HM Inspectorate of Constabulary
London and the East Regional Office

Inspection of Sutton BCU
Metropolitan Police
April 2005

Introduction

1.	There are over 300 basic command units (BCUs) in England and Wales and no two are alike. They vary in size from over 1000 officers to just under 100; some serve densely populated, ethnically diverse inner cities, while others cover vast tracts of sparsely populated countryside. What they do share are some key aims and objectives, specifically to work with partner agencies in reducing crime and disorder in their areas, and to do so with integrity. Scrutiny of police performance is shifting from aggregate force outcomes to the performance of individual BCUs, recognising that policing is essentially a locally delivered service.

2.	The focus on performance in reducing crime and disorder is likely to be relentless. Forces and police authorities, working with local authorities and other community safety partners, will need to raise their game year after year. Indeed, the statutory regime of Best Value demands 'continuous improvement' and an array of sanctions exist if authorities fail to deliver this.

3.	In trying to make sense of the variations in operational performance which exist – to differing degrees – in every force, a key ingredient is *focus*. The best performers focus the efforts of their staff through timely, dynamic local briefings that are supported by a well managed intelligence system. They set targets and make sure that staff are aware of them, they communicate results and celebrate success, and they hold individuals to account for how they have used their time. Ministers have decided upon a nationwide rolling programme of BCU Inspections that focus on performance and leadership, intended to help enhance performance and spread good practice (Box A).

Box A – Aims of BCU Inspections

• **Promoting effective leadership.**
• **Disseminating good practice.**
• **Identifying inefficiencies.**
• **Providing pointers to enhance performance.**
• **Strengthening the capacity for self-improvement.**
• **Leaving behind a BCU management team that has learnt about itself and is even more committed to self-improvement.**

4.	An Inspection of Sutton BCU in the Metropolitan Police was conducted between 4 - 8 April 2005. This report sets out the Inspection findings, highlighting areas of good practice and making recommendations for improvement where appropriate. HM Inspector thanks the officers and staff of Sutton BCU for the co-operation and assistance provided to members of the Inspection team.

Methodology

5.　The Inspection of Sutton BCU consisted of the following stages:

Pre-visit data and document analysis	HQ Review	BCU Inspection	Feedback to BCU	Reporting
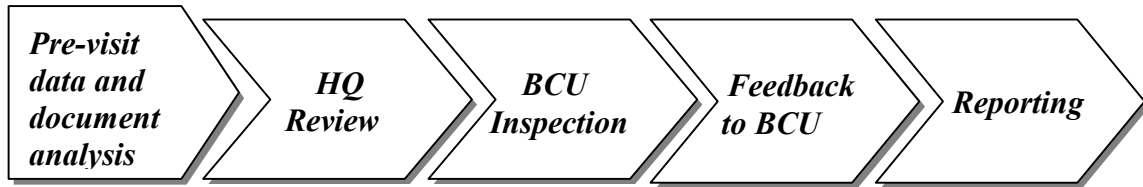
6.　During the Inspection a total of 11 structured interviews and 14 focus groups were conducted, involving over 70 individuals. Other staff members and partnership agency representatives were interviewed during the ten visits to workplace settings. Additionally, the borough link member of the Metropolitan Police Authority (MPA) and chair of the Sutton Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership were consulted. The Inspection team was also pleased to have been accompanied by a member of the MPS Inspectorate on a short attachment to HMIC. Two BCU audits were conducted: the management of forensic science submissions and staff appraisals.

Force Overview

7.　　The MPS is the largest and most diverse police force in England and Wales with in excess of 35,000 officers and support staff; it is responsible for the policing of Greater London. Territorial policing (TP) of the Force area is divided into 32 metropolitan boroughs, each of which has a borough-based policing model. TP is commanded by an assistant commissioner (ACTP), based at New Scotland Yard and assisted by four 'link' commanders, each of whom has specific oversight of a number of boroughs together with policy portfolios for the MPS.

8.　　Serious crime support is provided by specialist operations (SO) and, in addition, numerous separate directorates exist to augment and support aspects of territorial policing of the boroughs, eg the directorate of professional standards. The corporate centre can call on borough resources to deal with ceremonial occasions and major incidents, eg anti-terrorism patrols as a result of incidents such as 11 September 2001. The impact of the increased anti-terrorism patrols across London since that terrorist attack has been the subject of corporate evaluation by the MPS.

9.　　The working relationship between Force HQ and BCUs was examined as part of the HMIC baseline assessment of the MPS conducted during summer 2004 and reported upon in October 2004.

10.　　The MPS celebrated its 175th year in 2004.

Sutton BCU[1]

11.　　Sutton BCU is located at the southern edge of Greater London and is bordered by other MPS BCUs of Kingston, Merton and Croydon and also the county of Surrey. It is coterminous with the London Borough of Sutton (LBS). Sutton is generally an affluent area with pockets of deprivation in some of the northern wards. The BCU is split into two sectors, Sutton and Wallington. These sectors are further split into 17 wards.

12.　　Sutton's community benefits from a vibrant economy and a quality of life that has attracted many major employers. Unemployment is low, with jobs locally mainly in the service area, professional, light industrial and retail sectors. The borough has a substantial population of

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[1] Source: BCU pen picture

commuters, since Sutton is just 25 minutes from central London by train. The M25 and M23 are also easily accessible.

13.   There is a major regeneration project underway on the 1960s Roundshaw estate. This project will create new homes, jobs and schools for local families. A further development is undergoing construction, a housing scheme called the Beddington Zero Energy scheme which is being built on a brownfield site.

Demographics[2]

14.   The resident population of Sutton, as measured in the 2001 Census, was 179,768. This equates to 41 people per hectare. The largest ethnic group is white, which accounts for 89.2% of the population; the next largest group is Asian or Asian British accounting for 4.7%. Of this population 67.9% are employed and 2.6% are unemployed and 11.8% of the population are retired.

15.   There were 76,402 households in 2001 in Sutton broken down as follows:

	Sutton	England & Wales
One person households	33.1	30.0
Pensioners living alone	13.8	14.4
Other All Pensioner households	7.7	9.4
Contained dependent children	30.0	29.5
Lone parent households with dependent children	6.1	6.5
Owner occupied	74.3	68.9
Rented from Council	10.9	13.2
Rented from Housing Association or Registered Social Landlord	4.4	6.0
Private rented or lived rent free	10.3	11.9

Police Buildings

Police Station	Opening Times	
Sutton	24 hours	Daily
Wallington	Restricted hours	
Worcester Park	Restricted hours	

Sutton BCU Senior Management Team (SMT)

16.   The BCU is led by a chief superintendent as Borough Commander (BCM) who is supported by a superintendent operations and a superintendent partnership. The latter is a unique position since the post is part funded by police and the LBS as a partnership initiative and thus the postholder is both an MPS and LBS employee. This initiative will be discussed more fully later on. The BCU also has a business manager (BBM) who is the longest serving member of the SMT at Sutton. The SMT also includes a chief inspector (operations, leading and managing response teams, control room and custody suite) and a second chief inspector (criminal justice unit (CJU) and partnership, leading and managing the safer neighbourhood

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[2] Source: Census 2001 from National Statistics Online

teams (SNTs)). A detective chief inspector (DCI) leads and manages the CID, the borough intelligence unit (BIU) and borough task force (BTF).

Performance

How successful is the BCU in tackling its principal crime and disorder problems – is performance improving?

Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRPs)

17. The BCU enjoys a strong and productive working relationship with LBS, with the BCU Commander playing a leading role within the CDRP 'Safer Sutton Partnership' (SSP). The partnership is mature and well established, yet remains dynamic and progressive and the Inspection team was provided with ample evidence demonstrating this, as described later in the report.

18. SSP has a CDRP strategy[3] encompassing six key themes as follows:

   - Further develop and strengthen partnership working.
   - Respond to Government crime reduction targets.
   - Mainstream crime and disorder work.
   - Reduce disorder, anti-social behaviour and improve quality of life for Sutton's citizens.
   - Improve data collection and analysis.
   - Reduce the involvement of young people in crime.

19. The crime and disorder partnership group, known as the community safety steering group (CSSG), consists of membership drawn from the following organisations: police, local authority, health, fire service, voluntary sector, probation and magistrates court. The chief executive of the local authority chairs the CSSG. Work is delivered by staff across the member organisations working in groups and tasked by the CSSG to undertake CSS activity focused primarily on the three strategic priorities of Sutton town centre, prolific and persistent offenders (PPOs) and drugs and alcohol. Underpinning the CSS are individual organisational plans that also specify actions necessary to contribute to a reduction in crime and disorder across the LBS. The work groups are held to account by the CSSG and their work is co-ordinated by the local authority community safety unit (CSU). Sutton BCU is developing a 'one plan' concept that incorporates both the annual policing plan (APP) and CDRP aims and objectives. The BCU is seeking to integrate both CSS and APP activity into one document which it considers will generate joined-up action that will complement and enhance crime-fighting activity across both the partnership and the BCU. The Inspection team recognises this as potentially good practice and looks forward to future developments.

20. The Inspection team had the opportunity to meet members of the CSSG and found that an open and constructive relationship existed, with some excellent examples of partnership working and commitment to joined-up activity. The role of the partnership superintendent is indicative of the accord that exists between the BCU and the local authority as well as its progressive and forward thinking perspective, since the postholder is the newly appointed head of partnership for the LBS, reporting directly to the BCM and the local authority chief executive. The head of partnership leads not only the police community and partnership units

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[3] Source: Crime and Disorder Strategy 2002 - 05

(including licensing, community, crime prevention, schools and youth crime units but also the safer communities unit of the LBS. The unit includes community safety, CCTV, drugs and alcohol team functions. Additionally, the head of partnership manages liaison between partners including the London Fire Brigade (LFB), the ambulance service, Sutton primary health trust, Sutton race equality council, local community and voluntary groups amongst others. The head of partnership role is unique and demonstrative of partnership working at its most integrated.

21. The BCU has also recruited a partnership finance manager, who will be responsible for income generation and growth. The post is entrepreneurial and both the BCU and the CDRP see it as an opportunity to more effectively manage partnership funding as well as seeking and creating opportunities for wealth creation. The Inspection team also noted that the local LFB commander is shortly to take up accommodation within the BCU and views this as an interesting and potentially productive step. The Inspection team regards all three examples above as innovative, with significant potential for positively impacting on the CSS's key theme of developing and strengthening partnership working. The team considers all three to be excellent practice.

22. However, while the partnership wing of the BCU is thriving, the Inspection team is of the view that other areas of BCU business (operations and crime investigation) are areas where partnership working has yet to be embraced. The Inspection team questioned representatives from these groups and researched partnership working in both areas and found little evidence that the BCU community and citizen focused policing style was fully understood by leaders or that opportunities were taken to participate in or generate partnership working. The team found evidence of silo working, with limited cross-fertilisation between BCU units and departments or externally with CSU colleagues.

23. The Inspection team acknowledges that the SMT is relatively new and that the policing style has yet to be fully promulgated and embedded across the BCU. That notwithstanding, the team is of the view that there is significant work to be done to mainstream partnership working across the key areas of business identified above. The Inspection team does not underestimate the level of achievement in partnership working within that specific area of business. The team is, however, of the opinion that there is a lack of awareness of CDRP significance elsewhere on the BCU and thus the potential to develop and mainstream such activity further is yet to be fully exploited. For example, the CID had no knowledge of problem solving as a crime management tool and there was a lack of liaison and information sharing with the local authority CSU/domestic violence co-ordinator. The CSU co-ordinator also shared the view that engagement with core and reactive teams could be enhanced as well as local authority involvement in the formulation of the BCU strategic assessment and control strategy. The partnership is also not performance management orientated, although there is a CSSG tasking process that ensures that focus and direction are maintained. That said, developing a more robust performance management framework is a priority identified by the head of partnership as well as the CSU co-ordinator.

24. In summary, the Inspection team considers that the BCU has demonstrated an approach to partnership that goes beyond mere co-operation and achieved effective co-ordination and

collaboration. The partnership is strong and complementary with a shared strategic vision, objectives and decision-making processes and the Inspection team acknowledges that the above developmental issues have already been identified by the BCU and that work has started to address matters.

Box B – Examples of Partnership Working in the BCU

- **Monthly Partnership tasking group meetings** - focused on dealing with anti-social behaviour.
- **Partnership deployment** of the mobile reassurance unit.
- **Multi-agency Diversity Training -** organised by the BCU for 400 individual partners and community members.
- **BASIS scheme** operating in the town centre – exchanges information and obtains exclusion orders against prolific offenders.
- **Dedicated Police Anti-Social Behaviour Order Officer -** responsible for liaising with the local authority and housing associations.
- **Establishment of a co-located Partnership Team** - including police, CSU, CCTV, licensing and DAT (Safer Sutton Partnership Service) under a single line manager – head of partnership in old police station.
- **Fast Tracking** of PPOs into drug treatment and rehabilitation programmes.
- **Sutton Volunteer Service** (SVS) - funded by BCU to recruit, train, support, supervise and liaise with appropriate adults on behalf of the police. There are currently 40 appropriate adults whose services have been obtained by the SVS, enabling the provision of a 24/7 service which is valued by police officers.
- **Lay Visitor Training -** also provided by the SVS.

Performance against Operational Targets

25.   The BCU is grouped with the following most similar BCUs (MSBCUs):

BCU	Force
Barnet	MPS
Bexley	MPS
Bromley	MPS
Bury	Greater Manchester Police (GMP)
Croydon	MPS
Enfield	MPS
Havering	MPS
Hillingdon	MPS
Lancashire Western	Lancashire
Merton	MPS
Redbridge	MPS
Southend	Essex
Stockport	GMP
Sutton	**MPS**
Trafford	GMP

26.   The statistics used in the following section come from the 2001/02 – 2003/04 Annual Data Requirement received from Forces by the Home Office, the Home Office Statistical Bulletin 07/03 (Crime in England and Wales 2002/03) and iQuanta. Overall MPS and Sutton BCU performance is summarised in the tables below.

