



## Northamptonshire Police

### Baseline Assessment

October 2006



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### **Appendix 1 Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations**

## Introduction to Baseline Assessment

Since March 2004, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) has conducted a periodic, strategic-level performance review of each Home Office police force in England and Wales. For a range of policing activities, forces are assessed as delivering performance that is Excellent, Good, Fair or Poor. The process is known as baseline assessment (BA) and this report covers the assessment for the financial year 2005/06; performance outside this period is not taken into account in determining grades. The assessments focus on the high-level processes of police forces and their results. The assessments are undertaken by regional HM Inspectors, supported by experienced police officers and police staff on secondment.

BA is designed primarily as a self-assessment, with the degree of validation/reality-checking undertaken by HMIC dependent on a force's overall performance and the rigour of its internal assessment processes. It is important to recognise that BA is not a traditional inspection; rather, it helps HMIC focus its inspection effort where it is most needed. A formal statutory inspection may still be necessary where there is evidence of systemic underperformance and poor leadership.

In addition to the qualitative assessments contained in this report, force performance is also measured by a series of key quantitative indicators. The most important indicators are statutory performance indicators (SPIs), which are determined each year by the Home Secretary and which Police Authorities/forces must report to the Home Office. Examples of SPIs include crime incidence and detection rates, as well as relevant management information such as sickness absence and ethnic recruitment rates. Results for these SPIs are also graded using the Excellent, Good, Fair and Poor categories. These SPI grades are added to HMIC BA grades to provide a fuller picture of police performance; the joint results are published annually in October and can be found on the internet at [police.homeoffice.gov.uk/performance](http://police.homeoffice.gov.uk/performance)

Policing has undergone significant changes in recent years as the country adapts to new forms of terrorism and criminality. As policing is dynamic, so also must be the form of assessment. Dominating much of HMIC's recent thinking is the need for the service to modernise its workforce while providing better 'protective services', as identified in the *Closing the Gap* report published in 2005. On-site activity for the 2005/06 baseline concentrated on these areas, but could not – given ministerial priorities – ignore volume crime and the roll-out of neighbourhood policing. As forces and Police Authorities consider options for change to meet new challenges with constrained resources, a force-by-force balance sheet of strengths and areas for improvement is critical contextual information.

### Priority Frameworks

Seven BA areas were designated as priority frameworks for on-site validation, to reflect the need to improve protective services and deliver key policing objectives. These were:

- managing critical incidents and major crime;
- tackling serious and organised criminality;
- providing specialist operational support;
- strategic roads policing;
- protecting vulnerable people;
- neighbourhood policing; and

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- leadership and direction.

These areas were the key focus of on-site validation by HMIC staff; the first five can be loosely classified as protective services. Other frameworks were assessed primarily by desk-top reviews of the evidence submitted by forces, using the framework key issues and specific grading criteria (SGC) as an indicative guide.

### **Force Amalgamations**

Following the challenges highlighted with regard to protective services capability and capacity in the summer of 2005, all forces undertook significant additional work on options to 'close the gap'. The Home Secretary directed that business cases should be prepared and submitted by December 2005. The BA report thus reflects, in many of the frameworks, activity and effort to produce and assess options for change. It is vital to acknowledge the energy and commitment given to the prospect of a major restructuring of the service, which inevitably gave rise to some turbulence during this period.

At the end of July 2006, the Home Secretary indicated that the restructuring of forces would not be pursued at this time. The agenda to improve protective services is to be advanced by forces and Police Authorities through alternative means such as collaboration. Progress to 'narrow the gap' between existing capability and that which is needed will be assessed by HMIC in future inspection activity.

### **The Grading Process**

Forces have been graded for both service delivery and direction of travel. It is important to remember that, for most activities, delivery is measured through the use of most similar force (MSF) groups, whereby forces are compared with peers facing similar policing challenges. For direction of travel, the grade is awarded largely in respect of the force's own previous performance. A vital component of the grading process is SGC, which outlines, for each activity, what represents Excellent, Good, Fair and Poor levels of performance. The criteria were developed in conjunction with expert practitioners and Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) business/portfolio leads, who were also involved in the national moderation process to help ensure that these criteria were applied fairly and consistently.

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### **Service delivery grade**

This grade is a reflection of the performance delivery by the force over the assessment period 1 April 2005 to 31 March 2006. One of four grades can be awarded, according to performance assessed against the SGC (see full list of SGCs at <http://inspectrates.homeoffice.gov.uk/hmic/methodologies/baseline-introduction/ba-methodology-06/?version=1>).

#### *Excellent*

This grade describes the highest level of performance in service delivery – eg top quartile, where relevant – and achieving full compliance with codes of practice or national guidance. It is expected that few forces will achieve this very high standard for a given activity. To achieve Excellent, forces are expected to have attained **all** the criteria set out in Fair and the vast majority of those set out in Good. In addition, two other factors will attract an Excellent grade:

- The force should be recognised, or be able to act, as a ‘beacon’ to others, and be accepted within the service as a source of leading-edge practice. Examples where other forces have successfully imported practices would be good evidence of this.
- HMIC is committed to supporting innovative forces and we would expect Excellent forces to have introduced and evaluated new ways of improving performance.

#### *Good*

Good is defined in the Collins dictionary as ‘of a high quality or level’ and denotes performance above the norm – in many cases, performance that is above the MSF average. To reach this standard, forces have to meet in full the criteria set out in Fair and most of the criteria set out in Good.

#### *Fair*

Fair is the delivery of an acceptable level of service. To achieve a Fair grading, forces must achieve all of the significant criteria set out in the Fair SGC. HMIC would expect that, across most activities, the largest number of grades would be awarded at this level.

#### *Poor*

Poor represents an unacceptable level of service. To attract this very critical grade, a force must have fallen well short of a significant number of criteria set out in the SGC for Fair. In some cases, failure to achieve a single critical criterion may alone warrant a Poor grade. Such dominant criteria will always be flagged in the SGC.

### **Direction of Travel Grade**

This grade is a reflection of the force’s change in performance between the assessment period and the previous year. For BA 2006, this is the change between the financial years 2004/05 and 2005/06. The potential grades for direction of travel are as follows.

#### *Improved*

This reflects a **significant** improvement in the performance of the force.

#### *Stable*

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This denotes no significant change in performance.

*Declined*

This is where there has been a significant decline in the performance of the force.

**Good Practice**

In addition to assessing force performance, one of HMIC's key roles is to identify and share good practice within the police service. Much good practice is identified as HMIC conducts its assessments; in addition, each force is given the opportunity to submit examples of its good practice. HMIC has selected three of these examples to publish in this report. The key criteria for each example is that the work has been evaluated by the force and is easily transferable to other forces. (Each force has provided a contact name and telephone number, should further information be required.) HMIC has not conducted any independent evaluation of the examples of good practice provided.

**Future HMIC Inspection Activity**

Although HMIC must continue to maintain a watching brief on all performance areas, it will become more risk-driven in its future inspection activity. Protective services will be the core of inspection programmes, tailored to capacity, capability and the likelihood of exposure to threats from organised criminality, terrorism and so on. Until its full implementation in April 2008, neighbourhood policing will also demand attention. Conversely, those areas where strong performance is signalled by SPI results, such as volume crime reduction and investigation, will receive relatively little scrutiny.

The Government has announced that, in real terms, there will be little or no growth in Police Authority/force budgets over the next three years. Forces will therefore have to maintain, and in some areas improve, performance without additional resources. This in itself creates a risk to police delivery and HMIC has therefore included a strategic financial assessment for all forces in its future inspection programme.

<b>Baseline Assessment 2006 Frameworks</b>			
<b>1 Citizen Focus (PPAF Domain A)</b>			
<b>1A Fairness and Equality in Service Delivery</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Equality of service delivery</li> <li>• Community cohesion</li> <li>• Engaging with minority groups</li> <li>• Hate-crime reduction and investigation</li> </ul>	<b>1B Neighbourhood Policing and Problem Solving</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effective mechanisms for obtaining community views</li> <li>• Responding to local priorities</li> <li>• Effective interventions and problem solving with partners and communities</li> <li>• Operational activity to reassure communities</li> <li>• Use of media to market success</li> <li>• Uniformed patrol and visibility</li> <li>• Extended police family</li> <li>• Performance in reducing fear of crime</li> </ul>	<b>1C Customer Service and Accessibility</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quality of service to victims and witnesses</li> <li>• Customer care</li> <li>• Responding to customer needs</li> <li>• Accessibility of policing services</li> </ul>	<b>1D Professional Standards</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Investigation of public complaints</li> <li>• Improving professional standards</li> <li>• Combating corruption and promoting ethical behaviour</li> <li>• Reducing complaints and learning lessons</li> </ul>
<b>2 Reducing Crime (PPAF Domain 1)</b>			
<b>2A Volume Crime Reduction</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crime strategy</li> <li>• Performance in reducing volume crime</li> <li>• Levels of crime compared with peers</li> <li>• Problem solving</li> <li>• National Crime Recording Standard (NCRS) compliance</li> </ul>			

