough is to be commended for the overall structure to deliver neighbourhood policing, and the impact of the teams to date is very encouraging.
- The BOCU is a force pilot for issue of fixed penalty notices (FPN) for disorder to 10-15 year olds. Under this scheme the onus for payment is placed upon the parent or guardian of such youths. The suspect is arrested and bailed and a decision is then made regarding the issue of a fixed penalty notice following consultation with the Youth Offending Team. Each case is taken on its merits. This is a new process and to date only ten such notices have been issued.

- The BOCU has recently introduced engagement with inspectors and police staff equivalents through a process of planning days and workshops (twice per year at a venue away from the everyday police environment) to encourage further 'buy-in' from middle managers. The first event (held in March) included a facilitated process entitled '24 hours at Kingston' where the workshop discussed what happened at hourly intervals throughout the day so that participants could identify what cause / effect their actions had on other sections. The most recent event was held in October.
- The BOCU has created an excellent and informative induction pack for new staff which provides contextual information, as well as highlighting policing priorities and identifying health and safety issues.
- The BOCU has a robust health and safety policy which is actively promoted through training, dissemination to all new staff, prominent displays within BOCU premises which is subject to regular review. The BOCU has developed the MPS health and safety 'Top 10' model by identifying the principal local risks to officers and staff to create a borough-specific 'Top 10'. This appears to have contributed towards the BOCU's low incidence of injuries on duty and its below-average sickness levels: no 'serious' injuries occurred on duty in 2005 and injury on duty levels were 15% below the MPS BOCU cluster average.
- The BOCU has a policy of positive engagement with local media, notably the three local newspapers (Surrey Comet, Kingston Informer and Kingston Guardian) and the local radio station (Radio Jackie). Liaison is through weekly and ad hoc briefings by the crime management unit and borough liaison officer, as well as regular meetings between the BOCU commander and editors, supported by the appointment of a dedicated BOCU media and communications officer in October 2005 with responsibility for internal and external communication.
- The BOCU has implemented a specific Korean communication strategy, with the appointment of a Korean liaison officer, regular meetings with Korean embassy staff, briefings to and by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office North & South Korea Section and dedicated liaison with local Korean community and church groups. Access to police services for this community – the largest Korean community in Europe, making up an estimated 10% of the borough's population – is ensured through the provision, with the local authority, of a 'One-Stop Shop' staffed by Korean speakers in New Malden (the area of the Borough with the highest concentration of Korean residents). The media and communications officer provides a dedicated point of contact for the six Korean-language newspapers and two internet news stations based within the borough. Korean police have visited the BOCU twice, while two Kingston officers undertook a cultural familiarisation and liaison visit to South Korea in 2004.
- The BOCU has the highest PPAF customer satisfaction rate in the MPS. The BOCU's commitment to customer service and community liaison is led by the borough commander and borough liaison officer, whose visibility at community meetings is high. Community groups such as the Kingston Community and Police Consultative Group and Independent Advisory Network appear vibrant and active forums, whose key role as 'critical friends' is understood and whose involvement and support in critical incidents is encouraged.

## Issues for management consideration

- HMIC found little in the way of understanding and monitoring of the PPO group's success. It was clear that this group is developing and the commander is urged to encourage the partnership to ensure that the group is able to fully understand how its work impacts upon offender behaviour. (For example by monitoring the percentage of re-arrests and re-offending for relevant offenders.)
- Detective inspectors had not seen the business progress plan and were unaware of the contributions required in December. This is an area that the commander may wish to consider.
- Constables within the safer neighbourhood teams were not aware that they were measured on the number of problems that they solved. The commander may wish to consider this issue (particularly in light of recommendation one).
- HMIC found some areas of concern regarding the way that several teams of the BOCU value or understand the roles of other teams. The commander is urged to review these issues and ascertain if these comments warrant better marketing of different teams' work within the BOCU and the roles that they provide.
- Arrest warrant execution could be further improved by the allocation of arrest time targets to warrant categories (eg Category A warrant – 7-days; Category B 14-days etc). HMIC understands that the MPS is considering this issue at present and this is an issue that the commander may also wish to progress.
- The BOCU could use FPN for disorder more than it does presently and it was clear that submission rates are currently low. There was some confusion among operational officers on whether an independent witness to the offence of section five (Public Order Act) is needed, or whether a police officer witnessing the conduct alone would suffice evidentially.
- Managers are not well informed about the current performance on DNA samples taken on the borough. At the time of inspection the DNA rejection rate for Kingston BCU was 3% (MPS target 2%) and the DNA administration error rate was 55% (MPS target 10%) – the borough is currently ranked third worst in the force in this area. The commander is urged to consider this issue as soon as possible and ensure improvement is secured.
- Currently, the BOCU does not monitor its arrest performance for forensic identifications against the MPS seven-day policy (hit allocated and suspect dealt with or circulated as wanted within seven days), and HMIC found some confusion over the accountability for handling fingerprint/DNA docket and the required timeliness for action. The lack of a robust and intrusive monitoring system means that individual officers are taking the initiative for pursuing the offender, leading to inconsistencies. Also, the 'docket' can take up to two weeks to emerge from the CMU, and is simply a follow-up to an e-mail message in any case. Some officers wait for the docket before actioning (particularly volume crime offences) – some do not.
- Generally, communication structures are good although sometimes meeting schedules slip (for example, the regular BOCU management team meeting has not occurred for some time).
- The BOCU has some input into succession planning; whilst the BOCU commander does not directly select managerial positions, (this is done by a central panel), the commander

does have an input into the selection process. While it is paramount that equal opportunities are carefully considered, it is essential that each command/management team has a balance of skills.

- There is little evidence of direct linkage between training and the BOCU's strategic priorities or the national intelligence model. The training sergeant collects all requests for training and completes a training needs analysis; a training schedule is then completed but it is not prioritised for delivery. This is an area for consideration.
- The BOCU still has a persistent problem with people failing to appear for training courses (particularly within CID). HMIC would urge the commander to urgently review this situation, ensuring in particular that all operational officers receive refresher officer safety training.
- There is evidence that for both police officers and police staff, PDRs are not valued and there are credibility issues as a consequence. Operational officers see them in the main as an administrative burden – a 'paper exercise'. This finding is not unique to this BOCU but needs consideration.
- There is no evidence of an IT strategy for the BOCU and no fulltime systems administrator – the latter being an explicit financial decision. These are areas that the commander may wish to further consider.

## Recommendations

It is recommended that the BOCU commander:

- Ensures that the present internal accountability framework is extended so that the performance of all staff is consistently measured against agreed targets. Also, the SMT should extend its monitoring of performance to capture those comparisons – within MSBCUs – used by the Home Office as part of the Policing Performance Assessment Framework (PPAF).  
(Paragraph 25)
- Instigates an urgent review of NIM intelligence functions of the BOCU to ensure that systems and processes are being deployed fully and effectively.  
(Paragraph 36)
- Instigates a review of CID workloads, terms of reference and relationships with other BOCU departments to ensure that CID is working efficiently and in partnership with other teams.  
(Paragraph 38)
- Reviews tactics to reduce demand on frontline officers. This should include a review of single crewing, jailer duties and role and ensuring that the Special Constabulary is fully utilised and integrated into borough policing.  
(Paragraph 54)