Overall MPS Performance last 4 years						
	Financial Year	**Number of Offences**	**TNO year on year percentage change**	**Number of detections**	**Annual Detection Rate**	**Detects year on year percentage change**
Total Notifiable Offences (TNOs)	2001/02	1056513		148105	14.0%	
	2002/03	1079877	**+2.2%**	156089	14.5%	**+5.4%**
	2003/04	1060927	**-1.8%**	162953	15.4%	**+4.4%**
	2004/05	1015121	**-4.3%**	214038	21.1%	**++31.3%**
Burglary Dwelling	2001/02	73930		6853	9.3%	
	2002/03	72237	**-2.3%**	8551	11.8%	**+24.8%**
	2003/04	67996	**-5.9%**	7017	10.3%	**-17.9%**
	2004/05	63084	**-7.2%**	8517	13.5%	**+21.4%**
Robbery	2001/02	53547		6042	11.3%	
	2002/03	42493	**-20.6%**	5539	13.0%	**-8.3%**
	2003/04	40639	**-4.4%**	5020	12.4%	**-9.4%**
	2004/05	39033	**-4.0%**	6043	15.5%	**+20.4%**
Vehicle Crime	2001/02	174258		7821	4.5%	
	2002/03	173392	**-0.5%**	7483	4.3%	**-4.3%**
	2003/04	159057	**-8.3%**	6323	4.0%	**-15.5%**
	2004/05	136190	**-14.4%**	7314	5.4%	**+15.7%**

Declining
Improving

Number of Crimes – Force and BCU Comparison over 3 years			
	2002/03	**2003/04**	**2004/05**
TNOs	14987	16154	16942
Domestic Burglary	778	720	701
Robbery	276	354	231
Vehicle Crime	2399	2279	2356
Violent Crime	3476	3703	3956

Crime Performance Table BCU Compared to the MSBCU Group				
	Performance 2004/05	**% Change from 2003/04 to 2004/05**	**MSBCU group average for 2004/05**	**BCU's ranked position in MSBCU group 2004/05**
Recorded crime per 1000 population	93.6	**+4.9%**	105.6	3
Recorded crime detection rate	21.1%	**+5.9 % points**	21.7%	7
Domestic burglary per 1000 households	9.0	**-2.6%**	16.2	1
Domestic burglary detection rate	19.1%	**+2.3 % points**	12.2%	2
Robberies per 1000 population	1.3	**-34.8%**	2.8	2
Robbery crime detection rate	25.1%	**+0.5% points**	18.6%	3
Vehicle crimes per 1000 population	13.0	**+3.4%**	15.3	5
Vehicle crime detection rate	5.5%	**+0.6% points**	6.1%	9
Violent crimes per 1000 population	21.9	**+6.8%**	24.4	5
Violent crime detection rate	39.1%	**+14.5% points**	41.4%	9

TNOs

27.   During 2003/04 Sutton recorded 89.3 TNOs per 1000 population. This increased during 2004/05 to 93.6 per 1000 population. This was lower than the MSBCU group average of 105.6 and ranks the BCU third. For the latest two quarters (October – March 2005) Sutton BCU recorded 8477 total crimes. This equated to 46.9 crimes per 1000 population. This was below the MSBCU average of 51.9 and ranks it third out of 15 of the MSBCU group.

Domestic Burglary

28.   During 2003/04 Sutton recorded 9.3 domestic burglaries per 1000 population. During 2004/05 this reduced to 9.0 domestic burglaries per 1000 population. This was lower than the MSBCU group average of 16.2 and Sutton is ranked first. For the latest two quarters Sutton BCU recorded 390 domestic burglaries. This equated to 5.0 domestic burglaries per 1000 households. This was much lower than the MSBCU group average of 8.7 and ranks Sutton second of its MSBCU group.

Robbery

29.   During 2003/04 the BCU recorded 354 robberies which equated to 1.96 per 1000 population. During 2004/05 this reduced to 231 robberies equating to 1.28 per 1000 population. This was lower than the MSBCU average of 2.78 and ranks Sutton second. Between October to March 2005 Sutton recorded 118 robberies. This equated to 0.6 per 1000 population. This was lower than the MSBCU group average of 1.5 and ranks Sutton second in its MSBCU group.

Vehicle Crime

30.   During 2003/04 Sutton recorded 2279 vehicle crimes which equated to 12.6 per 1000 population. During 2004/05 this increased to 2356 equating to 13.0. This was lower than the MSBCU group average of 15.3 and ranks Sutton fifth. Sutton recorded 1159 vehicle crimes between October and March 2005. This equated to 6.4 vehicle crimes per 1000 population. This was lower than the MSBCU group average of 7.7 vehicle crimes per 1000 population and ranks Sutton fourth.

Violent Crime

31.   During 2003/04 Sutton recorded 3703 violent crimes which equated to 20.5 per 1000 population. During 2004/05 it recorded 3956 which equated to 21.9 per 1000 population. This was lower than the MSBCU group average of 24.4 and ranks Sutton BCU fifth. The BCU recorded 1912 violent crimes during October to March 2005. This equated to 10.6 violent crimes per 1000 population. This was lower than the MSBCU group average of 11.8 and ranks Sutton sixth in its group.

Detections

Priority Crimes - Detections			
	2002/03	**2003/04**	**2004/05**
TNOs	2420 (16.2%)	2453 (15.2%)	3572 (21.1%)
Domestic Burglary	98 (12.6%)	121 (16.8%)	134 (19.1%)
Robbery	61 (22.1%)	87 (24.6%)	58 (25.1%)
Vehicle Crime	101 (4.2%)	111 (4.9%)	130 (5.5%)
Violent Crime	923 (26.6%)	912 (24.6%)	1547 (39.1%)

Total Crime

32.   During 2004/05 Sutton BCU achieved a detection rate of 21.1% for TNOs. This was an increase on the 15.2% achieved during 2003/04. It was slightly lower than the MSBCU group average of 21.7% and ranks it seventh. Sutton BCU achieved a detection rate of 24.6% for all crime between October to March 2005. This was higher than the MSBCU group average detection rate of 22.9% and ranks it fifth in its MSBCU group.
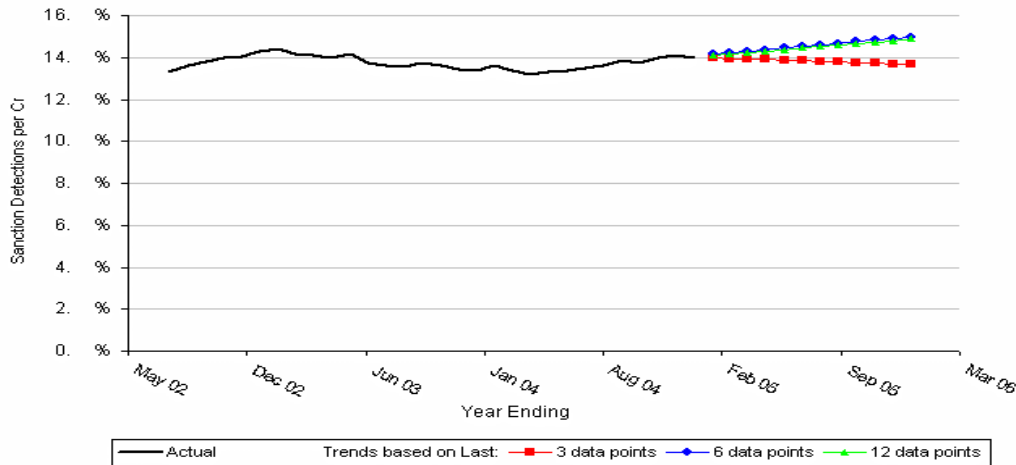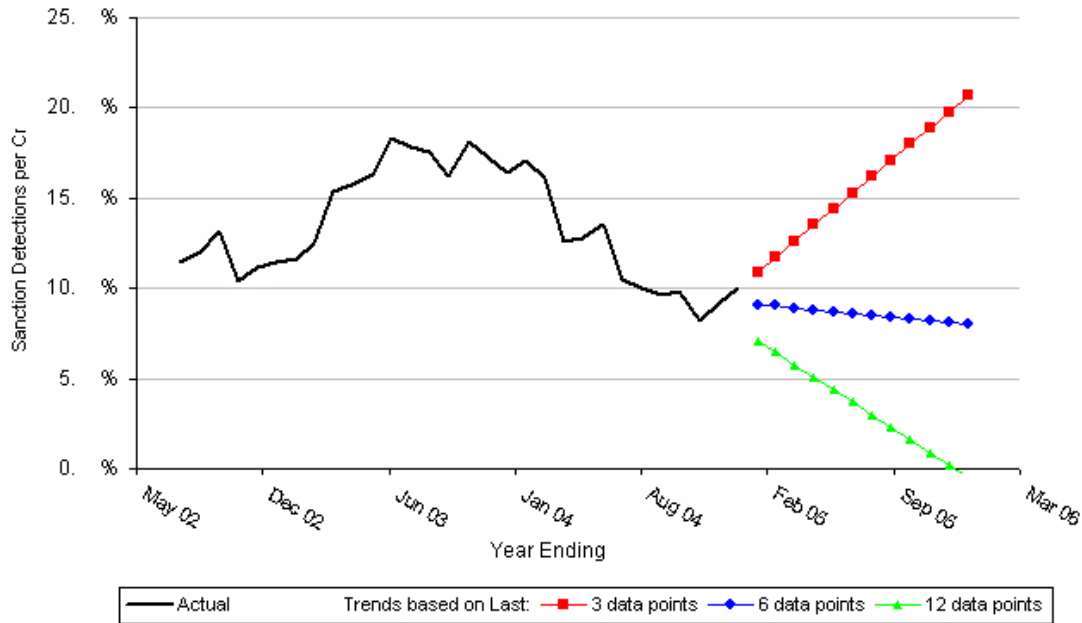

Projection - Sanction Detections per Crime-Metropolitan Police - Sutton-All Crime-01 Aug 02 - 31 Jan 05

The projection chart above shows that detections should continue to rise.

Domestic Burglary

33.   During 2004/05 Sutton achieved a detection rate of 19.1% which was an increase on 2003/04 when it achieved a rate of 16.8%. This is higher than the MSBCU group average of 12.2% and ranks Sutton second. Between October – March 2005 Sutton BCU achieved a 25.9% detection rate for domestic burglary. This was higher than the MSBCU group average of 12.7% and ranks it first in the MSBCU group.
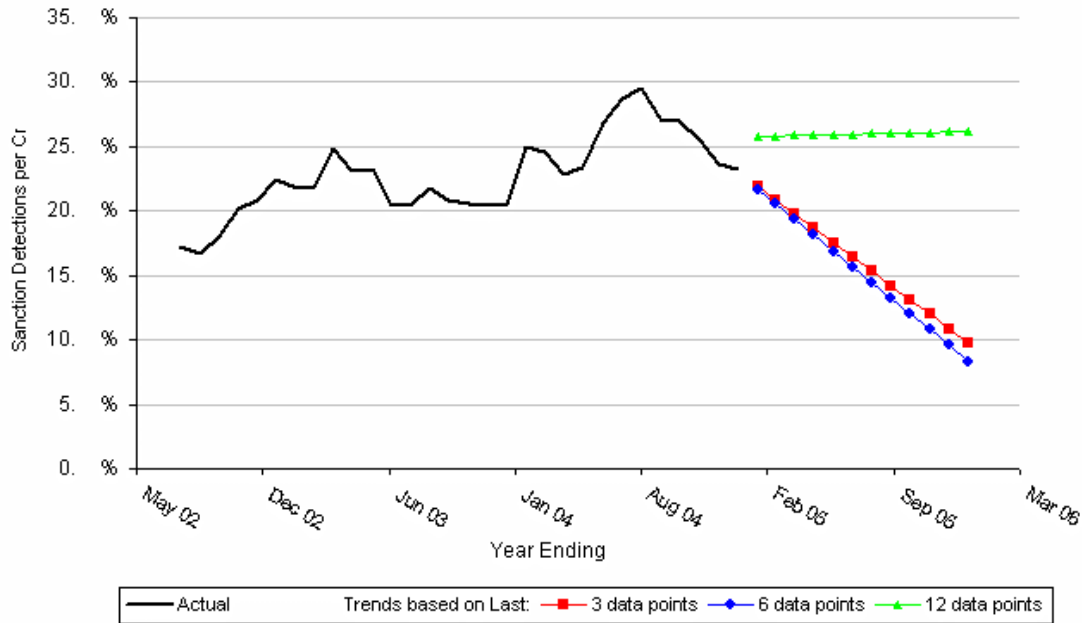
Projection - Sanction Detections per Crime-Metropolitan Police - Sutton-Domestic Burglary-01 Aug 02 - 31 Jan 05

It appears that during the last three months Sutton BCU has detected more domestic burglaries than in the previous six and 12 months.

Robbery

34.   During 2004/05 Sutton BCU achieved a detection rate of 25.1%; this was a small increase on the 24.6% achieved during 2003/04. This was higher than the MSBCU group average of 18.6% and ranks it third in its MSBCU group. Between October and March 2005 the BCU detected 17.8% of robberies. This was slightly lower than the MSBCU group average of 17.9% and ranks it seventh.
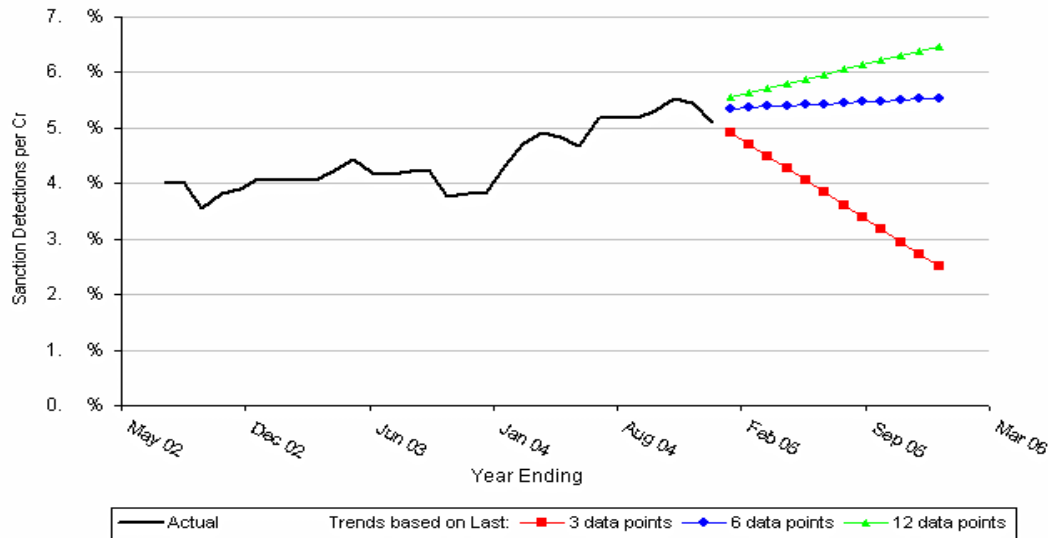
Projection - Sanction Detections per Crime-Metropolitan Police - Sutton-Robbery-01 Aug 02 - 31 Jan 05

The projection chart shows that robbery detections are going to decrease based on the last three and six months data points.