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<b>3 Investigating Crime (PPAF Domain 2)</b>		
<b>3A Managing Critical Incidents and Major Crime</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Detection rates for murder, rape and other serious crime</li> <li>• Integration with overall crime strategy</li> <li>• Compliance with Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) murder manual</li> <li>• Early identification of critical incidents that may escalate into major inquiries</li> </ul>	<b>3B Tackling Serious and Organised Criminality</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crime that crosses basic command unit (BCU) and/or force boundaries</li> <li>• Support for regional intelligence and operations</li> <li>• Asset recovery (Proceeds of Crime Act – POCA)</li> <li>• Effective targeted operations</li> <li>• Quality packages with the Serious Organised Crime Agency (SOCA)</li> </ul>	<b>3C Volume Crime Investigation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crime strategy</li> <li>• Crime recording</li> <li>• Investigative skills, eg interviewing</li> <li>• Automatic number plate recognition (ANPR)</li> <li>• Detection performance</li> </ul>
<b>3D Improving Forensic Performance</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specialist scientific support</li> <li>• Use of National Automated Fingerprint Identification System (NAFIS), DNA, etc</li> <li>• Integrated management of processes</li> <li>• Performance in forensic identification and detection</li> </ul>	<b>3E Criminal Justice Processes</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quality and timeliness of case files</li> <li>• Custody management/prisoner handing</li> <li>• Youth justice</li> <li>• Police National Computer (PNC) compliance</li> </ul>	
<b>4 Promoting Safety (PPAF Domain 3)</b>		
<b>4A Reducing Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Non-crime activities of crime and disorder reduction partnerships (CDRPs) and other partnerships</li> <li>• Use of ASB legislation, tools, etc</li> </ul>	<b>4B Protecting Vulnerable People</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Child abuse</li> <li>• Domestic violence</li> <li>• Multi-agency police protection arrangements (MAPPAs)/sex offender management</li> <li>• Missing persons</li> </ul>	
<b>5 Providing Assistance (PPAF Domain 4)</b>		
<b>5A Contact Management</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All aspects of call handling and call management</li> <li>• Initial incident response</li> <li>• Early identification of critical incidents</li> <li>• Performance in answering and responding to public calls</li> </ul>	<b>5B Providing Specialist Operational Support</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Management of central operational support</li> <li>• Police use of firearms</li> <li>• Capability for policing major events/incidents</li> </ul>	<b>5C Strategic Roads Policing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effectiveness of arrangements for roads policing</li> <li>• Integration/support for other operational activity</li> <li>• Road safety partnerships</li> </ul>

<b>6 Resource Use (PPAF Domain B)</b>		
<b>6A Human Resource (HR) Management</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HR strategy and costed plan</li> <li>• Key HR issues not covered in 6B or 6C</li> <li>• Health and safety</li> <li>• Performance in key HR indicators</li> </ul>	<b>6B Training, Development and Organisational Learning</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Costed training strategy and delivery plan</li> <li>• Key training and development issues</li> </ul>	<b>6C Race and Diversity</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Action to promote fairness in relation to race, gender, faith, age, sexual orientation and disability</li> <li>• Performance in meeting key targets</li> </ul>
<b>6D Managing Financial and Physical Resources</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resource availability</li> <li>• Effective use of resources to support front-line activity</li> <li>• Devolved budgets</li> <li>• Finance, estates, procurement and fleet management functions</li> <li>• Demand management</li> </ul>	<b>6E Information Management</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information systems/ information technology (IS/IT) strategy and its implementation</li> <li>• Programme and project management</li> <li>• Customer service</li> <li>• Adequacy of key systems</li> <li>• Business continuity/disaster recovery</li> </ul>	<b>6F National Intelligence Model (NIM)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extent to which structures, processes and products meet NIM standards</li> <li>• Integration of NIM with force planning and performance management</li> <li>• Use of community intelligence</li> <li>• Application of NIM to non-crime areas</li> </ul>
<b>7 Leadership and Direction</b>		
<b>7A Leadership</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extent to which the chief officer team is visible and dynamic, sets and upholds a vision, values and standards, promotes a learning culture, and sustains a well-motivated workforce</li> <li>• Effectiveness of succession planning</li> <li>• Promotion of corporacy</li> </ul>	<b>7B Performance Management and Continuous Improvement</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effective performance management structures and processes at all levels</li> <li>• Quality and timeliness of performance/management information</li> <li>• Internal inspection/audit/ quality assurance (QA) systems</li> <li>• Effectiveness of joint force/PA best value reviews (BVRs)</li> </ul>	

## **Force Overview and Context**

### **Geographical Description of Force Area**

The county of Northamptonshire is located in the south of the East Midlands region and covers an area of 914 square miles. The largest town is Northampton, with other main towns including Brackley, Corby, Daventry, Kettering, Rushden, Towcester and Wellingborough. Its central location affords easy access, with good road and rail links. The M1, M6 and M40 motorways, together with the A1 and A14 trunk roads, pass through or near the county. Good transport links have led to rapid growth in light industry, particularly in warehousing and distribution, retail and financial services. There has also been an expansion of the smaller, hi-tech motor racing industry, particularly in the south of the county around the world-famous Silverstone racetrack, and also in the north where the Rockingham venue attracts motor-racing enthusiasts.

### **Demographic Description of Force Area**

Northamptonshire has a population of 642,708 (totalling 265,582 households). The black and minority ethnic (BME) proportion of Northamptonshire's population is 4.9%, compared with 6.5% for the East Midlands region as a whole, with the majority living in the Northampton and Wellingborough areas. The employment rate for the county is high at 80.2%, above the national average of 74.2%. The proportion of the population claiming unemployment benefit averages 1.8% across the county, varying from 2.9% in the Corby area to 0.8% in South Northamptonshire. The cost of housing is above the regional average (£164,361 compared with £155,286). The county is scheduled for a significant increase in population over the next 25 years as a result of the planned housing growth in the South Midlands sub-region, with population predicted to rise by 52% by 2031.

### **Structural Description of Force, including Staff Changes at Chief Officer Level**

Peter Maddison, Northamptonshire's Chief Constable, has been in post since May 2003. The deputy chief constable (DCC), Davina Logan, was appointed in November 2004 and holds the operations – crime and performance portfolio. Assistant chief constable (ACC) Derek Talbot has been in his role since December 1998, and is responsible for the support portfolio. Since October 2004 the force has had an additional temporary ACC, Alan Featherstone, responsible for territorial policing. This post has now been made permanent and Alan Featherstone was successful in the selection process and appointed in June 2006. Mrs Linda Charker, Director of Resources, has been in post since 1999 and has executive responsibility for financial management, procurement and estates for the force. The force executive officers are based at police headquarters (HQ), which is located just outside Northampton town centre at Wootton Hall.

As of 31 March 2006, there were (FTE) 1,327 police officers, 989 police staff, 237 Special Constables, 40 police community support officers (PCSOs) and 1.5 traffic wardens. From April 2006, operational policing has been delivered via two basic command units, referred to locally as areas – Northamptonshire West and Northamptonshire North – each managed by a chief superintendent. Each area also has two superintendents – responsible for

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operations and community. The principal HQ departmental support is provided by the crime and community department, the operations department, the criminal justice department (CJD), the force communications centre (FCC), and the human resource (HR), corporate development, and professional standards departments.

The Police Authority (PA) consists of 17 members and is chaired by Dr Marie Dickie, who has held office since 1995. A very good working relationship exists between the force executive and the PA. There are seven crime and disorder reduction partnerships (CDRPs) within Northamptonshire, and each Area is coterminous with either three or four district council areas.

## Strategic Priorities

The force's annual budget for 2006/07 is £105 million, an increase of 3.5% on 2005/06; this however represents a net shrinkage as a result of the financial settlement and limits on council tax precept increases. A stringent budget reprioritisation process has resulted in the loss of 33 police staff posts, but a growth of posts in other areas. As a result of this adjustment there have been some compulsory staff redundancies. Police officer posts have been maintained but there are vacant posts.

Strategic priorities as identified in the force strategic plan are as follows:

- to tackle decisively the long-term problem of high levels of volume crime in Northamptonshire and deliver sustained and substantive reductions in volume crime, including a commitment to proactive crime prevention as the county grows through the South Midlands development;
- to deliver further improvement in engagement with local communities, working more closely with partners to help create safer, stronger and more sustainable communities;
- to increase substantially operational capacity, capability and resilience, with regional and national partners, in order to tackle serious and organised crime, terrorism and domestic extremism;
- to contribute alongside partner agencies to targeted and effective approaches to the management of offenders;
- working with partners in the criminal justice system, to increase substantially the proportion of crimes detected and brought to justice;
- to address the problem that public confidence in policing is lower than the national average and that fear of crime is higher than the national average in Northamptonshire;
- to reduce further casualty levels on the county's roads;
- to develop the police capability to respond quickly and effectively to calls for assistance from the public;
- to develop systems to deliver continuous improvement and sustainable high-performance policing in Northamptonshire;
- to manage effectively the development of the police workforce so as to deliver the skills and experience needed to police Northamptonshire effectively in the future; and
- to deliver the best possible use of resources in order to develop high-quality policing services.

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## **Impact of Workforce Modernisation and Strategic Force Development**

Strategic development within the force reflects a determination to tackle the long-term problem of high levels of volume crime in Northamptonshire, and the strategic direction has been primarily shaped to close the performance gap with the force's most similar forces (MSF) group – particularly in respect of crime rates and sanction detection rates. The strategic intent for future years outlined in the Local Policing Plan 2006/07 and the Strategic Plan 2006–09 reflects a continued emphasis on narrowing the performance gap.

Over the last year strategic priority has been given to developing a new integrated performance management system, which has been supported by the Police Standards Unit (PSU) and has been implemented through a force performance improvement plan. The development of performance management has embraced investment in performance analysis capability and a radical reshaping of performance information and analysis products, that are now accessible to managers and staff at all levels of the organisation. It has also seen the development of new processes for performance accountability and focused performance review at force, Area, team and individual level.

The Northamptonshire Policing Model (NPM) provides a policing style focused on front-line policing. This has been supported by the reduction in the number of Areas from four to two and the development of control room, demand management unit (DMU) and crime and incident-recording capability. There has been a renewed emphasis on strengthening the performance management capability of managers across the force, particularly of sergeant and inspector ranks. Arrangements have been strengthened for PA engagement in driving the performance agenda.

Over the next year there will be a further commitment to working in partnership, in particular a real engagement to help make the local area agreement (LAA) realise its potential to 'join up' local provision. The force also recognises strategically that a systematic end-to-end approach to managing prolific offenders, drug users and young offenders, working in partnership across and beyond the criminal justice system, will be critical to delivering real and sustained reduction in crime levels. In line with national policy, the force is shifting strategic focus to delivery at the neighbourhood level.

Similarly, there is a strategic recognition that 'building in' crime prevention to the population growth of the county through the Milton Keynes and South Midlands development process is critical to sustained long-term crime management.

Workforce development has been a priority area for the force and the development of PCSO, custody and control room roles has reflected the volume crime and sanction detection performance priorities that drive the force strategically. Northamptonshire Police has one of the highest ratios of police staff to officers in the country. Police officer roles have been developed with the creation of specialist team functions within the NPM. Over recent months there has been an emphasis on improving investigative skills and on enhancing resilience by broadening the spread of specialist skills and training across the officer population. The force has a three-year strategy for the development of the extended police family, in recognition that a diverse range of roles working alongside officers contributes to a more creative, efficient and effective policing approach.

## **Major Achievements**

The chief officer team have led the force with energy and commitment, and with comprehensive investment in internal communications and visibility, and in the development and involvement of the force's leaders. There were significant reductions in recorded crime in Northamptonshire in 2005/06 as compared with the previous year, with the force reducing

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the gap with Northamptonshire's MSF group average for all crime during the year. However, improvements are still required in order to close the gap further.

Significant changes have continued to be managed while maintaining performance and morale, particularly the further development of the NPM and the merger of four Areas into two. The introduction of the centralised crime recording and investigation bureau (CRIB) and the DMU have delivered significant improvements in the quality of crime investigations and timeliness and appropriateness of response to calls. For example, the average number of open grade 3 calls fell from 70% (September 2005) to 5% (January 2006). The percentage of grade 2 incidents that were either dispatched to or the caller called back within 15 minutes improved from 55% (October 2005) to 84% (January 2006).

### **Major Challenges for the Future**

Northamptonshire Police is one of three 'engaged' forces receiving Home Office support in order to secure performance improvement. Over the last 12 months the force, the PA, HMIC and the PSU (now part of the Police and Crime Standards Directorate (PCSD)) have adopted a collaborative approach to performance improvement. This support, and the force's positive response to advice, has delivered successes, but the force recognises the need to continue improving if it is to close the gap on the performance of its peers.

Performance challenges are being addressed against a backdrop of serious financial constraints, which have resulted in reprioritisation. This will affect service delivery and performance in some areas and will continue to present an additional challenge.

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<b>Summary of Judgements</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Direction of Travel</b>
<b>Citizen Focus</b>		
Fairness and Equality in Service Delivery	<b>Good</b>	<b>Stable</b>
Neighbourhood Policing and Problem Solving	<b>Poor</b>	<b>Improved</b>
Customer Service and Accessibility	<b>Fair</b>	<b>Stable</b>
Professional Standards	<b>Fair</b>	<b>Not Graded</b>
<b>Reducing Crime</b>		
Volume Crime Reduction	<b>Fair</b>	<b>Improved</b>
<b>Investigating Crime</b>		
Managing Critical Incidents and Major Crime	<b>Poor</b>	<b>Stable</b>
Tackling Serious and Organised Criminality	<b>Poor</b>	<b>Improved</b>
Volume Crime Investigation	<b>Fair</b>	<b>Improved</b>
Improving Forensic Performance	<b>Good</b>	<b>Stable</b>
Criminal Justice Processes	<b>Fair</b>	<b>Stable</b>
<b>Promoting Safety</b>		
Reducing Anti-Social Behaviour	<b>Fair</b>	<b>Improved</b>
Protecting Vulnerable People	<b>Poor</b>	<b>Declined</b>
<b>Providing Assistance</b>		
Contact Management	<b>Good</b>	<b>Improved</b>
Providing Specialist Operational Support	<b>Fair</b>	<b>Stable</b>
Strategic Roads Policing	<b>Good</b>	<b>Stable</b>
<b>Resource Use</b>		
Human Resource Management	<b>Fair</b>	<b>Improved</b>
Training, Development and Organisational Learning	<b>Good</b>	<b>Improved</b>
Race and Diversity	<b>Good</b>	<b>Stable</b>
Managing Financial and Physical Resources	<b>Good</b>	<b>Stable</b>
Information Management	<b>Good</b>	<b>Stable</b>
National Intelligence Model	<b>Fair</b>	<b>Declined</b>
<b>Leadership and Direction</b>		
Leadership	<b>Fair</b>	<b>Not Graded</b>
Performance Management and Continuous Improvement	<b>Fair</b>	<b>Stable</b>

## 1 Citizen Focus (Domain A)

### 1A Fairness and Equality in Service Delivery

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Direction of Travel</b>
<b>Good</b>	<b>Stable</b>

#### National Grade Distribution

Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
0	15	28	0

#### Contextual Factors

The force's approach to diversity issues remains committed and consistent. The race and diversity scheme is acknowledged by leaders to be part of their responsibilities, and the leadership of the ACC as the diversity champion helps to reinforce this and provides a strategic focus on all diversity issues. An equality impact assessment process is in place with all policy writers and some independent advisory group (IAG) members trained. A sound system for reasonable adjustments operates within the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) policy and procedure, and the disability project group, along with the internal disability and carers' support network, oversees progress on disability issues, including those relating to the estates strategy. Training delivery has integrated an awareness of responsibilities under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act (RRAA) into programmes, and high-level inputs are planned for specialist teams such as professional standards staff. Hate crime is one of a number of competing priorities for Northamptonshire Police; the force recognises the importance of this business area and work is in hand to ensure improved corporacy and consistency of delivery.

#### Strengths

- The DCC and ACC (support) have equality of service and diversity within their force portfolios, and are Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) national leads for age discrimination and human rights respectively. These responsibilities are reflected in the way that equality and diversity are mainstreamed in all areas of force business. The force is also leading on work to improve age equality in a number of HR areas.
- In 2005/06 the percentages of violence against the person offences successfully detected rose significantly from 2004/05 for both BME and white victims, and were above the force's MSF average. In addition, the difference in the detection rate for the two groups was less than the MSF average.
- The diversity (confidence and equality) strategic board, chaired by the ACC (support), oversees implementation of all equality areas of business, including the race equality scheme action plan and recommendations that have been identified from relevant national reports. There is a diverse representation on the board, including

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representatives of staff support networks, the IAG and Area senior management, who are held accountable for delivering service equality.

- The IAG is represented on the equality of service monitoring group, which also includes representatives from BME communities, the traveller and disability groups, the PA and key partner agencies. The group oversees stop-and-search issues and plays a key role in influencing policy. Stop-and-search is robustly monitored for proportionality. Stop-and-search champions are in place on each Area and management information can identify individual officers and teams who show a disproportionate propensity to target specific community groups.
- All six strands of diversity are incorporated into the force's race and diversity equality scheme (2005–08) and are subject to impact assessment by a significant number of trained impact assessors (including all policy writers and a number of the IAG members). A mechanism is in place to ensure that no new or revised policy can be published without an equality impact assessment.
- The last six months of 2005/06 saw a reinvigoration of IAG processes, prompted by lessons from the force's experiences of the July 2005 London bombings and the strategic and tactical need for robust and credible processes and systems. The IAG has a broad county-wide representation covering race, faith, disability, gender and age groups. It has been involved in advising on operational activity and force policy that could impact on particular communities. It also contributed towards the force's strategic assessment. IAG members are to be included in forthcoming critical incident training.
- The force has strong links with partner agencies to support the investigation and reduction of hate crime. For instance, regular forums are held, chaired by the Area community safety inspector, with representatives from a wide variety of national groups and local partners. This multi-agency activity ensures that arrangements to support victims and reporting are dynamic and innovative. For instance, crimes against people with disability are now treated as hate crimes for investigative purposes. The force has played a major role in the production of a hate crime DVD which is widely used as a training and education tool. In 2005/06, the percentage of victims of racist incidents who were satisfied or very satisfied with the overall service provided rose significantly compared to 2004/05, and was above the MSF average.
- Arrangements are in place for case conferences with relevant bodies and the nominated Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) champion in high-profile hate crime cases. A force officer is part of a county-wide multi-agency traveller unit, unique in the country, which was established in 2003 to facilitate good liaison with traveller communities.
- The force is 100% compliant with the requirement for access to the public areas of police buildings for people with disabilities.

#### **Areas for Improvement**

- There a limited capacity within the community police and partnerships department to develop the existing hate crime forums, which bring together all agencies which respond to reports of hate crime.
- Each Area has dedicated resources responsible for preventing and investigating incidents of hate crime, but there is no corporate approach to this process, specifically in relation to how those resources support the investigation process and the supervision of investigations.

**1B Neighbourhood Policing and Problem Solving**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Direction of Travel</b>
<b>Poor</b>	<b>Improved</b>

**National Grade Distribution**

Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
4	18	20	1

**National Position**

Neighbourhood Policing (NP) is a national programme and its expectations are based on national research. This framework differs from others because the grade awarded reflects the force’s ability to roll out NP progressively, year on year, until its implementation date of April 2008. This focus on programme delivery and the need for continual improvement are reflected in the grades. Therefore, in this framework it is significantly more challenging for a force to maintain the same grade as last year.

HMIC has awarded an Improved direction of travel where forces are actively progressing implementation, have improved their performance and have allocated significant resources to deliver NP. As a result, most forces have an Improved direction of travel. However, this assessment has also highlighted the significant demands of the NP programme and the vulnerability of some forces that are failing to maintain the pace of implementation.