Vehicle Crime

35. During 2004/05 Sutton BCU achieved a 5.5% detection rate for vehicle crime. This was a small increase on the 4.9% detection rate achieved during 2003/04. It was lower than the MSBCU group average of 6.1% and ranks Sutton ninth. During October – March 2005 it achieved a 5.4% detection rate for vehicle crimes. This was slightly below the 6.5% average detection rate for the MSBCU group and ranks it ninth in its group.
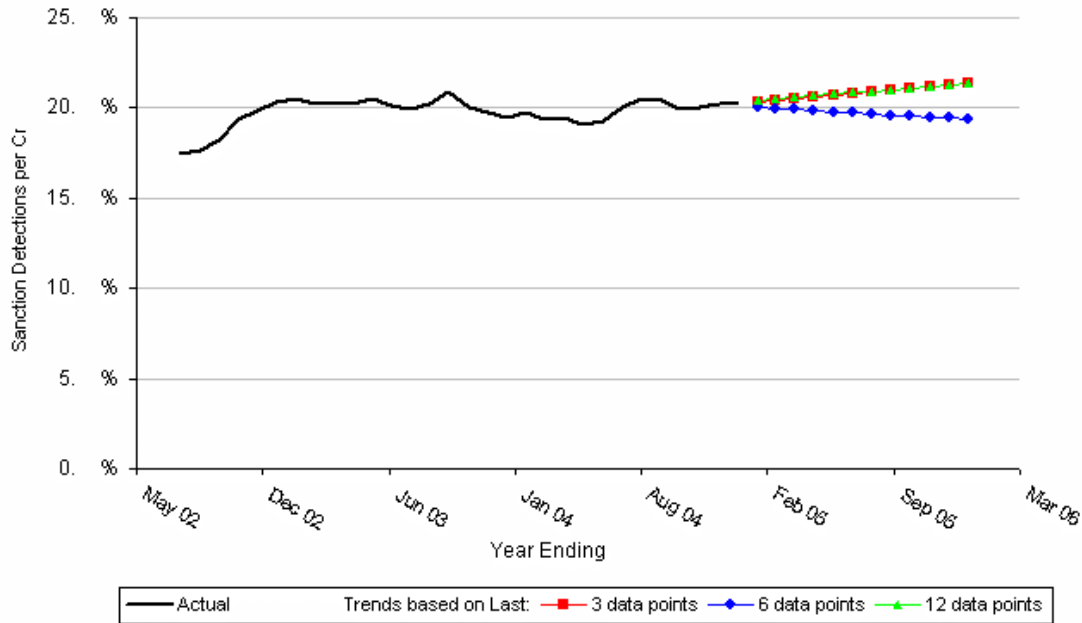
Projection - Sanction Detections per Crime-Metropolitan Police - Sutton-Vehicle Crime (excluding Vehicle Interference)-01 Aug 02 - 31 Jan 05

It appears that Sutton BCU vehicle crime detections have decreased in the last three data points but had been increasing based on the six and 12 data points.

Violent Crime

36.   The detection rate for violent crime increased from 24.6% during 2003/04 to 39.1% for 2004/05. This was lower than the MSBCU group average of 41.4% and ranks Sutton ninth. It achieved a 46.6% detection rate for violent crime between October and March 2005. This was just higher than the MSBCU average detection rate of 44.9% and ranks it seventh.

Projection - Sanction Detections per Crime-Metropolitan Police - Sutton-Violent Crime-01 Aug 02 - 31 Jan 05

The projection for the violent crime detection rate is that it will continue to rise although the last six data points show a slight decrease.

2004/05 performance compared to 2003/04

Good – improving	Good – declining
• Domestic burglary recorded offences • Domestic burglary per 1000 households • Domestic burglary detection rate • Robbery recorded offences • Robbery per 1000 population • Robbery detection rate	• TNO recorded offences • TNO per 1000 population • Vehicle crime recorded offences • Vehicle crime per 1000 population • Violent crime recorded offences • Violent crime per 1000 population
Poor – improving	Poor – declining
• TNO recorded detections • TNO detection rate • Domestic burglary recorded detections • Vehicle crime recorded detections • Vehicle crime detection rate • Violent crime recorded detections • Violent crime detection rate	• Robbery recorded detections

October to March 2004 performance compared to October to March 2005

Good – improving	Good – declining
- TNO detection rate - Domestic burglary detection rate - Robbery recorded offences - Robbery per 1000 population - Violent crime detection rate	- TNO recorded offences - TNO per 1000 population - Domestic burglary recorded offences - Domestic burglary per 1000 households - Vehicle crime recorded offences - Vehicle crime per 1000 population - Violent crime recorded offences - Violent crime per 1000 population
Poor – improving	Poor – declining
- TNO recorded detections - Domestic burglary recorded detections - Vehicle crime recorded detections - Violent crime recorded detections	- Robbery recorded detections - Robbery detection rate - Vehicle crime detection rate

Good - improving = Performing better than MSBCU group average and better than previous year.
Good - declining = Performing better than MSBCU group average but worse than previous year.
Poor - improving = Performing worse than MSBCU group average but better than previous year.
Poor - declining = Performing worse than MSBCU group average and worse than previous year.

37. The Inspection team noted that recent figures released from the MPS for the planning year 2004/05 are as follows and reflect a very creditable performance year in terms of the MPS:

   - Burglary residential crimes are down 2.6% (720/701).
   - Burglary artifice crimes are down 36.8% (57/36).
   - Robbery crimes are down 34.7% (354/231) (best return in the MPS).
   - Motor vehicle crime is up 3.4% (2279/2356) (but this is 12.5% down on 2001/02 (2754).
   - All offences (TNOs) are up 4.9% (16154/16942) (but detections up 17.2% (2159/2531).
   - Violent offence crimes are up 6.8% (3703/3956) but detections up by 20.7% (719/868).
   - Street crimes are down 33.9% (389/257).

Accountability Mechanisms and Performance Management

38. At Force level there are a number of mechanisms in place for holding BCU commanders to account. The organisational structure of the MPS indicates that each BCM is directly accountable to the Commissioner through ACTP. There are monthly BCM meetings chaired by either the Commissioner or ACTP at which there is an expectation that BCMs account for performance against MPS targets. The BCU is aligned to a 'link' commander who line manages and meets with BCMs on a quarterly basis, where BCU performance is discussed and reviewed.

39. A key feature of a successful BCU is a robust performance management system with clear roles and expectations and evidence that individuals are held to account for their contributions towards achievement of goals and targets set for the BCU. The Inspection team was pleased to note that SMT members considered themselves jointly accountable for performance targets set for the BCU.

40.   The Inspection team tested the BCU performance management and accountability structure at all levels, looking for clear knowledge of roles and responsibilities, evidence of robust performance management and clear accountability mechanisms. It found that performance management is practised in a somewhat piecemeal fashion across the BCU and that there is no stated performance management strategy or clear process whereby individuals are held to account for contribution. The BCM discusses performance at every second SMT meeting but elsewhere the team found limited evidence of robust performance management, where performance features as a standard agenda item and individuals are asked to account for contribution. The Inspection team attended the daily tasking group (DTG) and borough tasking and co-ordination group (BTCG) and reviewed minutes where available of SMT meetings as well as discussing the rationale and purpose of other meetings with attendees.

41.   The BCU internal meeting structure where BCU business and performance are discussed is as follows:

- The SMT meeting held every other Wednesday and chaired by the BCM, superintendents and chief inspectors.
- The senior leadership team (SLT) meeting, held every Tuesday and chaired by the BCM.
- The DTG meeting, chaired by superintendent operations.
- The BTCG meeting held every other Wednesday, alternating with the SMT.[4]

42.   Uniform inspectors attend a six-weekly meeting chaired by chief inspector operations (the divisional management team (DMT) meeting, although detective inspectors (DIs) are not invited to this meeting) and there is a police staff managers meeting chaired by the BBM every other month. Again, there seems to be limited discussion of performance at these meetings or evidence of individuals being held to account. The CID does not have any formal framework whereby the DIs and detective sergeants (DSs) meet with the DCI regularly to discuss performance and the DCI does not appear to have a forum for addressing uniform inspectors on matters which impact on crime management performance.

43.   The superintendent operations usually chairs the DTG with available members of the SMT/ DMT, and the early turn duty inspector. The meeting reviews the 24-hour position on crime and details are provided of arrests of note, items of interest and potential critical incidents. Updates are received on whether taskings have been carried out and new tasks are generated as appropriate. The Inspection team attended the DTG and found that the process is not apparently informed by a formal daily intelligence meeting; this meeting is held on a weekly basis alternating with the BTCG meeting. Further, the opportunity is not taken to review performance against monthly or year to date targets and thus maintain focus and accountability as well as exert a daily 'grip' on performance matters. The Inspection team is of the opinion that the DTG presents an opportunity to rigorously review daily performance and provide direction and drive of which the SLT should take advantage. Further, the DTG conducted in this form also provides a means of consistent follow-up as well as establishing a performance culture as day-to-day business.

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[4] Source: BCU Reference Material.

44.   The BTCG also provides an opportunity to review performance as well as assess the efficacy of tasking and ensure resources are deployed in accordance with strategic assessment and control strategy priorities. The Inspection team also attended this meeting and found that performance was reviewed, albeit as a backcloth to the tactical assessment and that again the opportunity exists to introduce a more robust accountability regime.

45.   The Inspection team also had the opportunity during reality checks across the BCU to test performance linkage at junior leader and management levels. On an individual basis there does not appear to be a method other than the performance development review (PDR) process whereby individuals are given the opportunity to discuss contribution with line managers on a formalised and consistent basis. Most officers interviewed did not view the PDR system as having credibility as a performance management tool and were unclear as to how they were held to account for individual contribution. Several officers cited examples of poor or meaningless objectives, missed reviews or interviews being conducted via the telephone or in one case being completed in the absence of the officer under review.

46.   Neither senior nor junior managers appeared to have a clearly documented process of performance review beyond the PDR process. Further, at junior leader/manager level there is confusion as to what is expected of them as individuals and as to how the BCU expects performance management of those under their command. The inspectors do not feel represented at SMT level and do not currently have an official forum in which to discuss BCU business or performance with the SLT. They thus appear to be unclear as to direction and focus. The BCU is shortly to conduct an away day with the inspectors in order to provide such a forum and seek views from this key group of managers. The Inspection team, however, would encourage the BCU to implement a more consistent process of engagement and performance management.

47.   The Inspection team also found inconsistency in relation to the manner that staff at constable and sergeant level and in some departments are held to account. For example, the task force, the BCU's main proactive capability, did not appear to work within any performance management regime or current operating terms of reference. Given the importance of this large team, the Inspection team is of view that robust performance management is critical, both to monitor workloads as well as to ensure maximum efficiency and contribution. The SNTs by contrast were able to provide evidence of being held to account via a regular meeting structure and showed awareness of a range of clear targets and priorities apparently set by TPHQ. Staff elsewhere were largely unaware of BCU priorities or achievement, summed up by vague references made in various focus groups and interviews to 'doing quite well'. Further, constables and sergeants could not provide details of any regular system of team meeting, whether for the purpose of performance management or as a communications exercise.

48.   The performance review unit generates management information that is comprehensive and enables review of individual and team contribution. However, the Inspection team did not find strong evidence of such material being formally used to provide focus or drive as a performance management tool and further, performance information on display across the

BCU was scant. Core team inspectors apparently hold informal meetings using the monthly management report (MMR) and have requested access to a comprehensive MMR with team data since, in spite of this being available, it is apparently not distributed to team leaders for their use. A cyclical inspection and review programme exists that requires embedding as part of a performance management regime in terms of consistency and robust follow-up.

49.   The Inspection team acknowledges that the BCU is delivering against many of its APP targets and that the SMT has identified performance management as an issue that requires addressing urgently through its recently conducted critical review process. The Inspection team is in agreement that the matter is pressing and that BCU recognition is timely; the team encourages the BCU to continue work on developing a 'compstat' process. Current performance levels will be difficult to sustain and continuously improving on a very creditable achievement will prove problematic, unless performance management is again given emphasis and is used as a key means of ensuring a quality service delivery. The Inspection team is of the opinion that there is an element of complacency, detected during interviews and focus groups with staff at some levels across the BCU, that has blurred the performance focus. The team is of the opinion that this perhaps derives from the confidence that current success has generated, which appears to have resulted in a slackening of management 'grip'. The Inspection team recommends that the BCU develops a clear model of BCU performance management (a 'compstat' process can be part of this) that is applied consistently across all ranks and grades. The model should be documented and leaders and managers given specific areas of responsibility, performance targets, milestones and accountability/review processes, so that the aims and objectives of the BCU are clear to staff with management and leadership responsibilities and within which accountability processes are defined and unambiguous.

RECOMMENDATION 1
It is recommended that the BCU develops a clear model of BCU performance management that is applied consistently across all ranks and grades. The model should be documented and leaders and managers given specific areas of responsibility, performance targets, milestones and accountability/review processes, so that the aims and objectives of the BCU are clear to staff with management and leadership responsibilities and within which accountability processes are defined and unambiguous.

Visibility and Reassurance

50.   There are a number of methods by which the BCU provides visibility and reassurance to the community. These include patrols by uniformed officers working on core (24/7 response) or SNTs. The BCU also deploys police community support officers (PCSOs) as part of the SNTs. All operational police officers and the majority of police staff are accommodated in the new Sutton police station in Carshalton Road, Sutton.

51.   The BCU is divided into 19 wards covered at present by nine SNTs; consequently, several wards are 'twinned' with an SNT covering two wards, pending a full roll-out of the MPS initiative and further SNT staff recruited and trained. SNTs comprise a sergeant and a mixture of constables and PCSOs, totalling five or six staff in all. The Inspection team had the opportunity to interview staff from the SNTs including PCSOs and found that the teams were well informed in relation to their role and knowledgeable as to their wards and communities. The team was pleased to note that PCSOs were well integrated and felt fully accepted as colleagues by their teams.