**Contextual Factors**

In March 2006 Northamptonshire Police had one neighbourhood policing (NHP) team in place, the pathfinder team on the Queensway Estate in Wellingborough. By August 2006 this had increased to five teams.

Work continues in preparation for the force-wide roll-out of NHP; however, the county council funding of £500,000 that was to allow this process to be brought forward was withdrawn, and consequently the force was forced to revert to the original timetable of recruitment in November 2006. This has now been brought forward to September as a result of additional government funding.

The Northamptonshire Policing Model (NPM) is integrated into mainstream policing activity with dedicated community action team (CAT) officers working specific beats. The merger of the previous four Areas into two was designed to support the implementation of NHP teams and tackle volume crime.

**Strengths**

- Improving engagement with local communities and creating safer communities through working with partners are 2006/07 strategic priorities for the force. The NPM supports the mainstreaming of NHP, particularly with regard to specialist services: these are split into three identifiable areas, one of which is community roles.

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- Existing safer community team (SCT) staff and other key Area staff, including members of the Special Constabulary, have benefited from an ongoing programme of joint training, some of which has been delivered by partners.
- A communications strategy is in place to support NHP, through which the names and contact details of SCT staff on the pathfinder site have been published.

### **Work in Progress**

- At the time of inspection, NHP implementation on the pathfinder Area was limited to only one SCT. Details of the force-wide roll-out were agreed in July 2006, and this will provide 38 SCTs by April 2007, with a further 28 by April 2008.
- The force has agreed an abstraction policy to allow for dedicated NHP officers and teams, and a deployment and tasking policy is under development. Work is continuing on logistical arrangements to support the teams, including information technology (IT), community engagement and partner consultation protocols; interventions and performance measurement; administrative support; and integration of the National Intelligence Model (NIM) principles.
- Working through the communications strategy and representation on the NHP programme board, HQ- and Area-based public relations officers have supported the pathfinder site in marketing and publicity for NHP. However, further work is needed to give partners the opportunity to be more involved in developing the marketing and branding of SCTs.

### **Areas for Improvement**

- As a Home Office 'engaged force', Northamptonshire has prioritised the need to improve crime performance, and has suffered from the withdrawal by the county council of funding for PCSOs. These two factors have contributed to some aspects of the development and implementation of NHP being behind that of other forces.
- The force has a NHP programme board, led by the ACC (territorial policing), together with a formalised project plan (subject to review) and a small NHP project management team. Since April 2006 the SCT project board has included all senior-level key force stakeholders, as well as several external partners. However, at present the project team does not have the capacity fully to develop all the critical strands of project work, although there is a plan to increase the team's resilience through the greater use of Area management.
- A number of neighbourhoods covering the county were identified under the previous structure of four Areas. However, the process did not involve any significant community consultation or review. Further consultation has now taken place with CDRP partners, which has led to identification of SCT areas/neighbourhoods that align with partner 'priority' areas.
- Although partners are involved at a strategic level (through the safer and stronger community board and CDRPs), they have not been involved in the development of the project plan and do not currently participate in the NHP programme board. The force acknowledges that greater involvement could strengthen the commitment of local authority partners to link existing neighbourhood management arrangements to the roll-out of SCTs, although the force is already well engaged with county council partners in terms of links with neighbourhood renewal.

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- There is currently no community engagement strategy in place to formalise best practice from existing processes for identifying neighbourhood priorities, especially with 'harder to hear' groups, or to provide feedback on action taken.
- The process of integrating NIM processes and the delivery of NHP is still at only an early stage of development. The intelligence function needs to be more engaged with the NHP project to support this area of work, specifically in developing joint tasking, in the use of NIM products at neighbourhood and SCT level, and in reviewing the capacity of analysts to support the roll-out of SCTs.
- A format for beat profiles and key individual networks needs to be developed to support NHP roll-out. This is being developed through the community profiling and problem solving (ComPaSS) website and is open to all partner agencies.
- At the time of inspection, performance management systems that would allow force and Area management to measure Area NHP-led activity and performance against agreed priorities were not fully developed. In addition PDRs will reflect the role profile.

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**1C Customer Service and Accessibility**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Direction of Travel</b>
<b>Fair</b>	<b>Stable</b>

**National Grade Distribution**

Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
0	19	22	2

**Contextual Factors**

A number of changes have been made with the aim of enabling Northamptonshire Police to focus closely on performance in customer service and accessibility. Towards the end of 2005, the force introduced a DMU. This is proving to be a positive step forward in relation to public satisfaction levels regarding grade 3 and 4 incident responses.

The introduction of the CRIB and a crime management unit (CMU) means that all police crime screening is now managed by one central unit, providing a consistent central decision management process that will improve crime investigation. A force crime website with victim crime update functionality has been launched. In addition, web pages containing information for the public on first contact and current call-handling performance have been designed and launched.

A local single non-emergency number has been introduced and promoted to the public. This has brought quicker access to all internal extensions and helped to manage call flows more effectively. The challenge for the force now is to ensure that this progress is embedded throughout the organisation, while achieving other priorities against a backdrop of tight budgetary constraints.

**Strengths**

- The force has introduced a centralised helpdesk, DMU and CRIB, which have improved accessibility for the public and provided greater consistency in the service delivered by the FCC.
- The final quarter of 2005/06 saw improvements in the proportion of victims of domestic burglary, violent crime, vehicle crime and road traffic collisions satisfied with respect to making contact with the police, action taken by the police, their treatment by staff and overall service. These improvements placed the force in each case at or above its MSF average for 2005/06.
- New Force Communication Centre (FCC) staff receive a training module, Right First Time, which trains them in the ethos of the Quality of Service Commitment (QoS), the HMIC *First Contact* thematic report and the National Call Handling Standards (NCHS).
- Members of the public can check the status of a crime they have reported to the police via the force website and can contact the case officer by email. The website is in a multilingual format and has wide-ranging crime prevention advice and links to partner

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agencies. While this facility has only just been launched (April 2006), it demonstrates the force's commitment to increasing public accessibility in innovative ways.

- The introduction in December 2005 of a local single non-emergency number, and its promotion to the public, have led to quicker access to all internal extensions and helped to manage call flows more effectively, thus providing easier contact and better service, for both emergency and non-emergency calls.

#### **Areas for Improvement**

- Customer satisfaction data is reviewed periodically at the force managing performance group (MPG) meeting, but is not a routine agenda item. Although the data is reviewed at the equality of service group and the quality of service group (chaired by the DCC and an ACC respectively), active management of customer satisfaction data at the MPG meeting would assist in mainstreaming quality of service and the Victims' Code of Practice.
- There has been a decrease in victim satisfaction with being kept informed, where the force is significantly below its MSF average.
- Customer service and accessibility have been a primary focus for the FCC in 2005/06, with a range of service improvements evident. However, customer service training has yet to take place on Areas and in other customer-facing departments. Leadership seminars for supervisors, held in March 2006 as part of an ongoing series, used the theme of quality of service and emphasised the need for changes in attitudes, behaviours and cultures.

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**1D Professional Standards**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Direction of Travel</b>
<b>Fair</b>	<b>Not Graded</b>

**National Grade Distribution**

Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
2	16	25	0

**National Position**

In view of the recent focused inspection activity of professional standards departments across the country, the grade allocated in the national moderation process and publication of the reports in January 2006 will be applied for the purposes of baseline assessment.

The inspections were conducted using a substantial framework of questions under EFQM4 (European Foundation for Quality Management) headings. This framework of questions was forwarded to forces in line with normal baseline methodology, requesting self-assessment and submission of relevant evidence and supporting documentation. This material was then analysed and followed by HMIC inspection teams visiting forces to carry out validation checks and supplementary interviews of key staff and stakeholders. The baseline inspection reports include recommendations as well as areas identified for improvement.

Evidence was gathered, consolidated and reported upon in individual force baseline assessment reports which can be found on the HMIC website:  
[http://inspectors.homeoffice.gov.uk/hmic/inspect\\_reports1/baseline-assessments.html](http://inspectors.homeoffice.gov.uk/hmic/inspect_reports1/baseline-assessments.html)

## 2 Reducing Crime (Domain 1)

### 2A Volume Crime Reduction

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Direction of Travel</b>
<b>Fair</b>	<b>Improved</b>

#### National Grade Distribution

Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
1	18	20	4

#### Contextual Factors

Historically Northamptonshire has been an area of high volume crime rates. The last 12 months has seen a period of continuing intensive activity to address volume crime issues, with substantial development of performance analysis monitoring and review, stretched performance targets, PSU engagement, a great deal of direct chief officer ownership and activity, continued focus on longer-term situational crime prevention, and a real strengthening of partnership engagement and focus.

Although volume crime levels have fallen substantially for all crime, the force remains a poor performer compared to its MSF group, being worst in most crime categories and remaining well below MSF average performance overall. Stretch targets have again been set for 2006/07 with the aim of closing the gap on the MSF average, and recent improvements have indeed brought a closing of that gap. In June 2006, all recorded crime was 11% above the MSF average, but this fell to 7% in July 2006 – the first time the force has been within 10% of the average. Good reductions were also recorded in residential burglary and robbery offences.

#### Strengths

- Robbery fell by 11% in 2005/06 in comparison with 2004/05, and vehicle crime also fell by 9% over the same period, both contributing to an overall reduction in all crime of 8%. Violent crime fell by 22% in 2005/06 in comparison with 2004/05, bucking the national trend of increases.
- The Northamptonshire ComPaSS unit is the primary data source and research facility for partnerships in Northamptonshire which lead on crime and disorder reduction and quality of life issues. The unit provides a single point for all learning and guidance for CDRPs on the monitoring and evaluation of crime reduction initiatives. There are a number of online crime reduction/problem solving tools for practitioners to use on the multi-agency website.
- The Milton Keynes and South Midlands three-force project is an innovative approach to situational crime prevention, led by Northamptonshire Police, which aims to make crime

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reduction integral to the long-term growth of the county, working together with a multi-agency Planning Out Crime network.

- The Rose Project is a multi-agency approach to dealing with the most disruptive PPOs in the county, based on national good practice. This project (detailed in a case study) has incorporated previous collaborative work with local prisons to address re-offending, particularly where drug-related. As part of the Rose Project, the force actively seeks to bring Northamptonshire offenders imprisoned elsewhere in the country back into local prisons so that they can be engaged in the project's work.

### **Work in Progress**

- Despite good partnerships in some areas of work (eg in tackling PPOs, partnership information sharing and domestic abuse), there remains room for improvement in the way the force works with its partners. In particular, the new Area commanders have been asked to prioritise partnership working in their new roles with their respective CDRPs.

### **Areas for Improvement**

- Substantial reductions were made in a number of categories of crime in 2005/06 in comparison to 2004/05; however, Northamptonshire Police remains significantly above its MSF group averages in all crime categories, with the exception of violent crime. The force achieved a reduction in all crime of 8% in 2005/06, cutting crimes per 1,000 population to 105.26; yet the MSF average in the same period was a mere 87.59. In addition, most recent crime trends show an increase in several categories of crime including robbery, burglary and vehicle crime, as well as in overall crime.
- Although the number of criminal damage offences in the county fell during 2005/06 compared to 2004/05, the number was still above the MSF average. Within this, criminal damage to vehicles has shown the largest increase.
- While some problem solving training has been delivered (to probationers, PCSOs and SCTs), not all staff have been trained, and during the inspection staff did not demonstrate adequate knowledge of the problem solving advice available to them (via ComPaSS for example). Problem solving training needs to be delivered to all CAT officers and their supervisors in particular, given their role in the force's policing model.
- Emphasis on securing sanction detections has been uppermost in recent months, as borne out by interviews with operational staff who viewed this as their primary focus. In addition, the standard operating procedures (SOPs) focus on crime investigation rather than reduction. Some work has now been commissioned by the force to formulate new initiatives for the reduction of burglary, vehicle crime and robbery, based on national good practice. A strategic crime reduction group, chaired by the head of the crime and community department, now has the remit of driving sustainable crime reductions. Work has already commenced on robbery reduction initiatives within Northampton, and the identification of seven key priority beats across the county that present the greatest opportunity for sustainable crime reduction across a range of crime categories.

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## GOOD PRACTICE

**TITLE: The Rose project**

**PROBLEM:**

The Rose project, based upon best practice from around the country, is a multi-agency approach to dealing with the most disruptive prolific and priority offenders (PPOs). Agencies involved include all those in the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRPs), local authorities, prisons, Probation and the police, along with non-statutory organisations which offer support to offenders.

**SOLUTION:**

PPOs are nominated by any of the agencies involved to one of the multi-agency panels based on the current BCU areas. Each offender is assessed using a matrix which takes into account previous convictions, the type of offences committed, arrests, drug addiction and also probation, prison and youth offending team scores. Intelligence from all partners is also considered as part of the scoring process.

The Rose Project staff work with PPOs over the age of 18 who appear to have some aspect of their life which causes them to commit crime. Often this is drug addiction, but may include alcohol, homelessness, unemployment or poor life skills. In each case the team seeks to address the root cause of offending behaviour to try and prevent, reduce or change the offending behaviour and to rehabilitate the individual into society. Where the offender refuses to engage, or engages but still continues to offend, fast tracking through the criminal justice system is essential.

The quicker a PPO moves through the judicial process, the lower the likelihood of further offending and the higher the prospect that referral to support services can be made to address lifestyle issues.

**OUTCOME(S):**

The Rose Project can be made part of the defendant's licence on release from custody or part of a Community Safety Order (for the first 60 days). Any delay in this process due to court listing times can only be detrimental to the defendant and his/her chances for rehabilitation. At no time throughout the 'life' of a PPO is the offer of intervention withdrawn. In fact it is continually offered.

**FORCE CONTACT:** Further information can be obtained from DI Andy Tennant.

### 3 Investigating Crime (Domain 2)

#### 3A Managing Critical Incidents and Major Crime

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Direction of Travel</b>
<b>Poor</b>	<b>Stable</b>

#### National Grade Distribution

Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
5	17	17	4

#### Contextual Factors

Since the last assessment the force has actively adopted recommendations and good practice. The strategic assessment now includes a section on major crime and its impact on force performance. This inclusion within the NIM format has allowed major crime and level 2 issues to benefit from specific actions, including the production of some problem profiles, for example on guns and gangs. The impact of organised immigration crime in the county has led to collaboration with the UK Immigration Service and proactive joint intelligence work.

The force recognises the impact of staffing abstractions on major incidents, as there is no dedicated major crime investigation resource in place in Northamptonshire other than the Home Office Large Major Enquiry System (HOLMES) support and senior investigating officer (SIO) role arrangements. Weekly review and monitoring of abstraction data is provided for chief officers and Area commanders. However, in terms of investigative skills and outcomes, the last year saw a number of murder cases successfully concluded, with some guilty pleas, drawing positive comments from judges and the CPS – evidencing the force’s professional approach.

There is a robust 24/7 call-out procedure for major crime and critical incident support, and from an intelligence perspective, the call-out of specialist staff is on a set rota with intelligence functions having interoperability between intelligence, crime, custody and child protection. A new SOP has been published for missing person (MISPER) investigations. This has been followed up with Area training to supervisors dealing with initial call, risk assessment, action at scene, supervision, review, and managing MISPER returns.

#### Strengths

- The force is part of the East Midlands regional intelligence unit and is contributing officers for the level 2 team as part of the East Midlands special operations unit (EMSOU). The second phase of this process is to further develop the EMSOU, and the force is contributing to a new level 2 regional team by providing additional trained staff.
- A dedicated HOLMES team and SIO cadre provide a good level of service for all major and serious crime investigations. In the first 72 hours the force’s level 2 team provides the investigative capacity for an enquiry, after which Area staff take over. The murder detection rate in 2005/06 was 100%, with convictions in four out of ten cases and the other six awaiting court results.

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- The force has completed a comprehensive firearms risk and threat assessment (February 2006) using a template which was commended by the National Centre for Policing Excellence (NCPE) in 2005. This assessment took account of all the firearms resources and skills the force deploys, to meet current known and future predicted demands.
- Silver firearms commander cover is provided by a cadre of 12 senior officers who have passed a nationally accredited course. This recently restructured cadre provides sufficient resilience and allows each commander to become more experienced, as they are called on reasonably often to perform the role. The force has trained three of its four chief officers to Gold level for firearms and critical incidents.
- In addition to the force strategic assessment and control strategy, there exists a counter-terrorism and domestic extremism strategy with particular relevance to Special Branch and the operations department. The force contributes seconded staff to the Midlands counter-terrorism support unit and the national Public Order Intelligence Unit, thus fostering working relationships and sharing information.
- There is a 24/7 duty chief officer rota, and call-out rotas for negotiators, area crime managers, forensics officers, firearms officers, family liaison officers, search-trained officers, occupational health staff, media liaison officers, child protection staff, covert operations officers and incident response inspectors for critical or major incidents. There are dedicated SIOs and a HOLMES capability for major crime investigations.
- The last six months of 2005/06 saw a reinvigoration of IAG processes, prompted by lessons from the force's experiences of the July 2005 London bombings and the strategic and tactical need to be satisfied that processes and systems are robust and credible. The IAG has a broad county-wide representation covering race, faith, disability, gender and age groups. It has been involved in advising on operational activity and force policy that could impact on communities, and has contributed towards the force's strategic assessment. IAG members are to be included in forthcoming critical incident training.

### **Work in Progress**

- The force has identified that at present there is little sharing of information of the kind that is needed to develop emergency plans. The intention is to improve information exchange with the local resilience forum (LRF) partners in conjunction with work on risk assessments. The force is developing an illicit laboratory policy with the fire and rescue service, the Two Shires Ambulance Service and the SOCA, in order to share information and make plans for any emergency action required.
- The major crime review process for 'live investigation' needs to be reviewed on the basis of best practice to standardise processes and expectations. This work was actioned by the director of investigations to commence in April 2006.
- The force has only recently put in place a system to flag Osman warnings (warnings concerning criminal threat to an individual's life) on the force intelligence systems and thus make them available to all staff, particularly those involved in first response to incidents.
- Some roles within the operations department (such as public order, tactical advice, the firearms tactical unit and some major incident specialisms) are constrained by a lack of resilience because individuals perform multiple specialist roles. Work is ongoing, locally

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and regionally, to address this through succession planning and improving the diversification of skills.