52.   SNTs as previously stated are working to a performance management regime, although how much this is driven by the BCU or TPHQ is not clear. The town centre team in particular demonstrated keenness and a healthy return of work, particularly of intelligence submissions, of which PCSOs submitted a pleasing number. All SNT members interviewed showed an awareness of problem solving and staff from initial SNTs appear proficient in problem solving, using the Form 301 process. Training for newly rolled-out teams is yet to be completed and joint training is at a very early stage. The Inspection team also noted that there are only three problem-solving initiatives currently in progress, although the BCU has 14 ASBOs in place. In general, the SNTs showed an understanding of partnership working that bodes well for the future development of the initiative in the LBS. The SNTs felt supported by the SMT, valued by their communities, and considered that they were an important part of 'Team Sutton'.

53.   SNTs are managed and led by two inspectors, dividing the 19 wards between them, with an additional inspector responsible for cross-BCU partnership work also forming part of the community leadership team. SNT inspectors hold regular monthly supervisors performance meetings, where achievement is discussed versus targets and key performance indicators, prior to submitting figures to TPHQ. All three inspectors are involved in shaping the new crime and disorder strategy, APP and targets. The inspectors feel supported by senior managers, and the SMT is considered visible and responsive to community policing issues.

54.   The Inspection team could find no evidence of a structured review of the initial three SNTs and respective effectiveness/impact on community confidence and reassurance. A baseline review by TPHQ of one SNT per BCU is anticipated but has not occurred thus far. The BCU may wish to consider conducting its own review, in order to ensure the capture of learning and good practice and maximise future opportunities for success as the initiative roll-out continues.

55.   Thus far, only one SNT is exploring setting up a neighbourhood panel, as a means of accessing communities and encouraging neighbourhood participation and feedback. Other SNTs use existing structures such as area committees and Neighbourhood Watches to achieve this, although a more formalised process in addition to these forums may create greater accessibility and communication opportunities.

56.   The Inspection team also investigated the quality and nature of SNT tasking via the BTCG. Feedback from the SNTs reflected a want of co-ordinated tasking in relation to quality of life and anti-social behaviour issues specifically. There is also the opportunity for tasking in

relation to PPOs resident on SNT wards which the BCU should exploit. Such taskings assigned to SNTs are of variable quality and not specific to shift. Further, the timeliness of tasking resulting from SNT intelligence input appears problematic, with examples found by the Inspection team of good quality actionable intelligence apparently disappearing into a 'black hole'. The Inspection team accepts that the 'black hole' may well be a traditional complaint in relation to BIUs, but would expect to see opportunities to increase purposeful visibility by SNTs seized and co-ordinated via the BCU tasking process.

57.   SNTs also take on some low level investigations relating to quality of life matters. The Inspection team, having reviewed capacity, is of the view that there is scope to increase this, enabling the SNTs to increase their share of the investigative burden and apply problem-solving methodology to minor crime matters affecting the communities they serve. This would also encourage ownership and provide a more visible and accessible service to victims of such crimes in SNT wards.

58.   BCU core teams follow a bespoke shift system based on five teams operating across 24 hours in shifts of 9-10 hours in length. The shift pattern is designed to accommodate the BCU demand profile, providing overlaps at times of peak demand (ie late turn and night duty changeover times). The shift pattern is under review, due to the increased demand in the town centre, generated by a burgeoning night-time economy. The Inspection team had the opportunity to speak to core team staff in interviews and focus groups as well as during the course of reality checks conducted across the BCU. The service profile of the core teams is very young and that of sergeants equally so. Each team is led by an inspector supported by two to three sergeants and comprises up to 30 officers. Abstraction levels are problematic with core teams working to minimum strengths reported as being the norm. The Inspection team reviewed this as well as demand over a corresponding period and found the former assertion to be predominantly accurate but that demand in terms of 'I' calls could not be construed as at an onerous level. Core teams also aspire to patrol crime hotspot areas and gather intelligence during downtime.

59.   The Inspection team found that the core teams exhibited no sense of ownership of local community problems or recognition of any wider role or responsibilities in terms of building community confidence and reassurance. The view expressed to the Inspection team was that the core team function was confined to response only, with most other elements of police work being passed onto other units or departments. Much resentment was expressed during focus groups and interviews at the recently-introduced crime allocation policy that resulted in core teams being given beat crimes to investigate. The Inspection team accepts that such work requires careful management but is supportive of the BCU's policy, since clearly ownership and responsibility as well as experience of police work beyond response activity need to be encouraged.

60.   The Inspection team appreciates that a young service profile may well partially engender this attitude since there is a lack of senior guidance providing a more informed perspective. However, the team would expect such perspective to be provided by sergeants. However, when spoken to by the Inspection team, core team sergeants also did not display any understanding of community policing or citizen focus, and knowledge of and interest in the

work and role of other BCU staff, specifically the CID and SNTs, was scant. The Inspection team regards this as a matter of concern since core team staff are at the interface of service delivery between the public and the BCU, and it is essential that they understand and appreciate the impact that they can have on public confidence. In short, at present the core teams do not present as the BCU's most effective ambassadors.

61.   Another vital source of reassurance is the public's ability to visit a police station for advice or to report incidents. The BCU has three station offices as specified earlier, but only Sutton offers a 24-hour service.

62.   A proactive media strategy is an effective tool in promoting confidence and reassurance, enabling BCUs to reach out to their communities and to disseminate information to a wide audience. The BCU does not have a media strategy but operates a public relations unit (PRU) that has been in place for two years and is staffed by three members of police staff. The unit deals with both internal and external communication issues, although external communication appears more sophisticated and structured than internal. Regular briefings are provided for local media as well as material relating to initiatives and events being supplied for publication. An example of the scope of the unit's activities externally is the 'Partnership in the Park' event, a fun day that has been running for three years this year. The event is hosted by the BCU and partner agencies, and is organised to advertise CDRP work as well as raise monies for charity. The event attracts good feedback from the community who attend in increasing numbers and the Inspection team acknowledges that the Partnership in the Park initiative is a further example of the strength of the CDRP. The unit has also used some innovative methods to encourage staff to contribute good news and details of interesting incidents, offering prizes for the best stories and running competitions to attract interest. Newspaper articles related to BCU activity are also promulgated to staff. Posters and leaflets incorporating details of the SNTs have been printed and circulated to advertise the introduction of the SNTs to the wards and help the community to identify the officers on the teams.

63.   Internally, the PRU produces a six monthly newsletter, the 'Safer Sutton Snapshot'. There is no more frequent publication and in spite of a BCU communications action plan that contains many suggestions for accessing staff and keeping them up to date, there appears to be a limited range of methods by which the SLT/SMT makes meaningful contact with junior ranks. An example of this is the imminent advent of an integrated borough operations (IBO) unit, part of the MPS C3i project. The IBO has significant implications for staff because it will fundamentally alter the way that the BCU exercises its command and control function as well as requiring significant BCU resources in terms of staff and skills. The implications for the BCU will be discussed fully under the Demand Management section of the report; however, core teams are particularly concerned about the IBO and demonstrate confusion and a lack of understanding in focus groups. Further, the teams expressed resentment and felt undervalued because there had apparently been no effort to brief or update staff adequately. The Inspection team is aware that there has been a great deal of work done in relation to this initiative at SMT level and also understands the corporate constraints on announcing BCU plans too early before the organisational position is clear. However, in a general communications context, the SLT needs to develop a means by which staff are kept informed

of change and BCU business in order to encourage engagement as well as developing the aspirational 'Team Sutton' philosophy.

64.   One such means is developing the intranet and the internet websites to make them more user friendly and relevant. The PRU has identified this as a priority and the BCU has employed a qualified member of staff to work on this. The Inspection team would also encourage the BCU to use this as a means of advertising BCU performance as well as using it as a more general communications tool. **The Inspection team acknowledges that the PRU provides a good service but suggests that a definitive media and communications strategy is required, underpinned by a business and delivery plan that will ensure that the BCU gets the maximum return for a significant investment.**

65.   The BCU has recently completed a recruitment drive for Metropolitan Special Constabulary (MSC) officers in an effort to increase its current establishment of three. There have apparently been some 50 expressions of interest and the Inspection team looks forward to a healthier contingent of MSC officers forming part of the BCU's patrol capability in future. The BCU has also begun work to create a volunteer cadet corps (VCC), although this is at a very early stage of development. Again, the Inspection team looks forward to future progress.

66.   The BCU has a good level of interface with its community via its SNTs and strong partnership working. The SLT/SMT also has a visible and positive profile within the LBS, aided by the work of the PRU. However, as highlighted there are opportunities to further enhance this by encouraging greater citizen focus among the core teams as well as creating a strong MSC and VCC. The Inspection team acknowledges that these are issues identified by the BCU's recent critical review and looks forward to developments with interest.

Intelligence-led Policing (ILP)

67.   A principal focus of the BCU Inspection programme is the application of ILP, looking in particular at the degree to which the National Intelligence Model (NIM) has been implemented. Further, if the BIU is to be fully effective, it is important that the unit is staffed with appropriately trained and skilled individuals and structured in a manner that best supports BCU intelligence needs. A fundamental element of any model is the need for an intelligence structure that enables accurate definition of the problem and then allows resources to be deployed in a targeted way. The Inspection team visited the BIU and spoke to staff in the workplace and in focus groups and interviews as well as examining intelligence products. The Inspection team also attended the DTG, BTCG and several parades/briefings.

68.   The BIU is led and managed by a DI and operates a core desk, which performs a 'gate keeping' role, quality assuring intelligence inputs. There is a briefing and tasking desk and focus desks dealing with priority crimes, namely burglary, robbery, vehicle crime and drugs/violent crime. Each focus desk is staffed by an analyst, a field intelligence officer and researchers.

69.   The BCU has a strategic assessment, although the review process appears to be irregular and is not minuted. The last strategic TCG meeting was apparently 'piggybacked' onto an SMT

meeting and was not a standalone meeting in its own right, nor did it include senior members of the partnership. The lack of minutes also renders the accuracy of any resulting control strategy questionable. However, the Inspection team noted that the temporary higher analyst had prepared a strategic assessment independently of the strategic TCG process and had carried out some review and updating. Consequently, the Inspection team looked for strong evidence that the strategic assessment and control strategy drive and focus policing activity across the BCU, since a robust strategic process is a pre-requisite to the effective implementation of the NIM. The Inspection team found that there are several aspects of NIM implementation and intelligence management that require immediate attention if the BCU is to be kept on track in terms of appropriately focused activity and deployment.

70.   The policing style of the BCU is community and citizen focused, emphasising local service delivery through the SNTs. Thus, it is important that community intelligence is fed into and informs the BCU tasking process and that SNT activity is controlled via the central process. With a community tasking process such as practised by the BCU with partners, that process should nonetheless be complementary to and firmly linked into the main BCU tasking process via the BIU. The Inspection team found that the community focus desk is not located within the BIU and that there is no clarity as to where the soon to be recruited community analyst will work from. The Inspection team views the recruitment of a community intelligence analyst as adding an important dimension to the BCU's intelligence capability. **However, the Inspection team suggests that, in order to ensure that the intelligence flow is managed in a co-ordinated and consistent way and consequent activity is also co-ordinated, both the desk and the analyst should be located within the BIU, as should PPO management.**

71.   The BCU runs a daily tasking process, chaired by superintendent operations. The meeting ensures that the tasking is kept on track and that any 'hot tasking' is allocated as necessary. A record of allocation is maintained, ensuring an audit trail of decision making and enhancing effective critical incident management. Attendees include representatives from the SMT, CID/BIU and operations staff and although the DTG is not currently utilised as a performance management opportunity, it nonetheless provides an accurate overview of the last 24 hours of BCU events, crime and activity.

72.   An informal intelligence meeting that is not minuted precedes the DTG, but does not appear to feed into and inform it. The main intelligence meeting alternates with the BTCG meeting that the Inspection team also attended. The Inspection team is of the opinion that the latter meeting appeared to serve no useful function other than to review the progress of several ongoing PATP[5] operations. An informative intelligence presentation was provided by the higher analyst relating to a developing crime trend and consequent hotspot, but the audience was small and lacked SMT representation. The presentation contained good quality analysis and the Inspection team expected to see it actioned. In the absence of members of the SMT, however, the decision was deferred until the BTCG, losing valuable time. In any event, a weekly review of intelligence militates against the BCU's ability to generate a quick and flexible response to emerging issues as identified by the presentation. The team further noted that there was an extensive overview of performance and achievement provided, although no

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[5] MPS form for monitoring and managing proactive operations via Proactive and Tasking Proformae.

corresponding accountability process occurred. **The Inspection team suggests that a performance-orientated DTG meeting, fed and informed by a formal daily intelligence meeting will create the ability to look forward as well as retrospectively and provide the BCU with a more effective means of managing daily deployment and focusing activity.**

73.   The BTCG takes place on every alternative Wednesday, chaired by superintendent operations. A performance backcloth was provided within the context of the tactical assessment, together with a hotspot review, crime pattern analysis and some predictive analysis delivered by the higher analyst in relation to a criminal damage hotspot within the context of increasing prevalence. This was in fact the presentation provided at the weekly intelligence meeting. Action was initiated utiltising a problem-solving methodology as a potential solution, although the Inspection team considers that there is also an opportunity to remit the matter to the community tasking group creating a joined-up approach. Automatic number plate recognition usage was promoted with ownership clearly allocated and Rainbow matters and terrorism threat levels were also included on the meeting agenda. Staff were also thanked for good work and effort acknowledged in relation to achieving the BCU residential burglary target. A summary of taskings was provided together with details of taskable resources.

74.   The Inspection team is of the opinion that the tasking process conducted via the BTCG is not utilising all taskable assets and focuses predominantly on the core teams. Such tasking is also limited, mainly taking the form of directed patrols in crime hotspots and tasking in relation to curfew visits, bail condition monitoring, warrant execution etc was limited. There was also evidence that some tasks were not being completed and that compliance could be improved. The Inspection team considers that benefit would be derived from fully utilising all the tactical options available, ensuring that tasking is both specific and where required innovative. **The Inspection team suggests that this should be carried out within a performance management framework ensuring that tasks are co-ordinated, spread across all the taskable assets on the BCU and that the products from such tasking are evaluated and staff held to account for activity.**

75.   The Inspection team noted that the reactive DI was absent as were core team representatives from the BTCG. Given that the majority of tasking is allocated to core teams and that this group forms a significant section of the BCU's patrol and proactive capability, the Inspection team considers that core teams should be represented. The CID also plays an important part in the intelligence gathering process, is a taskable asset and in any event should be included in what is primary cross-BCU business and should be represented.