### **Areas for Improvement**

- The inspection revealed little evidence of performance monitoring and evaluation in the crime and community department overall, and the data that was collected was more quantitative than qualitative, eg the value of assets seized, the number of arrests made, etc. The force has sought good practice nationally, and is currently considering the adoption of three performance targets. However, these are general in nature: for example a target to increase the number of organised crime groups dismantled or disrupted.
- There is no dedicated major crime investigation team in the force (other than the HOLMES support and SIO role), and major incidents therefore impact on both level 2 capacity and Area work. A better balance between Area work and level 2 work has been evident in recent months, and abstractions to murder investigations, while still not desirable, have been at a manageable level.
- Critical incident training and awareness are inadequate at both operational and strategic levels. A Centrex trainer delivered critical incident training in May 2006 to targeted members of staff at inspector level and above. The force will need to determine how to provide additional training for managers and improve operational awareness.
- Existing partnership arrangements are focused on crime and disorder priorities rather than examining how local information and intelligence can be recorded and disseminated to support force intelligence requirements around major crime and counter-terrorism. The force community tensions team (FCTT) has reviewed its terms of reference to provide greater opportunities for community intelligence gathering.
- The force's strategic assessment has not taken into account the predictable demand profile of all critical incidents and vulnerable communities and locations, nor does it provide an assessment of potential risks and threats.
- The force has limited capacity to deal with cold case reviews, but has invested in serious crime review training, which will be used to develop a cold case review process.
- With the merger from four to two Areas, the force needs to rethink the resourcing protocol agreements currently in place, and work has started to provide the chief officer team and the two new Area commanders with options.
- There is no link between the force intelligence system and the HOLMES IT system used in major crime/murder enquiries, and thus intelligence uncovered during such enquiries is not available to intelligence staff across the force to inform other intelligence products (unless specifically entered by incident room staff). SIOs now have a responsibility to ensure that this is done.
- Understanding of the threats arising from the drugs markets in the county is more limited than that which exists for other threats, such as those from guns and gangs, where specific analysis has taken place. In part this reflects limited analytical/research capacity within the force intelligence bureau (FIB). A bid for additional capacity was agreed but has been put on hold due to lack of funding. Understanding the drugs market is important not just for its link to level 2 criminality in the county, but also because of its link to acquisitive crime.

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- The force has not delivered training in disclosure in recent years. A number of staff have developed this skill through experience, but developments in legislation mean that training must be delivered in-force to ensure that sufficient staff are available to perform this crucial role in major incident rooms as well as in more routine cases. Subsequent to the inspection, specific disclosure training was delivered in May 2006 to those staff engaged in dedicated source unit work.
- With the exception of those cases where there are believed to be suspicious circumstances, there is no direct involvement of supervisors at all cases of sudden death in the county. It is best practice for supervisors to be directly involved in all cases, both for incident management and risk assessment purposes.

**3B Tackling Serious and Organised Criminality**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Direction of Travel</b>
<b>Poor</b>	<b>Improved</b>

**National Grade Distribution**

Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
7	21	13	2

**Contextual Factors**

The force has recognised over the last 12 to 18 months its vulnerability in meeting the requirements of effectively investigating serious and organised crime. During the last 12 months in particular it has created a level 2 team and increased the number of financial investigators. In respect of the Proceeds of Crime Act 2004 (POCA), the force has been successful in securing incentivisation money, and unlike some forces, it has ploughed this back into financial investigation work. Securing a dedicated level 2 case lawyer has had significant benefits in terms of the ability to exploit POCA legislation and to provide legal advice to the level 2 team in tackling organised criminals.

Work is in hand to enhance the delivery and use of community intelligence, and to develop performance monitoring within the crime and community department. However, there are still issues to be resolved around dedicated level 2 resources and level 2 investigation activity, as well as intelligence development and capacity.

**Strengths**

- The EMSOU – which the force has used to target drug offences by way of test purchase operations, as well as HGV and cash-in-transit crimes – is an asset to the force and region. The commitment by the region’s five Chief Constables to enhance the unit will begin to bridge the gap between force-level operations and the national work of the Serious Organised Crime Agency (SOCA).
- Serious crime is a force control strategy priority, and the force perspective is incorporated into the EMSOU regional control strategy.
- The force has had a dedicated level 2 crime team now for 12 months, incorporating economic crime and POCA enforcement capability. Over that time the team has delivered significant results in tackling level 2 activity such as distraction burglary and drug production and supply. Staff receive nationally accredited training to assist them in their role (with the exception of disclosure and intelligence training – see below).
- Performance targets have been established in relation to asset recovery, confiscation orders, cash seizure and forfeiture and restraint orders. Targets are set for Area commanders to encourage level 1 asset recovery. The force exceeded its target in 2005/06, recovering over £706,000, which was above the MSF average and 12th-highest nationally.

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- The force has creatively re-invested money secured in 2005 to put in place an additional financial investigator, a dedicated level 2 case lawyer and a marketing campaign to promote POCA. There is a detailed action plan drawing on the results of the HMIC POCA thematic inspection (Payback Time).
- The director of investigations ensures that all sensitive, high-profile and difficult investigations are monitored and that cases are not discharged from the monthly CPS major investigation panel until complete. The director of investigations monitors the force's initial response to major investigations and commissions a review where there are lessons to be learnt. Improvements have been made to MISPER enquiries as a result of this process.

### **Work in Progress**

- There are robust intelligence and tasking processes in place across the East Midlands region, but until now there have been difficulties in getting operations actioned, because of a lack of dedicated investigators within the region. Progress towards filling this identified gap has been made by appointing a regional investigative team, under the aegis of the EMSOU.
- Recognising that gaps in community intelligence were impeding the development of preventive strategies, the FCTT has recently implemented procedures for enhanced community intelligence gathering and the dissemination and actioning of such intelligence.

### **Areas for Improvement**

- There is no dedicated major crime investigation resource in the force (other than the HOLMES support and SIO role), and major incident rooms therefore impact on both level 2 capacity and Area work in place to investigate such crimes. There has been a better balance between Area work and level 2 work in recent months, and abstractions to murder investigations, while still not desirable, have been at a manageable level.
- Although the force has an improved understanding of the nature and extent of level 2 criminality within and impacting upon the force area, there is still room for improvement for example in mapping drugs markets. The force is only beginning to understand and map the nature of the organised crime groups operating in the county and regionally. The force control strategy now has an explicit intelligence requirement to fill intelligence gaps.
- The force does not have a comprehensive range of harm indicators applying to particular communities, and there is no evidence that it monitors and responds to signal crimes.
- The analytical/research capacity within the FIB is insufficient for the current demand, especially given the limited capacity at Area level. Requests for analytical products have been put on hold during the completion of the strategic assessment, and there is no dedicated analytical capacity for the level 2 team. A bid for additional capacity (for force and Areas) was agreed, but has been deferred due to lack of funds.
- Recent cases demonstrate that while witnesses are protected and offenders receive custodial sentences for intimidation, in-force arrangements for witness protection are limited. There are agreements within the region for mutual support, which is provided if required, but regional resources are also stretched.

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- The force has no surveillance team dedicated to level 2 work, which is not unusual for forces of its size. Prioritisation of the force surveillance team is therefore conducted through the level 2 force tasking and co-ordination meeting. This is held on a monthly basis, and the chair follows up actions allocated each month for surveillance. However, at a separate weekly meeting, further bids for surveillance are received from level 1, and all the competing bids are considered 'taking account' of level 2 priorities and tasks, but not necessarily prioritising them over those from Areas. There is currently no matrix against which bids can be prioritised, which would assist this weekly process.
- The force has no dedicated level 2 technical support unit capacity, and competing demands from levels 1 and 2 are prioritised by the technical support team itself, without the help of any prioritisation matrix. As with mobile surveillance capacity, there has to be a balanced approach but where capacity is limited (as can be the case with some technical equipment) higher-priority operations should take precedence.
- The force had some success in tackling level 2 crime in 2005/06 but its policing plan does not contain targets relating to level 2 activity and designed to reduce the harm caused by organised crime. The inspection revealed little evidence of performance monitoring and evaluation in the crime and community department overall, and such data as is collected is more quantitative than qualitative – eg the value of assets seized, the number of arrests made, etc. The force has sought best practice nationally, and is currently considering the adoption of three performance targets but these are general in nature: for example a target to increase the number of organised crime groups dismantled or disrupted.
- There is no force-wide corporate standard for knowledge and understanding of intelligence and intelligence systems and products. A formal intelligence training structure is now being developed.
- The force has not delivered training in disclosure in recent years. A number of staff have developed this skill through experience, but developments in legislation mean that training must be delivered in-force to ensure that sufficient staff are available in the future to perform this crucial role in level 2 enquiries, as well as in more routine cases.
- Suspicious activity reports (SARs – received monthly from financial institutions via SOCA) are dealt with reactively by the force, and are only brought into play when individual nominals are referred to the financial investigation unit. The force will recruit a SARs officer who, on taking up the post in October 2006, will have responsibility for the receipt, assessment, intelligence-building and dissemination of packages to facilitate investigative action and enforcement. The force is also in the process of delivering an IT solution to assist the financial investigation unit in managing and handling the SARs received. This solution will link the current SARs database with the force intelligence system.

**3C Volume Crime Investigation**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Direction of Travel</b>
<b>Fair</b>	<b>Improved</b>

**National Grade Distribution**

Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
3	20	16	4

**Contextual Factors**

The force made significant steps in crime investigation in 2005/06, with the introduction of SOPs, focussed on specific volume crime types. The introduction of the CRIB and CMU means that one central unit now manages all police crime screening, and therefore provides a consistent central decision management process that should lead to improved crime investigation. Extensive use is made of the POCA legislation and the force has achieved high levels of asset recovery; recovered assets have been reinvested into financial investigation and a jointly funded CPS lawyer. Offences brought to justice and sanction detection figures are set to rise in the coming 12 months, with the most recent trends already showing improvement.

**Strengths**

- SOPs have been developed for all crime types and an SOP for generic crime investigation and volume crime was introduced in August 2005. The SOPs set standards for investigation based on national good practice.
- Operational staff have demonstrated an unequivocal understanding of the importance the force places on sanction detections. The last quarter of 2005/06 saw an increase in the sanction detection rate from 20.4% to 23.4%.
- The contribution that forensic science makes to detecting crime in Northamptonshire is significant, representing nearly 50% of detections for residential burglary and taking of vehicles without consent (TWOC) offences, and 30% of theft from motor vehicles (TFMV) detections.
- In the last 12 months the force has achieved the Police National Computer (PNC) compliance target of entering 90% of all arrests and summonses onto the PNC within 24 hours. The figure for 2005 was 89.8%, and for the first quarter of 2006 it was 92.4%. In the same 12-month period the force also exceeded the compliance target of entering 75% of court results onto the PNC within 7 days of receipt from the court, with a figure of 89%. This performance was above the level of many forces nationally, and has assisted the investigation and detection of crime.

**Work in Progress**

- Collaborative work with the PSU (now part of the PCSD) has identified areas of non-compliance with the new SOPs for crime investigation, which are not yet embedded within the organisation. The force is redirecting existing managerial resources, as well

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as buying in additional capacity, to implement a reality checking process, including random auditing, so as to ensure compliance with SOPs. Chief officers will need to monitor the results carefully to ensure full compliance.

### **Areas for Improvement**

- Most categories of sanction detection rate increased in 2005/06, with the exception of robbery and vehicle crime. But despite improving its performance on sanction detections in the majority of categories, the force remains below the MSF average in all key crime areas.
- In previous years the force has received an Amber grading for its compliance with the National Crime Recording Standard. The introduction of the CRIB has improved the accuracy of crime recording (as well as the service to the public). In its most recent external review in 2006, the force attained an Excellent rating for data quality, but only a Fair for management arrangements, giving a Fair rating overall. Issues concerning the management practices of the CRIB have now been addressed, and this work is being supplemented with a schedule of PSU-funded work to streamline its use to aid the initial investigative process, including a supervisors' module to assist in the intrusive management of every stage of an enquiry.
- The Home Office audit of compliance with the counting rules for detections, carried out in early 2006, assessed the force as Fair overall. However, the audit identified poor compliance in relation to summonses, offences taken into consideration, cautions and penalty notices.
- The current poor management of the delayed charge bail process is a significant inhibitor of performance. In particular, the force has considerable problems in ensuring that all bailed persons return to custody, and the inefficiency of the current bail diary system has a negative impact on investigation. A draft recovery plan, 'Improving performance and accountability in custody', was being formulated at the time of inspection.

**3D Improving Forensic Performance**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Direction of Travel</b>
<b>Good</b>	<b>Stable</b>

**National Grade Distribution**

Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
3	16	21	3

**Contextual Factors**

Forensic investigators are located in two sites, centrally controlled and offering areas a ‘one-stop shop’ for scene examinations. The scientific support unit’s focus is performance-driven and set on outcomes and detecting crime. Performance (including cost) is monitored at every stage from the recording of a crime to its detection. Performance information is given to areas at a quarterly meeting attended by scientific support and area practitioners as well as other operational units and the forensic science service (FSS). Both scientific support and areas have challenging targets to achieve, and performance targets are included in the PDR of each member of staff in the unit.

Performance information is obtained through a sophisticated computer system (Trak-X), integrated with the crime and intelligence systems. Forensic intelligence is resulted through the force intelligence system, arriving on Areas in the form of intelligence logs. This results in high performance levels and low backlogs. The unit is much improved in the area of fingerprint identification since the recruitment of two further experts, and the current conversion rates are above the MSF average. The DNA hit conversion rate is now also above the MSF average. Full use is made of new technology such as Ident1 and laptops to scan in finger marks at crime scenes. In addition, the unit works closely with a number of leading UK universities to enhance the use that is made of forensic science to detect crime. This includes not only the analysis of data to influence and inform working practices, but also the development of new techniques such as neural networks and a next generation of fingerprint enhancement techniques.

**Strengths**

- The force’s fingerprint recovery rate is in the top quartile nationally for residential burglary and TWOC. DNA recovery is in the top quartile for residential burglary and the second quartile for TWOC.
- In line with the force’s commitment, the forensic budget has increased by 160% over the last four years. External funding has been secured (eg from the Home Office and from the incentivisation scheme linked to POCA) for both standard work and special projects. Costs of forensic processing are closely monitored and cost/benefit analysis is used in relation to scientific support activities and priorities.
- There are documented policies and procedures in place for the entire forensic process, as well as a forensic strategy document. The unit’s strategies and priorities are well publicised on the force intranet and mirror force priorities. Priorities are subject to a six-monthly review to coincide with the force’s strategic assessment.

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- The performance culture extends down to Areas where processes deliver timely actioning of forensic intelligence, driven by scientific support. Home Office figures from July 2005 show that Northamptonshire was in the top quartile nationally for the percentage of recorded crimes detected by DNA or fingerprints in the case of both residential burglary and TWOC, and above the MSF average in both cases.
- The force's percentage of crime scene stains yielding a DNA profile suitable for the database is far in excess of the national average, a position held consistently since late 2004.
- The unit's targets for processing forensic evidence have recently been revised upwards and are now very challenging. This reflects the unit's focus on performance and its aim of maximising opportunities to detect crime using forensic science.
- The scientific support function has a performance management process that measures performance from first contact to sanction detection.
- The contribution that forensic science makes to detecting volume crime in Northamptonshire amounts to nearly 50% of detections for domestic burglary and TWOC and 30% of TFMV detections.
- The force holds a quarterly forensic processes review meeting, chaired by the head of the crime and community department and including practitioners from scientific support and areas, and representatives from other operational units (such as PNC inputters) and the FSS. These meetings lead to the dissemination of good practice and identify weaknesses in the process. For example, refresher training for forensic investigators has helped put Northamptonshire above the national average for the conversion of DNA material recovered from scenes to profiles loaded onto the national database.
- Scientific support intelligence analysts attend area tasking and co-ordination meetings and disseminate area priorities, targets, hotspots, etc to scientific support staff. In addition, scientific support analysts provide daily updates to areas with details of linked offences, footwear patterns identified and so on.
- The unit works closely with a number of leading UK universities on several research programmes, with the general theme of improving the use of forensic science to detect crime. Some of these projects are researching areas not previously considered for forensic science and have attracted national support. They offer the potential to improve the delivery of forensic science to the police service as a whole. One project, aimed at focusing crime scene attendance by forensic investigators on the most productive crime scenes, is now in the process of being rolled out to other forces. Another current project in conjunction with St Andrews University, aims to develop a next generation of fingerprint enhancement techniques.

### **Work in Progress**

- The unit has extended the level of support given to Areas for TFMV offences. At the time of inspection, the unit attended over one-third of all reported TFMV offences and since April 2006 this has risen to over half. Work to predict the usefulness of crime scene attendance by forensic investigators should assist in ensuring that priority is given to the most productive crime scenes across the range of crime types, including TFMV. This work has been recognised nationally and some of the results will be presented to a British Computer Society meeting on artificial intelligence at Cambridge in December 2006.

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## GOOD PRACTICE

**TITLE: Research into new Forensic Methods**

**PROBLEM:** Northamptonshire Police's Scientific Support Unit has an ever-increasing portfolio of active research with leading UK universities, the underlying theme of which is to enhance the detection of crime by forensic science.

**SOLUTION:** Northamptonshire's research programme covers two distinct areas:

- Analysis of historical forensic science data from crime scenes, to better understand the role played by forensic science in crime detection and hence to improve it. This research is undertaken in collaboration with the Jill Dando Institute of Crime Science, University College London, and the Forensic Psychology Department, Leicester University.
- Novel methods of enhancing finger marks on a range of surfaces. This research is undertaken in collaboration with Physics & Astronomy Department, St Andrew's University and the Archaeology Department of Reading University.

In addition, the Scientific Support Unit supports postgraduate research in these areas by supervising research projects leading to publication in learned journals. The Scientific Support Unit is also active in defining university forensic science undergraduate courses, and has worked with Sussex University on its Physics with Forensic Science B.Sc. programme.

**A knowledge-based IT solution for crime scene examiner (CSE) deployment:**

With sponsorship from the Home Office, Northamptonshire Police and the Jill Dando Institute of Crime Science have jointly developed a computer-based approach to the deployment of CSEs. A neural network is used to successfully predict which crime scenes are most likely to yield forensic evidence; while still in development, it has been demonstrated that the computer model can be used for a variety of volume crime types such as burglary and car crime. It is intended to complement a police force's existing scene attendance criteria to provide more efficient deployment of CSEs. The model has consistently shown an accuracy of between 68% and 74% (depending on crime type) for the prediction of the likelihood of retrieving forensic evidence at a crime scene.

**FORCE CONTACT:** Dr John Bond

**3E Criminal Justice Processes**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Direction of Travel</b>
<b>Fair</b>	<b>Stable</b>

**National Grade Distribution**

Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
0	15	27	1

**Contextual Factors**

Over the last twelve months there have been fundamental changes in the management structure and business processes within the CJD. The enhanced management structure has introduced team leader roles within the typing and administration teams, contributing to improved performance and better reflecting the business needs of the department. Business processes have changed in readiness for the implementation of Director’s Guidance, and this has been reflected in the movement of resources from post-charge to pre-charge work. Strategic changes have resulted in the formation of new operational groups that sit below the local criminal justice board (LCJB). These have facilitated more joint ownership of Narrowing the Justice Gap targets.

Improvements have been made in custody policy to address health and safety, Independent Police Complaints Commission and NCPE safer detention and handling requirements. Long-term planning is under way to ensure that the new custody centre will meet the projected needs of the force.

The recent reorganisation within the CPS has created two units, corresponding to the structure of the CJD and to the two Areas that resulted from mergers within the force. This will provide opportunities for closer working between the police and CPS. Some criminal justice targets have not been achieved, including those for offences brought to justice and arrest-to-sentence times for persistent young offenders (PYOs), although recent improvements have been made. Pre-charge advice has successfully passed its final assurance check and migrated to a statutory footing in February 2006. However, the current poor management of the delayed charge bail process, and especially its impact on investigation, is a real challenge that the force is starting to address through the formulation of a recovery plan, ‘Improving performance and accountability in custody’.