76.   The tactical assessment included a 12-week strategic review that led to problem-solving opportunities being identified. The Inspection team noted that an enduring problem of robbery was not recognised as a problem-solving issue that could also have been remitted to the community tasking group. The team highlighted a regular overlap with the community tasking group, which would be overcome should the community focus desk and analyst be located within the BIU. The Inspection team noted that there was little or no reference made to the control strategy or summaries of the position in relation to forensics, warrants, taskings, F302s, IPE matters from the control strategy and level 2 submissions provided and reviewed.

The Inspection team considers that the opportunity to review important aspects of BCU business and again introduce accountability and compliance was not fully exploited. An example of this was a compliance issue identified for a PPO who was wanted and located within Sutton High Street and not arrested. There was no action taken due to some alleged confusion over the exact wanted status of the PPO. The team was reassured that the matter would be robustly investigated and either the individual who did not make the necessary updates to the BCU intelligence system or the individual failing to execute the warrant held to account. Further, there was also very limited discussion in relation to fast-track initiatives undertaken by either the task force or core teams, again losing an opportunity to closely examine such work and ensure that BCU proactive capability is kept focused on BCU priorities.

77.   The proactive tasking process is managed within the BIU and at the time of the Inspection there were eight in progress. The Inspection team researched the BCU PATP process after receiving feedback as to its apparently bureaucratic nature. There appears to be a lack of awareness as to the requirements of NIM and the MPS proactive operations system in respect of the level of research appropriate to such activity among staff. The analysts are regarded as obstructive when requesting further research into applications or when analysis demonstrates that activity is not warranted. The Inspection team found that a great deal of activity is being carried on outside the BTCG process because staff are seeking to 'go round' the official process in the face of such perceived obstruction. The focus of the BTCG should be tightened to enable the scrutiny specified above to occur and staff should be made aware of the requirements of the process by line managers and the necessity for compliance.

78.   In relation to implementing the Home Office PPO strategy, the BCU does not appear to be in a state of readiness. The BCU has prepared a list of PPOs that is being reviewed because it is apparently not in accordance with Home Office guidelines. The BCU acknowledges that the original list was prepared in haste as a result of organisational pressure. Target profiles have been prepared, although the analysts have not had any input into the selection of the individuals named in the current list. The BIU does not manage PPOs; this is the remit of a DS on the task force, who leads a PPO unit and ostensibly co-ordinates activity. However, there are also no intervention plans at present and so activity and ownership seems ad hoc and not focused or consistent. Linkage across the three strands 'prevent and deter, catch and convict, resettle and rehabilitate' seems limited, although the Inspection team noted some strong potential for results as a result of partnership activity and integrated offender management under the third strand. For example, PPOs are to be fast tracked onto drugs referral schemes, as a result of engagement with primary care trusts, which the Inspection team regards as good practice.

79.   Elsewhere on the BCU there is confusion as to what PPOs actually are and what is required, perhaps demonstrated by the fact that only four intelligence reports were submitted relating to PPOs to the BTCG during the two weeks between meetings. This is notwithstanding that PPO pictures have been distributed to staff and are displayed in the parade room. **The Inspection team suggests that the BCU reviews the decision to place PPOs outside the remit of the BIU.** Further, the analysts should be tasked with preparing target profiles, which are backed

up by structured intervention plans that are regularly reviewed, ensuring consistent, co-ordinated activity. PPOs also need to assume greater prominence on the BTCG agenda.

80.   The BCU task force is the main source of proactive capability. The proactive task force (PTF) is an amalgamation of all the BCU's proactive teams and is led and managed by the DI intelligence. The amalgamation is intended to ensure that the PTF is flexible enough to respond to day-to-day demand as well as create the resilience to undertake longer-term activity and pertinent investigative work. The Inspection team interviewed members of the PTF and its line management. The team noted that there were no clear operating terms of reference, staff lacked clear direction and were unclear as to how work allocated to the PTF is distributed among teams. The PTF and BIU analysts are also not working efficiently together since, as previously stated, the analysts are viewed as obstructive in relation to PATP operations. There only two substantive DCs on the PTF and this perspective may well be attributable to a lack of experience and understanding as to the requirements of NIM among PTF staff. PTF representatives do not apparently attend the daily intelligence meeting. **The Inspection team suggests that this would be a valuable learning opportunity as well as a means of ensuring that the BCU proactive team is kept up-to-date in relation to intelligence matters, particularly if as suggested to the BCU formalises the meeting. Further, an investment in training the PTF in NIM and PATP requirements may do much to encourage team working.**

81.   The Inspection team also noted that there was no performance management regime in place, enabling a firm grip to be maintained on workloads and activity. Given that the PTF represents a significant BCU investment, **the Inspection team expected to see a robust approach to performance and a consistent accountability process for leaders and supervisors and suggests that this should be remedied as a matter of priority.**

82.   The Inspection team attended two parades conducted for different shifts. The parade room was well equipped, clean and tidy with relevant and up-to-date information displayed on the walls. Briefings were conducted using the MPS briefing and tasking system (Met B&T). Content was generally of an acceptable standard, although on one occasion, the late turn had to use the early turn briefing and thus tasks were not up to date. On both occasions, however, tasks were allocated, but were confined to hotspot patrols and officers were not given any contextual information as to the background and rationale for the task. However, items of information contained in the briefing were relevant and timely and included details in relation to PPOs. On the second briefing attended by the Inspection team, the BIU briefing officer was present on parade and generated some healthy discussion around PPOs. The Inspection team considers that the delivery of briefings is of paramount importance and based on the evidence available found that some supervisors (inspectors and sergeants) had a clear understanding of the importance of effective presentation, while others lacked impact and dynamism. Effectively briefing staff is a vital element of good leadership and the Inspection team encourages the BCU to ensure that junior leaders and managers are trained in briefing techniques and are aware of the minimum standards contained in Met B&T. Further, there was no emphasis given to debriefing at the conclusion of the shift either in relation to incidents or task compliance.

83. The Inspection team is of the view that knowledge of the NIM and intelligence matters outside the BIU is limited. The team noted that the quality of intelligence inputs is generally low with limited actionable intelligence. There are also shortcomings in relation to the organisation of the BIU, its management and its intelligence product and thus its ability to drive and focus BCU crime fighting activity as it should. Responsibility for mainstreaming the NIM and ensuring that the BCU is intelligence driven rests with the SMT. The Inspection team recommends that NIM implementation is reviewed against current BCU practice, ensuring that there is a robust strategic tasking and co-ordination process, that generates a relevant strategic assessment and corresponding control strategy. This should be underpinned by a consistent and robust review process at SLT level that consequently drives all BCU proactivity. The team also recommends that the BIU structure and leadership are reviewed, ensuring that it is able to effectively service strategic assessment and control strategy requirements. This will ensure that the BIU assumes a central position in terms of managing and disseminating all intelligence and provides linkage and co-ordination of all activity across the range of BCU business, ie operations, crime and partnership.

RECOMMENDATION 2
It is recommended that the NIM implementation is reviewed against current BCU practice, ensuring that there is a robust strategic tasking and co-ordination process that generates a relevant strategic assessment and corresponding control strategy. This should be underpinned by a consistent and robust review process at SLT level that consequently drives all BCU proactivity. It is also recommended that the BIU structure and leadership are reviewed, ensuring that it is able to effectively service strategic assessment and control strategy requirements. This will ensure that the BIU assumes a central position in terms of managing and disseminating all intelligence and provides linkage and co-ordination of all activity across the range of BCU business.

Intelligence Sources

84. The use of covert human intelligence sources (CHISs), within the provision of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000, is an effective tactical option in crime operations. The Inspection team considers that as many officers as possible on the BCU should receive the necessary training and encouragement to be involved in this particular area of police work. **The team suggests that the case progression unit (CPU) is an opportunity where such an investment could be best placed to return good results, potentially in intelligence debriefing or cell recruitment.** As a result of an MPS review, the management of the dedicated source unit (DSU) has been transferred to TP, although staffed by BCU resources. The Inspection team was pleased to note that the BCU is making satisfactory use of CHIS intelligence, with the DSU involved in the BTCG process and the recruitment of CHISs at a healthy level.

Crime Investigation Practices

85.   The BCU CID operates under the direction of superintendent operations and is led and managed by a DCI overseeing a department divided into four sections: the BIU, reactive team, PTF and the vulnerable persons unit. A DI supported by DSs leads each section and each comprises varying levels of skill and experience among its staff that reflect a mixture of substantive detectives, trainee detectives and uniform officers working on the PTF. CID staff regard a system of uniform attachments as beneficial, increasing knowledge and interaction with CID and encouraging uniform officers to consider the CID as a career path. Detective capability on the BCU is at a premium with eight substantive detectives shared among all four departments. Most of the DSs are recently recruited and therefore relatively new to the BCU.

86.   The Inspection team interviewed members of the CID individually and in focus groups as well as dip sampling work, visiting the crime desk and CJU. CID staff in general presented themselves as professional and willing members of the BCU, who are aware of the importance of good victim/customer support as well as generating satisfactory detection rates. There is a crime allocation policy in place whereby core teams and in some cases the SNTs are allocated 'beat' crimes, spreading the investigative burden, encouraging ownership and ensuring manageable workloads among CID staff. Uniform staff, when spoken to by the Inspection team in relation to the policy, were, however, confused as to what level of investigation should be assigned to the CID and viewed the department as 'less than helpful'. CID colleagues viewed uniform officers as having a propensity to 'dump and run' both in relation to investigative work and in cases passed to the CPU. The Inspection team is of the opinion that the issue is one of communication between and understanding of the work of both departments and is supportive of the crime allocation policy for reasons outlined previously. The team encourages the BCU to continue to work to inculcate a 'Team Sutton' philosophy as well as continue with uniform secondments into the CID.

87.   In terms of general crime management practice, the Inspection team found that CID strengths are: a creditable level of detection performance; commitment to proactive domestic violence investigation, again with a high detection performance; a well run and high performing BCU forensic team, who have a good working relationship with the CID, (the quality of forensic work being described as 'very professional' by all CID officers spoken to); and a well run and productive crime management unit (CMU). The CPU is functioning well and again is viewed by all staff spoken to as providing a useful and quality service.

88.   The Inspection team conducted a crime audit of beat crimes allocated to the core teams and major crimes allocated to the CID. It found that among uniform staff responsible for initial investigations that investigations were generally poor and lacked supervision. Minimum standards of investigation are integrated onto the electronic crime reporting and investigation system (CRIS). However, the Inspection team found that often these were not followed and further, omissions were often not picked up by any supervisory overview until reviewed by the CMU. Exploring explanations for this in focus groups, the Inspection team found a lack of investigative skill among front-line officers was highlighted and sergeants apparently lacked the time and training to supervise effectively. Minimum standards are also not in place

in relation to secondary investigations, albeit that these are not monitored. The BCU needs to address the skill deficiency among uniform officers in relation to investigative capability and remitting beat crimes to the core teams is potentially a means of achieving this. However, given the lack of experience and youthful service profile among core team constables and sergeants, it is clear that some training input and performance management is necessary, both to set a standard of investigative practice and to enable sergeants to exercise leadership and take responsibility for quality controlling investigations assigned to core teams. The necessity is also underlined by the adverse impact on public confidence of a poor service delivered to victims of crime by officers assigned to investigate and report beat crime allegations, usually core team constables.

89.   A further issue of concern for the BCU under crime management is its failure to achieve an acceptable standard for compliance with NCRS in an audit conducted of the MPS by the Audit Commission in October 2004. The BCU's overall grading was 75% (red), burglary 95% (green), vehicle crime 100% (green), violent crime 74% (red), domestic violence 40% (red) and racist crime 41% (red).

90.   To its credit, the BCU has acted swiftly following both audits and has already implemented a number of recommendations arising from the BCU audit. Detailed guidance has been published and the CMU conducts a series of housekeeping checks cross referencing crime, CAD and custody numbers to ensure compliance with NCRS. Remedial action also involves increased use of the TIU in both the reconciliation of CAD/CRIS calls/crimes and in the initial investigation of potential crimes, however tenuous, not requiring the immediate attendance of a police officer   The BCU has also quickly embraced and applied the MPS recent 'first aid kit' (action plan) to improve activity regarding Investigation One (crime related incidents) and Investigation Five (CADs resulted as no crimes). In addition, the BCU continues to routinely conduct the crime integrity checks prescribed by the MPS crime integrity team and, subject to the results, to take action when required.

91.   Whilst the BCU has achieved excellent results for burglary and vehicle crime in the Audit Commission assessment, it will be unable to achieve a green assessment for overall compliance with NCRS until all categories are green. Thus, the veracity of all its crime reduction achievements remains in question until overall compliance is achieved. This has the potential to undermine the excellent work achieved by the BCU described throughout this report. It is therefore critical that the BCU becomes fully compliant with the NCRS and achieves a green assessment as quickly as possible.

> **RECOMMENDATION 3**
> **It is recommended that the BCU continues to implement its NCRS compliance action plan in support of MPS work to achieve a green assessment from the Audit Commission.**

92.   The CMU and telephone investigation bureau (TIB) operate to robust standard operating procedures which enables good housekeeping and accurate reporting, screening in and classification of crimes onto the MPS CRIS. The CMU is currently screening in around 41%

of crime. As stated above, the MPS has not achieved a satisfactory standard of NCRS compliance and feedback to and research by the Inspection team indicates that there is still a lack of understanding of NCRS requirements, with many incidents reported as crimes rather than 'non-crime'. The former is seen by staff as expedient versus accurate reporting and recording of non-crime incidents is seen as bureaucratic and time consuming. This again appears to demonstrate a want of robust and informed supervision at sergeant level on core teams. The Inspection team considers that work with sergeants will also complement BCU efforts to achieve a green status and is a key area of complementary activity.

93.   Non-adherence to crime reporting standards is identified at the crime screening stage. CMU staff will make the necessary changes themselves if appropriate, or refer the crime back to either the initial reporting officer or the investigating officer for remedial action, although this is an informal process. Major errors are rectified before classification is confirmed and again feedback is provided to line managers and reporting/investigating officers on an informal basis. The Inspection team spoke to and visited staff in the CMU and found the team to be focused and motivated. However, the Inspection team noted that the CMU has no formal links to the BIU. CMU staff will clearly identify crime trends at the point of recording and might be guided to be aware of longer-term crime trends assisted by close linkage with the BIU; nor have CMU staff received any guidance as to the significance of crimes committed by PPOs. The TIB undertakes investigation of approximately 34% of BCU crime and it is intended that the unit will be developed to enhance this level; at present, the unit is open from 8am – 8pm including weekends.

94.   The vulnerable persons unit encompasses hate crime investigation as well as Operation Sapphire[6]. The latter team is not resourced to the MPS model and workloads are correspondingly high to the extent that the cold case review responsibility under Operation Sapphire is not being serviced satisfactorily. The BCU may wish to review the allocation of indecent assaults to the unit, since this is not strictly within the terms of the MPS policy (unless constituting a 'serious' assault) and could be remitted to the CID main office, where there is capacity. There are also opportunities to increase repeat victimisation activity within the unit as well as liaison with the CSU in relation to domestic violence matters in particular. There are good standards of compliance with the domestic violence positive arrest policy and Form 124 (minimum standards guidance) was being introduced in May together with requisite training, further enhancing the service to victims.

95.   The most fundamental developmental area, however, is the need for a formal performance management and accountability framework to be introduced into the CID as per Recommendation 1. The Inspection team found that there was no formal meeting structure or methodology for holding staff to account or for discussing CID business or achievement. Indeed, the Inspection team was surprised to find that some of the new DSs had not been introduced to the SMT and had not met each other as part of a management/leadership team. The Inspection team found a lack of awareness among staff as to what sanction detections are (although guidance recently provided by the DI reactive was favourably commented on) and targets have not been set for individual teams. Investigation plans are not expected or only

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[6] MPS policy in relation to the investigation of serious sexual crime.

used informally and there is a lack of awareness of the BCU policing style and the CID role within that in relation to problem solving and citizen focused service delivery. That the CID is delivering is testament to the hard work and commitment of individuals within the department which the Inspection team acknowledges. There is, however, an appetite among CID staff for a performance framework that provides clear direction and clarity of purpose as well as opportunities to discuss performance and interface with senior managers. This presents the BCU with an opportunity to build on and develop further an achieving department as well as deliver continuous improvement.

96.   The CJU sits under the remit of an inspector working to superintendent operations and the Inspection team had the opportunity to meet with a group of representatives. The unit is performance orientated and there are regular meetings where performance is discussed and feedback relating to achievement is provided. There are weekly case progression meetings, which have contributed to a decrease in the ineffective trial rate, currently running at 30%. There are also timeliness targets for file submission which are being met. Further, all files are submitted to the CPU. The unit acts as a quality check, ensuring file standards are satisfactory before being passed to the CPS, although there is no case paper accreditation system in place at present. The CJU operates a premium service, in place for PPO cases although not for priority crime cases. The CJU also manages warrants and outstanding warrants have been reduced to 75 and of these only seven are category A. This good work was recognised via a quality service report.

97.   The CJU also incorporates a witness case unit that has had a positive impact on CJU workloads in the main office. Staffing within the unit has also been recently increased to accommodate a rise in demand. The Inspection team tested knowledge of Operation Emerald and found that although staff were aware of targets, the rationale of Operation Emerald had not been explained, causing some frustration and confusion.

98.   PDRs are apparently a cause for concern since none of the staff spoken to have had a review or any discussion in relation to PDR matters. This is also linked to an apparently patchy level of recognition of the good work generated by the CJU elsewhere on the BCU. That said, the unit seemed enthusiastic and diligent, supportive of its line manager and keen to help the BCU continue to improve.

Use of Forensic, DNA and other Scientific Techniques.

99.   The Inspection team conducted an audit of the above issues and the support and guidance provided by the DCI, reactive DI, custody staff, and borough forensic manager (BFM) within Sutton Borough was gratefully received.

100.   Forensic audits were introduced as part of a force or BCU Inspection in January 2002. The audit concentrated on the scientific investigation into volume crime specifically, the use of DNA and fingerprint identifications.

101.   The Government has recently made substantial investment in the forensic potential of DNA and this includes funding for volume crime scene examiners (VCSEs) to undertake DNA and fingerprint examinations in respect of volume crime.

102. The HMIC thematic Inspection report *Under the Microscope* and the follow-up report *Under the Microscope Refocused* made a number of recommendations pertinent to the management of scientific support services at force and BCU levels. In particular, the collection and monitoring of management information and the use of identifications as intelligence were key issues.

103. The aims of the audit are to check the qualitative and quantitative elements of forensic investigation. The qualitative audit tests for the presence of strategies for and/or linkages between the use of forensic investigation and force strategies. The quantitative element of the audit consists of interrogating a sufficiently large sample to enable the Inspection team to make an informed decision on the quality of service provided.

104. The methodology used during this audit included the examination of the systems used at Sutton BCU for the management and recording of the three main areas of forensic activity:

- Retrieval and submission;
- 'Hits' and subsequent investigation; and
- Criminal justice submissions

105. The auditors also examined the procedures to action identifications within the intelligence and crime analysis systems. The audit involved interviews with managers and staff, along with the sampling of DNA, fingerprint and custody records.

Force Overview

106. The total MPS forensic budget for 2004/05 is £70.6m. The MPS recruited 120 VCSEs in 2002/03 under the DNA expansion programme. In addition the Home Office has provided £5.2m for the DNA expansion programme in 2003/04.

107. The MPS uses the services of the Forensic Science Service (FSS). The FSS costs submissions at an hourly rate with no specific price for individual submissions, although there is a price guide. A standard submission costs from £140, but there is also a system of fast tracking where the costs start at £500 and the submission is turned round in three days. The FSS sends out regular updates and guidance notes. Work is underway to produce a price list per submission, but pricing of forensic examination is not straightforward. The cost of a simple request to examine a garment for blood would be determined by the number of stains and any different bloodstains found. Currently, SCD4 scopes the average 'cost' of an investigation at between £1200 and £1500.

108. During 2003/04 the MPS devolved forensic budgets on a number of BCUs down to borough level; at Sutton it is now the responsibility of the BFM.

Retrieval and Submission

109. The retrieval and submission of crime scene and other forensic evidence is managed within Sutton BCU by the BFM. The BFM has been in post since June 2004 and has extensive forensic experience within the MPS. She is fully aware of her budgetary responsibilities and

keeps a running spreadsheet detailing her monthly forensic expenditure against the annual target budget of £236,000. She has recently received training on the new MPS forensic budget management tool 'Forest' which she found useful.

110. Each BFM is responsible for deciding what is submitted to the FSS. Decisions are reached in consultation with the investigating officer, and considerations include cost effectiveness. To ensure control of the submissions the BFM has been issued with a 'forensic validation stamp'.

111. The BFM anticipates that she will be heading for a budget overspend of £36,000. She identified a number of causes for this, including incorrect invoicing by the forensic central command unit.

112. With the anticipated overspend the BFM will need to consider closer links between submission selection and BCU priorities.

113. The BFM informed auditors that she had an establishment figure of nine staff (all posts are filled) as shown below:

- One BFM.
- One temporary senior forensic practitioner.
- One forensic practitioner.
- Six assistant forensic practitioners.

114. Two additional assistant forensic practitioners are due to start in the next few weeks to support the future move to 'sole' reporting.

115. The unit works a shift system, which enables it to provide cover 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. On nightshifts the BCU operates a 'cluster' system covering a number of BCUs in South-East London.

116. The BFM was only recently (November 2004) invited to join the SMT. Although the BFM's line manager is within the forensic command team, there is no clear line of accountability to the BCU senior management. The BFM's objectives are therefore set corporately and are not specifically linked to the objectives of the borough.

117. The BFM attends the monthly management meetings and bi-weekly intelligence and tasking meetings. She attends daily intelligence meetings to contribute intelligence and advice on forensic issues, both in general and with regard to specific crimes. There is no evidence that the BFM is regularly tasked through the NIM structure.

Performance

- The MPS target for BCU domestic burglary forensic interventions is 85%. In the current financial year performance stands at 91% against a force average of 84% (ranked eighth in the MPS).

- The MPS target for BCU autocrime interventions is 10%. In the current financial year performance stands at 22.1% against a force average of 12.4% (ranked fourth in the MPS).
- The MPS target for BCU street crime interventions is 7.5%. In the current financial year the performance stands at 8.2% against a force average of 8.2% (ranked 17th in the MPS).
- The BFM showed a clear commitment to supporting and developing her forensic staff. She delivers training to staff on borough training days.

118. The BCU has one custody site based at Sutton police station. The auditors visited the custody suite and made the following observations:

- About 5,000 custody entries a year.
- Six dedicated custody officers on secondment from response teams covering custody 7am - midnight seven days a week.
- Two to four gaolers per shift provided by the PFI contractor.
- DNA1 samples are stored in a freezer in the fingerprint room.
- A total of 56 DNA1 samples in the freezer, the oldest dating back to only 12 March 2005 (audit conducted 22 March 2005).
- Eight samples were still waiting for arrest/summons numbers to complete the forms.
- There were visible instructions for the completion and storage of DNA1 samples.
- The management of DNA1 samples was good.
- On examination of the DNA2 samples there were 41 samples all dating from March 2005.
- The exhibits fridge in the surgeon's room contained only 12 exhibits dating back to November 2004.
- The management of DNA2 and other forensic samples is excellent.
- There are no effective systems in place for the capture and management of footprint samples from suspects and scenes. The guidelines attached to the footprint ('Bigfoot') folder are four years old.
- Overall, the management of forensic issues within the BCU is good with clear and firm management grip.

DNA and Fingerprint 'Hits'

119. Identified DNA and fingerprint 'hits' are sent through to BCUs from SCD4. MPS guidance recommends that the CMU DI manages the dockets through the CRIS. The policy aims to have the hit allocated and the suspect dealt with or circulated as wanted within seven days. SCD4 staff compile their Home Office returns from the CRIS.

120. At Sutton the proactive DI has overall responsibility for the investigation of forensic identifications. 'Hits' are e-mailed to him personally (copy to BFM) by SCD4. The DI then enters them onto the CRIS and enters the details onto a spreadsheet. Hits are allocated to the officer in the case for action.

121. From discussions with the DI, the following issues were identified:

- The process where e-mails are only sent personally to the DI lacks robustness.
- Although the DI keeps information about individual cases on a spreadsheet, no management information is available for his line manager or the SMT via the MMR.
- The process does not fully incorporate the prioritisation of priority offenders or offences.

122. Over the last 12 months the MPS has undertaken four initiatives under the title of Operation Halifax. These initiatives have been aimed at reducing outstanding warrants and forensic dockets. The BCU did not perform well during Halifax 1, aimed at reducing outstanding warrants, being ranked 32nd (worst) in the MPS.

123. For Halifax 2, aimed at reducing forensic identification dockets, the BCU performed well and reduced its dockets from 59 to 32. However, docket numbers have now increased to 45 and it appears that the performance driven up by Halifax 2 is not being maintained.

Criminal Justice Submissions

124. The recent Operation Halifax 3 was aimed at maximising opportunities to obtain fingerprints and DNA from arrested persons. The BCU has a fingerprint failure rate of 8% (MPS average 7.9%) and a DNA failure rate of 17% (MPS average 14.6%).

125. These figures are published on the forensic command (SCD4) intranet site and BFMs are expected to access the information themselves. SCD4 accepted that this process was not working effectively across the MPS. The BCU BFM was personally aware of this information but it is not shared with other staff.

126. Quality control is shared between BCUs and SCD4, which acts as a final quality control check for DNA samples. Research conducted for a recent policy review and standards inspection found that BCUs which have quality control checks in place and a named individual responsible for the checks achieved lower than average error rates.

127. The internal thematic also highlighted the number of DNA samples unnecessarily taken from persons whose DNA is already confirmed on the PNC.

128. The custody officers were unaware of the failure rate or otherwise of DNA submissions, and had not had sight of any performance figures provided by SCD4.

129. During examination of the 50 custody records, it was apparent that the issue of obtaining a DNA sample was a permanent feature, and that in every custody record examined, samples were either being obtained or had been obtained previously and confirmed on PNC. In addition, new custody monitoring sheets (form 57) were being consistently marked up with DNA sample numbers. Thus, it appears that few DNA1 opportunities are being missed by Sutton BCU.

Intelligence

130.	When a 'hit' arrives on the BCU, it is entered on the spreadsheet system and the record is also passed to the BIU for research to be conducted. Thus, the DI is better able to decide on allocation.

Summary of findings

- The MPS has devolved the annual forensic budget of £236,000, which is heading for an overspend of about £36,000.
- The MPS BCU target for attending burglaries is 85%; Sutton is achieving 91% (ranked eighth in the MPS).
- The MPS BCU target for attending autocrime scenes is 10%; Sutton is achieving 22.1% (ranked fourth in the MPS).
- The MPS BCU target for attending street crime incidents is 7.5%; Sutton is achieving 8.2% (ranked 17th).
- There are effective arrangements for probationer and other staff training by the forensic department within the BCU.
- There is no evidence that the BFM is regularly tasked through the NIM structure.
- There is a fair system in place for identifying, prioritising and tasking forensic 'hits'.
- There is no effective system in place for the capture of shoeprints in the custody suite.
- Sutton BCU is not sustaining the performance improvements generated by Operation Halifax.
- There is no management information to support tasking and strategic decision making around forensic 'hits'.
- There is no shared information on rejected DNA and fingerprint submissions.
- For the 50 custody records examined, DNA was taken or confirmed in 100% of cases.
- The management of DNA1 samples is good.
- The management of DNA2 and other forensic samples is excellent.
- Operation Halifax 3 showed Sutton with a fingerprint failure rate of 8% (MPS average 7.9%) and a DNA failure rate of 17% (MPS average 14.6%).

Managing Demand

Sutton BCU 'I Call' performance for 2004/05					
Total CAD Calls	Total 'I' Calls	% 'I' Calls from Total Calls	Target response time (mins)	'I' Calls within Target	% 'I' Calls within Target
51961	11368	21.9%	12	8263	72.7%

131.	The MPS target is 80% within 12 minutes. The BCU operates five response teams working in a bespoke pattern that is very popular with officers deployed onto core team duties. The pattern ensures that there are overlap periods in 24-hour periods at times of peak demand and shifts are between nine and ten hours long. Increasing demand generated by a growth in the night-time economy in the town centre (analysis reveals that the BCU fails to reach its 'I' call targets predominantly at peak periods on Friday and Saturday evenings) has prompted a review of the shift pattern. This is part of a wider 'critical review' conducted by the BCU in

an effort to identify current and future demand trends and begin to orient resources accordingly. **The Inspection team suggests that in view of the popularity of the current shift pattern, extensive consultation with core team staff will be necessary.**

132.   Other issues identified by the BCU critical review, an internal self-assessment process that the Inspection team acknowledges as good practice, include: modernising probationer training and deployment; CID working practices; increasing partnership activity in the town centre; income generation; tasking and briefing; and IBO and Metcall implementation. The Inspection team was pleased to note that many of the issues identified by the BCU have also been identified during the Inspection process, indicating awareness of demand management issues. It is also fair to say that consequent planning is at an early stage and that the BCU does not yet have an overall demand management strategy.

133.   There are also a number of existing initiatives focused on demand management as follows:

- Good use of PCSOs and SNTs and an emphasis on problem solving to achieve long-term solutions rather than quick fixes.
- There is a TIB, currently taking on approximately 34% of crime investigation and open between 8am – 8pm Monday to Sunday.
- There is an efficient CPU, tasked with taking on core team prisoners and other prisoners, freeing officers for patrol.
- There is a permanent custody officer team, supported by civilian assistants, providing expertise and experience in prisoner management.
- The PRU maintains excellent media and public relations which ensure that positive and reassuring messages are consistently disseminated to the local community, via press briefings and other communication techniques, including use of the internet through upgrading the BCU website.
- There are minimum standards in place for crime investigation, although as stated there is evidence that core team officers are not complying and that robust supervision at sergeant level is required to ensure compliance. **The Inspection team suggests that improved training and introducing supervision performance indicators, together with a formalised feedback process, should assist in addressing this weakness.**
- The schools unit is well staffed with six officers and interacting well with local schools and communities. There is perhaps an over-emphasis on classroom input and potentially greater scope for increasing policing activity, which the BCU may wish to adjust.
- There is a 'smart water officer' focused on target hardening potential burglary victims.
- There is a 'people' management forum (the resource management meeting) whereby cross-BCU staff deployments are considered, ensuring skills are distributed according to need. The Inspection team, however, found some confusion as to whether all BCU staff movements were controlled via this forum, with evidence that some staff felt that their skills were not deployed to best effect in the CID particularly and others under the impression that only core team deployments went through the forum. Therefore, there needs to be a clarity around the terms of reference for the meeting and greater openness of process.

134. The BCU does not operatea safe crewing policy or patrol strategy and when the Inspection team tested this with core team representatives, the response was that Sutton BCU was not 'safe' enough to permit single crewing or 'solo' patrol. Probationers on the street duties course are also not taught to patrol independently. There seems to be a culture whereby a default position is to 'double up' when employed on core team work. The Inspection team is concerned by this since the core teams protest they are overworked, yet do not make best use of resources due to the somewhat exaggerated risk involved in single patrol either on foot or in vehicles. This seems to indicate a lack of confidence by leaders to single crew, by officers to be willing to work independently on the street (characterised by a reluctance to engage with the public unless paired up) and in control rooms when making deployment decisions. The Inspection team acknowledges that this is a matter that is not peculiar to Sutton BCU and maybe part of a wider organisational culture. However, the team is of the view that because of the youthful service profile of core team staff and the resilience issues pertinent to a smaller and 'outer' BCU, it is having a more pernicious effect on staff development that needs to be addressed directly at constable level through training. Primarily, though, the responsibility for allowing such an attitude to become embedded lies with the SMT and operational leaders at sergeant and inspector level, wherein the leadership responsibility rests. The Inspection team is aware that the BCU is about to invest in a leadership training programme for sergeants and agrees that this is the right forum in which to address this issue.

135. The biggest challenge for the BCU in terms of demand management is the impending implementation of the IBO unit as part of the MPS roll-out of the C3i programme. Twelve members of the BCU's current staff in its command and control unit, based at Epsom, are required to transfer to a Metcall centre based at Lambeth. The BCU also has to create four teams of one sergeant and four band E police staff members respectively to staff the IBO from zero growth. There are very real difficulties to be overcome, not least in transferring staff who are unwilling to take up the new positions and creating a new team of 20 individuals with all the requisite training and skills. This may involve compulsory redeployment of staff with the appropriate skills into the IBO from a workforce where skill and experience are at a premium. Superintendent operations has responsibility for leading a project group charged with managing the staff issues as well as the creation and implementation of the IBO unit itself.

136. The Inspection team found deep concern generally among staff as to the full implications of the IBO unit for BCU resilience and impact on core teams particularly. In spite of the existence of a project plan, there appeared to be little or no information as to BCU plans promulgated to staff, with a great deal of rumour and speculation consequently circulating causing uncertainty and anxiety. There is an intention to brief staff as soon as more is known of organisational deadlines and priorities, although such information has not apparently been forthcoming with any clarity or regularity. C3i project members have also attended the BCU and spoken to staff potentially directly involved, although this did not reassure staff but appears to have caused more angst.

137. The Inspection team is of the opinion that the implications for the BCU are potentially grave in terms of staff morale, resilience, skills balance, potential employment tribunals and cost implications. The last derives from the possibility of insufficient staff with skills being

available for redeployment without undue adverse impact on existing operational capability, with the consequence that the BCU will be forced to recruit over its workforce target. This will potentially create a serious overspend against its budget (already estimated at around £600,000). The Inspection team considers that the implications and organisational risk are critical and recommends that the matter should be managed as an organisational critical incident with a project team assuming gold group status. A policy log should be created documenting decisions and actions in relation particularly to staff consultation and communications, HR management, consideration of appropriate and risk assessed options, financial management and the involvement and engagement with staff associations. Thus, the process will assume openness and transparency, enable the BCU to create an audit trail of decision making as well as ensure that the matter is given prominence and focus among staff either charged with responsibility or directly involved in the implementation.

RECOMMENDATION 4
The Inspection team considers that the implications and organisational risk of the IBO unit are critical and it is recommended that the matter should be managed as an organisational critical incident with a project team assuming gold group status. A policy log should be created documenting decisions and actions in relation particularly to staff consultation and communications, HR management, consideration of appropriately risk assessed options, financial management and the involvement and engagement with staff associations. Thus, the process will assume openness and transparency, enable the BCU to create an audit trail of decision making as well as ensure that the matter is given prominence and focus among staff either with responsibility for discharging actions or directly involved.

138. In relation to overall demand management, in a policing context this relates to handling calls and requests for assistance from the public, making the most of all police/public interactions and recognising that internal users and ineffective systems add to the demand burden. Elements of the police reform agenda, including the drive for greater public access and reassurance, are also directly linked to demand management. The Inspection team found considerable effort being made by the BCU to create more efficient customer focused ways of working. The Inspection team recognises that the BCU has begun to understand and manage demand but considers that all such initiatives should be integrated into an overall strategy that defines function and contribution to BCU performance and is subjected to a performance management regime that enables accurate assessment of contribution. The Inspection team recommends that the BCU creates an integrated demand management strategy with explicit ownership at SLT level. The strategy should be underpinned by detailed action plans, have clear accountabilities and be supported by an evaluation process enabling accurate assessment

to be made of the impact of demand management initiatives as well as ensuring that there is a co-ordinated impact on the work of the BCU.

RECOMMENDATION 5
It is recommended that the BCU creates an integrated demand management strategy with defined ownership at SLT level. The strategy should be underpinned by detailed action plans, have clear accountabilities and be supported by an evaluation process enabling accurate assessment to be made of the impact of demand management initiatives as well as ensuring that there is a co-ordinated impact on the work of the BCU.

Leadership

Does the BCU management team demonstrate effective leadership?

139. The BCM has recently been appointed, having served as the superintendent operations for the previous two years. Superintendent partnership has also served on the BCU before selection for the head of partnership role. The rest of the SMT are new to their roles on the BCU and have varying levels of skills and experience.

140. The Inspection team found that the BCM has a clear vision of a policing style that is citizen focused and strongly community and partnership orientated. The SMT is in accord with this vision and views itself as progressive and keen to develop a strong team, providing firm and positive leadership for the BCU and building a 'Team Sutton' philosophy.

141. The SLT has an excellent strategic capability and the Inspection team acknowledges the sophistication of the strategy creation and planning process. However, the issues that the Inspection team has highlighted in relation to performance, NIM and intelligence management and IBO implementation in particular indicate that the SMT needs to work on converting strategy into action and developing the ability to exercise grip at a tactical level, if the SLT strategic vision is to develop into operational reality.

142. The Inspection team tested the impact of the SMT among staff and found that the BCM has a firm base of support and approbation as has superintendent partnership among BCU staff, deriving from their previous experience on the BCU. While the team acknowledges that the SMT is relatively new, other members have as yet a lower profile. The BCM is keen to encourage them to engage with staff across the BCU and make themselves familiar with all aspects of BCU business as well as their own portfolios. Favourable feedback was received by the Inspection team as to the approachability and visibility of most of the SMT to members of their own staff, although in the CID and on core teams there is work to be done. Outside individual portfolios, the rest of the SMT also need to invest time in raising profiles across the whole BCU.

143. The Inspection team also found when questioning staff in interviews and focus groups that there is confusion as to the policing style of the BCU among operational and CID staff in particular. This is also linked to a general lack of awareness of both performance matters and of an accountability structure whereby staff are focused on and motivated to contribute to BCU achievement. Inspectors and sergeants report feelings of disengagement from senior leadership and state that they have limited engagement or involvement with senior managers and decision making in relation to BCU direction and focus. The SMT is aware of the issue and is investing time and opportunities to enable inspectors to participate through an 'away day'. The SMT is also developing a leadership programme for sergeants in order to ensure that this key rank is also fully engaged and supportive of the BCM's leadership vision.

144. The Inspection team is supportive of the above approach but also considers that there needs to be greater inclusion of and regular access by inspectors and sergeants into SMT debate and consequent decision making. There is no official meeting structure whereby the SLT engages with all the inspecting ranks. Further, there also needs to be a range of communication

techniques for engaging with BCU staff, enabling them to express views and obtain access to information, since as indicated elsewhere in the report some staff feel disenfranchised and disengaged. That said, feedback from the staff associations indicates that a relationship is beginning to develop between this important group and senior managers by virtue of a recently introduced formal meeting system. This commitment is clearly bearing fruit in terms of encouraging the 'Team Sutton' philosophy to take root. Therefore, the Inspection team recommends that the BCU creates a communications strategy that explicitly defines the BCU policing and leadership style and has clear linkage to performance and accountability. The strategy should be focused on engaging junior colleagues, enabling participation and input by junior leaders and managers into BCU strategic decision making and encouraging senior leaders and managers to become visible with purpose[7].

RECOMMENDATION 6
It is recommended that the BCU creates a communications strategy that explicitly defines its policing and leadership style and has clear linkage to performance and accountability. The strategy should be focused on engaging junior colleagues, enabling participation and input by junior leaders and managers into BCU strategic decision making and encouraging senior leaders and managers to become visible with purpose.

Self-review and Learning

145. The BCU has a system for ensuring that good work by staff is acknowledged and appropriately rewarded based on the submission of quality service reports (QSRs) to line managers which are then considered by the SMT. The Inspection team found evidence of both the QSR system and bonus payments being used to reward staff, although there existed confusion between the two processes with staff unsure as to the parameters of either. **The Inspection team suggests that the SMT may wish to combine both systems using one to complement the other. Further, the team suggests that staff involvement in the decision making process by using a quality of service panel or staff association representation during deliberations may be beneficial, making the process open and transparent, involving staff in the process and introducing a measure of peer assessment.**

146. The Inspection team was pleased to note that the performance review team has a cyclical programme of inspection, reviewing critical processes such as missing person investigations and PACE stop/search activity. However, follow-up processes appear to lack robustness and the Inspection team could find no evidence of improvement plans, review processes or management information being fed back to line managers either highlighting good or poor practice. There seems limited value to be accrued from such an inspection regime unless it is

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[7] ie, adding value through a variety of consistent interfaces with junior colleagues, whereby opportunities to drive home BCU values, priorities and achievements are maximised.

supported by a rigorous follow-up process and the SLT may wish to review the current process bearing this aspect in mind.

147.   The BCU does not appear to practise debriefing and senior managers when questioned did not routinely review incident logs relating to critical incidents or conduct post-incident reviews. The Inspection team is of the opinion that again given the youthful service profile of BCU staff, the above practice would be beneficial and encourage organisational learning as well as identifying good practice and highlighting poor performance. Debriefing is also an integral part of performance management, generating opportunities to review work in a constructive environment as well as promoting continuous improvement. The BCU training unit would be potentially best placed to provide the facilitative expertise required and again the process would provide opportunities for 'visibility with purpose' for senior leaders.

148.   The BCU is actively pursuing opportunities to develop organisational learning and is keen to encourage continuous improvement as well as increase competence among its staff and sergeants in particular. The leadership development programme for sergeants, as well as the inspectors' 'away days' and the provision of executive coaching for some staff, are examples of the type of substantial investment the BCU is willing to make in order to foster a learning environment. The Inspection team looks forward to seeing the results of the leadership programme in particular. The critical review recently conducted is also another example of seeking to learn as is the diversity training programme using a theatre workshop group that the BCU delivered to staff and partners last year.

HR Issues

149.   The BCU has a borough business manager (BBM) who is a member of the SMT and who leads on HR issues, resource and financial management as well as overseeing the performance review team. The BBM also has responsibility for the implementation of corporate policy at a strategic level. The BBM is supported by a finance and resources manager, an HR manager and a performance review manager.

150.   The BCU staff complement is as follows: 303 (BWT 295) police officers and 70 (BWT 66) police staff and 29 PCSOs (BWT 36).

151.   The BCU personnel department is based at Sutton police station and is managed by two personnel managers who operate a job share. The department has the following staff:

- Administration unit: one band D, two band Es, two part-time band Es.
- Training unit: one band D, one part-time band E.
- Street duties team: one PS, two PCs, plus two unfilled PC posts.

152.   The two personnel managers have 18 years and 22 years service respectively with the MPS. They are both professionally qualified. The job share works very effectively with one manager working Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday and the other Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. The handover day on Wednesday is important to the effectiveness of the process.

Management of PDRs

153. The MPS recently reviewed the procedure for the completion and submission of PDRs. As of April 2004, in relation to all PDRs whether for a police officer or a member of the police staff, there are now set timescales for completion culminating in the deadline, 31 March each year. The key PDR milestones are set out below:

- By April 2004 new PDR forms opened.
- By 31 June 2004 SMART objectives to be set.
- By 30 September 2004 six-month performance review to be completed.
- By April 2005 annual review to be completed.

154. All PDRs must also comply with the SMART formula:

S – Specific – clearly stated and precise.
M – Measurable – objectives are measurable, benchmarked and progress/results can be recognised as positive achievements.
A – Achievable - objectives are challenging but not impossible.
R – Realistic – objectives are manageable in terms of content and number.
T – Timed – agreed and set timescale to focus on objectives.

155. The audit identified several difficulties, not peculiar to Sutton BCU, in implementing the new system as follows:

- The timelines of the availability of corporate PDR forms.
- The timelines and lack of central guidance to support the process.
- The availability of training for staff in the new process.
- The corporate communication and marketing of the new process.

156. The personnel managers lead on the PDR process with the support of the administration unit. Although there has been some activity on PDRs it is clear that at Sutton objectives were not set until autumn 2004; as a result, there have been no six-monthly reviews.

157. The MMR contains no effective management information relating to PDRs. The personnel unit worked hard to complete the initial objective setting last autumn. However, there is little evidence that the new PDR system is embedded into the BCU culture and no evidence it is linked into NIM or performance management processes within the BCU.

158. The personnel managers stated that the issues of concern had been identified and highlighted to the SMT and there is evidence of SMT support for the PDR process beyond the personnel department. However, there is no clear plan for resolving the situation and the Inspection team is concerned that the PDR process will remain ineffective until the SMT takes control of the situation.

PDR Inspection Findings

159. Prior to the Inspection, the Inspection team requested a sample of PDRs from a variety of ranks and departments including a number of support staff. In total, 50 completed PDRs were presented for examination selected as follows:

- Ten police staff.
- One DI.
- Four inspectors.
- Four DSs.
- Four DCs.
- Two T/DCs.
- Five PSs.
- Ten PCs.
- Ten Probationers.

Probationer PDRs

- Probationers PDRs were completed on old style forms (last year's reports).
- One had not been signed by the probationer; another had no signature and date on the sergeant's comments and lacked comments from the inspector; a third one (confirmation report) had not been completed until five months after the end of the reporting period.
- However, generally, the probationer PDRs were thorough, well evidenced and timely. They contained objectives and personal development plans.

Other PDRs

- Other PDRs were all on the new style form.
- All contained SMART objectives linked to the borough policing plan and objectives.
- Some 39 were opened in August/September 2004 due to the late availability of the new form; 11 were undated.
- As a result, no six-month reviews had been carried out.

Probationers

160. The percentage of probationers on front-line duties within the BCU stood at 65% at the time of the audit. The probationer reports examined by the Inspection team were of a higher standard than other reports inspected, indicating more effective quality control. The Inspection team noted that management information on the completion of probationary PDRs is available and that it is included in the BCU MMR. The Inspection team is unable to obtain an explanation as to why only probationer reports are monitored in this way. Probationer training is managed by a dedicated sergeant and team of street duty instructors. The street duties course is currently being reviewed as is current probationer deployment practice in an effort to update and modernise probation development and introduce probationer constables to all aspects of police work.

Sickness Monitoring

	Sutton BCU figures year to date	Sutton BCU figures 2003/04	Year to date MPS ranking	MPS Sickness targets
Police officers	7.6	8.4	16th	9
Police staff	10.9	7.0	24th	10
PCSOs	8.5	Not available	13th	11

(most recent data – Feb 2005)

161. Sickness policy management is led by the personnel managers and the BCU adheres to the corporate absence management policy. There is evidence that the personnel managers have a good level of understanding in this area; for example, they have recently noted a trend with increased PCSO sickness and conducted research into this area to identify the causes and take corrective action.

162. The BCU is currently within MPS targets for sickness reduction for police officers. Police staff sickness levels are giving cause for concern, since although the BCU reduced sickness levels last financial year, the police staff rate has increased. However, the trend is attributable to long-term sickness and the Inspection team found ample evidence that the BCU is proactive in managing attendance and that the personnel managers are well supported by members of the SMT.

163. The resource management meeting is responsible for allocating officers returning from absence to appropriate employment within the BCU. A member of the SMT chairs the meeting and focuses on facilitating a swift return to operational duties as well as seeking to maintain skill levels. The forum manages officers on recuperative duties in a proactive yet sensitive way, ensuring a meaningful contribution to the BCU, and the Inspection team acknowledges this as good practice.

Overall findings

- 100% of PDRs examined had objectives set.
- The quality of most PDRs is fair.
- The quality of probationer PDRs is good.
- There is no embedded system for monitoring the completion of PDRs.
- There is no effective management information available to the BCU on PDRs.
- There are corporate issues that are affecting Sutton's capability to deliver the new MPS PDR system.
- Absence is proactively managed with good management information and linked to the BCU workforce planning meeting.

164. Training provision on the BCU is limited to mandatory training, such as self defence, first aid and probationer street duties. There is a training day rostered into the shift pattern for core team officers but this has not regularly been utilised, with training opportunities cancelled due to abstraction or non-attendance. Staff identified various training needs to the Inspection team and the team is of the opinion that the following are a priority: basic crime investigation and

supervision, the PATP process, intelligence management and the NIM. **The Inspection team suggests that the BCU conducts a training needs analysis using the expertise available within the training unit, although it is evident that the unit will need to be augmented in order to expand current training provision any further.**

165.   There is an active health and safety forum, chaired by the BCM, showing commitment and awareness of the importance of creating and maintaining a 'safe' working environment.

Diversity Issues

166.   The BCU does not have a diversity strategy at present; it is in the process of being rewritten by the BBM. The BCM is committed to effectively managing diversity and considers that diversity awareness is a fundamental element of both provision of a quality service to the community as well as creating a thriving workplace environment for BCU staff. The Inspection team found evidence of the BCM's personal interest in managing diversity and hands on approach to dealing with diversity matters. The team was pleased to note that the diversity strategy is being updated at his behest in acknowledgement of the implications of both the Race Relations Amendment and Disability Acts, with good examples of workplace assessments and alterations occurring in order to accommodate staff with disability needs. That said female and visible ethnic minority (VEM) staff representation data was not readily available, and the HR manager was unable to be specific as to distribution across the ranks. However, when the data was forthcoming the Inspection team noted that the BCU has a healthy female representation and a VEM representation at all ranks that also reflects its community.

167.   The BCU does not have a full independent advisory group capability as yet, although again developing this will be a priority under the new strategy and the Inspection team looks forward to progress.

168.   The Inspection team was also pleased to note that a significant number of staff had taken advantage of flexible and part-time working arrangements. That said, the Inspection team could find little evidence of BCU policy and guidelines in relation to advising staff on the organisational requirements in relation to accessing such arrangements or to staff responsible for managing staff working on a flexible or part-time basis. The HR section seems to rely on staff self-briefing using the internet, which is a useful source of information up to a point. However, the Inspection team would expect to find clear and explicit guidelines for BCU staff managing colleagues working flexibly or part-time since the legal obligations and responsibilities are significant and can be complex. The Inspection team found several examples of staff who were experiencing difficulties with line managers who apparently were not fully aware of their responsibilities towards staff working or applying to work flexibly. The Inspection team referred these matters to the BCM for resolution, but **strongly suggests that such guidance should be prepared and included as part of the overall diversity strategy.** Benefits will include creating a corporate memory for reference and the ability to audit trail decision making, as well as providing clear direction for staff as to their responsibilities and obligations when managing colleagues working in this way.

169.   The BCU has a published fairness at work policy and currently has one such matter outstanding. Staff associations are engaged fully in fairness at work processes and such matters are discussed during regular meetings held between the SLT and the Police Federation and unions. The BCU also reviews complaints from the public and uses trend data to make early interventions where potential issues become apparent.

170.   The Inspection team considers that that SMT is genuinely committed to effectively managing diversity and is making efforts to ensure that diversity becomes embedded as a culture of tolerance and inclusion. The SMT has previously committed a substantial level of investment in training and is open to suggestion and actively seeking to develop its diversity agenda.

Financial Management

171.   The BCU budget of £15,498,637.71[8] has been fully devolved since April 2004 and is forecast to come in £41,000 within budget. The SMT agrees and sets financial targets for each financial year and monitoring is carried out via a standing agenda item at every SMT meeting. The MPS holds the BBM clearly to account and there are regular formal and informal meetings with the MPS head of profession as well as the BCM where financial matters are discussed and reviewed. The BCU is not required to make formal efficiency savings since the budget is top sliced by 2% and savings are generated corporately. The BBM has set clear roles and responsibilities for the finance and resources manager and the HR manager and meets regularly with these individuals, facilitating consistency of management and seeking to ensure that all BCU resources are utilised to best contribute to BCU operational efficiency. To this end, the BBM is introducing management information focused on maximising all BCU resources to ensure full contribution to performance.

172.   The BBM is seeking to enhance income generation and together with the SLT has facilitated the recruitment of a 'partnership' finance and resources manager. The new finance and resources manager will be tasked with creating financial growth through identifying and accessing available funding streams, maximising financial potential from BCU assets and services as well as increasing sponsorship opportunities. The post is entrepreneurial in nature and in fact, it is anticipated that the postholder will be self funding. The Inspection team acknowledges the creation of the new post as potential good practice and looks forward with interest to developments.

173.   Elsewhere on the BCU, awareness of financial matters is variable with a fluctuating level of commitment to overtime management. Inspectors and sergeants spoken to by the Inspection team provided little evidence of being held consistently to account for overtime expenditure, although senior managers were all aware of budget targets. Overtime information is contained in the MMR but is not apparently used as an indicator of performance by inspecting ranks. The SMT, however, regularly reviews high earners with a view to monitoring staff welfare as well as ensuring that the BCU gets a good return for its investment.

174.   BCU financial matters are generally well managed with a proactive attitude in terms of forward planning expenditure. For example, SNT funding has been projected until 2007/08

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[8] Source: BCU Budget Full Year Report.

and duly planned into future budgets, as has expenditure for the IBO. In relation to the latter, the BCU is already preparing a business case justifying the identified overspend. The introduction of the partnership finance and resources manager is another example of this proactivity, as is the use of the BCU fund that will be utilised mainly in support of partnership initiatives and activity.

Conclusions and Recommendations

175. Sutton is a small BCU that is performing well and punching above its weight in terms of both MPS performance and its MSBCU group. This is an enviable position in which the BCU may justifiably take pride. The achievement is undoubtedly attributable to long-term, mature and committed partnership working as well as dedicated staff and progressive leadership. The challenge for the new SMT is to develop into a cohesive and capable team that will provide the leadership and drive necessary to sustain and improve on current performance – a formidable test.

176. Other significant challenges facing the BCU include the implementation of the IBO from a position of zero growth as well as managing the staff issues, the development and growth of the town centre economy and the continued roll-out of the SNTs, all of which will demand skill and competence in order to achieve successful outcomes.

177. The Inspection team found many positive aspects to the way the BCU conducts business and serves the people of Sutton. As previously mentioned the partnership is a huge strength, as is the SLT's strategic capability and corresponding forward thinking and progressive, open attitude. There are many new initiatives that the new team has created and implemented as necessary to meet the above challenges as a result of its own critical review process. The Inspection team has also identified some of these issues as necessary to keep the BCU on track and is reassured that the Inspection findings accord with the BCU critical review. It is clear that the SMT is developing a clear sense of direction and purpose and has the necessary insight and determination to strive for continuous improvement.

178. The identification of critical success factors is not easy and it is fair to say that there is no single enabler that will alone guarantee success. It is with this in mind that the Inspection team has formed several recommendations that together with various suggestions that the SMT may wish to consider, should assist the BCU to achieve its objectives.

Recommendations

179. It is recommended that:

i. The BCU develops a clear model of BCU performance management that is applied consistently across all ranks and grades. The model should be documented and leaders and managers given specific areas of responsibility, performance targets, milestones and accountability/review processes, so that the aims and objectives of the BCU are clear to staff with management and leadership responsibilities and within which accountability processes are defined and unambiguous.

(paragraph 49)

ii. The NIM implementation is reviewed against current BCU practice, ensuring that there is a robust strategic tasking and co-ordination process that generates a relevant strategic assessment and corresponding control strategy. This should be underpinned by a consistent and robust review process at SLT level that consequently drives all BCU proactivity. It is also recommended that the BIU structure and leadership are reviewed, ensuring that it is able to

effectively service strategic assessment and control strategy requirements. This will ensure that the BIU assumes a central position in terms of managing and disseminating all intelligence and provides linkage and co-ordination of all activity across the range of BCU business.

(paragraph 83)

iii.   The BCU continues to implement its NCRS compliance action plan in support of MPS work to achieve a green assessment from the Audit Commission.

(paragraph 91)

iv.   The implications and organisational risk of the IBO unit are critical and it is recommended that the matter should be managed as an organisational critical incident with a project team assuming gold group status. A policy log should be created documenting decisions and actions in relation particularly to staff consultation and communications, HR management, consideration of appropriately risk assessed options, financial management and the involvement and engagement with staff associations. Thus, the process will assume openness and transparency, enable the BCU to create an audit trail of decision making as well as ensure that the matter is given prominence and focus among staff either with responsibility for discharging actions or directly involved.

(paragraph 137)

v.   The BCU creates an integrated demand management strategy with defined ownership at SLT level. The strategy should be underpinned by detailed action plans, have clear accountabilities and be supported by an evaluation process enabling accurate assessment to be made of the impact of demand management initiatives as well as ensuring that there is a co-ordinated impact on the work of the BCU.

(paragraph 138)

vi.   The BCU creates a communications strategy that explicitly defines its policing and leadership style and has clear linkage to performance and accountability. The strategy should be focused on engaging junior colleagues, enabling participation and input by junior leaders and managers into BCU strategic decision making and encouraging senior leaders and managers to become visible with purpose.

(paragraph 144)

Areas of Potential Good Practice

180.   The Inspection team acknowledges the following areas of potential good practice:

- The integrated plan concept (paragraph 19).
- The fast tracking of PPOs into drug treatment and rehabilitation programmes (paragraph 78).
- The critical review, an internal self-assessment process (paragraph 132).
- The finance and resources manager partnership role (paragraph 160).
- The management of officers on recuperative duties (paragraph 163).

Items for Management Consideration

181.   Items identified by the Inspection team for management consideration are highlighted in **bold** throughout the report.