**Strengths**

- A two-tier CPS/police prosecution team structure is in place, with a strategic team and a performance management team. This reflects the strong working relationship between senior CJD managers and their opposite numbers in the CPS. The joint team meetings have resulted in a number of improvements, including the mirroring of structures achieved during recent force and CPS reorganisations, and initiatives to address problems around statutory charging and trial management.
- The force has been operating a single joint witness care unit (under the No Witness, No Justice programme) for about a year at the time of inspection, co-located with the CPS

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and serving the whole county. Performance monitoring is based on the Victims Code of Practice, with the majority of the targets regularly achieved, and the force recently received a Green assessment for compliance with this code.

- Case progression officers work within the joint co-located criminal justice unit in compliance with the force's commitment under the Effective Trial Management Programme, especially in the area of PYOs.
- All the main custody sites use the new criminal justice powers and the latest technology to support crime investigation, including an automated fingerprint system (Livescan), Viper/Promat identification, drug testing and the National Strategy for Police Information Systems (NSPIS) custody system (version 4).
- PPO schemes, each with a manager, are in place on both Areas. Working closely with these schemes is the Rose Project, a multi-agency team approach to identifying and robustly managing the most disruptive PPOs through a series of interventions.
- In the last 12 months the force has achieved the PNC compliance target of entering 90% of all arrests and summonses onto the PNC within 24 hours. The figure for 2005 was 89.8%, and for the first quarter of 2006 it was 92.4%. In the same 12-month period the force also exceeded the compliance target of entering 75% of court results onto the PNC within seven days of receipt from the court, with a figure of 89%. This performance was above the level of many forces nationally.
- Police officers are seconded to the county youth offending team. A joint agency approach is taken both to replacing seconded officers at the end of their tenure and to monitoring their performance.

#### **Areas for Improvement**

- The number of offences brought to justice in 2005/06 was 12,985, well below the force target of 14,135. However, a plan has been put in place through the LCJB and there have been recent increases in excess of the monthly force target.
- In the past 18 months the average time taken to get PYOs from arrest to sentence greatly exceeded the national target of 71 days. Average performance is currently around 91 days, although a recovery plan, monitored through the LCJB, has contributed to improvements in performance in the last few months.
- The criminal justice performance management information system inhibits force managers' efforts to improve performance measures of effective trial management, such as the proportion of discontinued cases. This problem has been recognised and the force is starting to address it.
- The current poor management of the delayed charge bail process is a significant inhibitor of performance. In particular, the force has considerable problems in ensuring that all bailed persons return to custody, and the inefficiency of the current bail diary system has a negative impact on investigation. A draft recovery plan, 'Improving performance and accountability in custody', was being formulated at the time of inspection.
- At present, custody arrangements are not under the control of one department or function: the criminal justice department is responsible for policy but Areas are responsible for custody site resources and management. With four main custody sites on two Areas there is evidence that this arrangement has impacted on custody resource

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levels, creating tensions in delivering the statutory charging scheme and generating differing levels of service throughout custody processes for arresting officers and crime investigation. Again, this is an inhibitor of performance, and staff in some parts of the force encounter significant delays in processing detainees.

- The victim support service (VSS) is working with the force, through the relevant LCJB group, to resolve concerns over a significant fall in the number of victims referred by officers. This results in there being less opportunity for VSS to give support and advice to victims of crime in Northamptonshire. Recent IT developments and joint research have started to address this problem.

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## 4 Promoting Safety (Domain 3)

### 4A Reducing Anti-Social Behaviour

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Direction of Travel</b>
<b>Fair</b>	<b>Improved</b>

#### National Grade Distribution

Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
0	8	35	0

#### Contextual Factors

The force recognises the growing issue of anti-social behaviour (ASB) and the public perceptions and concerns associated with it, and has been proactive in developing a multi-agency approach (seconding an officer to the ASB unit at Northampton Borough Council). The LAA team now includes two senior police officers based in the executive offices of the county council.

The force's recent engagement in an alcohol misuse enforcement campaign highlighted its commitment to seeking external funding for the support of initiatives to tackle ASB. The force control room has a policy in place to deal with ASB incidents. The introduction and integration of the DMU has enabled more robust monitoring and tasking of such incidents.

#### Strengths

- The Northamptonshire Police ASB strategy outlines a clear direction to tackle ASB, through enforcement, prevention and education. The county LAA has ASB as a priority and a senior police officer is seconded to the LAA team, reflecting the force commitment.
- ASB is included within the force strategic assessment and Areas have developed specific ASB problem profiles. A multi-agency unit is in place with a remit covering community profiling and problem solving through ComPaSS, a dedicated database to support operational staff.
- There is evidence that the force and its partners adopt a multi-agency and incremental approach when using a range of ASB interventions. For instance, a case study on use of dispersals has been carried out and placed on the Together website.
- Training needs for beat officers, PCSOs and special constables have been addressed, and the training programme includes ASB in the 'working with partners' and 'problem solving' modules.
- There are effective working relationships between the Anti-Social Behaviour Order (ASBO) co-ordinators in each of the two CPS offices and both Areas, and this helps to secure consistent use of ASB powers through the criminal justice system.

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- Details of offenders subject to ASBOs, including details of conditions and any breaches, are entered onto the PNC.

#### **Areas for Improvement**

- In 2005/06, according to the British Crime Survey, there were significantly higher proportions of people in the county with high levels of worry about burglary, car crime, violent crime and public safety than the force's MSF average. These levels had increased from 2004/05. However, the period October to December 2005 showed a decreasing trend.
- The force and its partners do not yet have a county-wide ASB strategy and action plan. These are now being developed following a recent workshop with county-wide partner representation. The process of determining ASB priorities through local police and community engagement has yet to be fully developed in line with the NHP programme.

**4B Protecting Vulnerable People**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Direction of Travel</b>
<b>Poor</b>	<b>Declined</b>

**National Grade Distribution**

Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
8	32	3	0

**National Position**

This framework replaces two frameworks used in 2005 – Reducing and Investigating Hate Crime, and Crimes against Vulnerable Victims – which covered hate crimes (predominantly racially motivated), domestic violence and child protection. Following consultation with practitioners and ACPO leads, a single framework was introduced for 2006 with four components: domestic violence; child protection; the management of dangerous and sex offenders; and vulnerable missing persons. Hate crime is captured in framework 1A. It is therefore inappropriate to compare this framework with last year’s results; the direction of travel reflects HMIC’s judgements about changes in domestic violence and child protection, and the work that forces could evidence in the other two areas, for example that they had improved their structures, processes and resources.

The four areas are discrete but share a common theme – they deal with vulnerable victims where there is a high risk that an incident can quickly become critical, and where a poor police response is both life-threatening and poses severe reputational risks for the force. For this reason, the grade is an overall grade capped at the level of the weakest area of performance. Aggregating four components to a Fair grade – which is defined as being an acceptable level of service – when HMIC (and in many cases forces themselves) recognises that at least one area merits a Poor would be unsafe.

**Contextual Factors**

This does not mean that other areas arouse similar concern; in the case of Northamptonshire, HMIC commends the efforts made to tackle child protection and deal with missing persons promptly and effectively. However, domestic abuse work and the management of sex offenders has been inadequately staffed and supervised on Areas, risk assessment processes are not applied consistently across the county and training is weak. For these reasons, an overall grade of Poor was considered appropriate at national moderation, a grade identified as appropriate by the force in its self assessment.

**Strengths**

- An accountability framework for child protection enquiries exists, both for specialist staff and for Area-based enquiries. Performance measures for child abuse enquiries include the number of referrals received, the number of crimes recorded, the mean investigation duration and the degree of risk remaining at the conclusion of investigations. Objectives geared to improvements in these measures are included within staff PDRs and child protection unit (CPU) development plans.

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- The central CPU delivers a high-quality service, in conjunction with partners and the central referral unit, which acts as a resource for both CPU staff and Area staff conducting child protection enquiries. The remit includes the investigation of all child deaths, working closely with the crime and community department (in particular the SIOs) in the case of suspicious deaths, and providing a 24-hour call-out facility for all child abuse incidents.
- The staffing and supervisory levels of the CPU were considered as part of a 2005 best value review and in terms of investigator posts are seen as appropriate for the unit's remit and workload. All CPU officers are fully trained detectives and have completed training in achieving best evidence. Police staff have qualifications and experience and have benefited from induction training appropriate to their roles.
- The Sunflower Centres (covering approximately half the force area) have received national acclaim for work on domestic abuse. Here, police officers work with the VSS to ensure that victims' concerns are met and that they are kept fully informed of case progression. Victims are advised on personal security and are referred to appropriate support agencies. Key to the success of the centres is a comprehensive understanding of the nature of this type of crime, and support for victims is paramount. The number of cases of repeat victimisation recorded by one centre has fallen by 30% in 12 months.
- Accountability for domestic abuse enquiries at chief officer level is quite clear, with a lead taken to raise the number of arrests at domestic incidents and progress the implementation of NCPE guidance. Where police domestic abuse staff sit within Sunflower Centres, again the level of (multi-agency) management and accountability is robust. This accountability structure is not replicated on those parts of the force not covered by a Sunflower Centre, although there have been improvements recently following the restructuring from four Areas to two.
- Compliance with the NCPE guidance on the recording, risk-assessment, supervision and review of MISPER reports has been achieved in policy terms ahead of target (with the exception of an IT system to support the process). Therefore a full accountability framework is in place for the management and review of missing persons.
- The force has now developed and produced a SOP to reinforce the MISPER policy and ensure NCPE compliance. This SOP caters adequately for the initial risk assessment, and the inbuilt review process ensures that this is regularly reviewed and updated.
- The new SOP has been delivered to Area management teams and is available to all staff via the force intranet. To support the SOP, an aide-mémoire has been produced and circulated to all staff to inform them about every part of the process, including risk assessment, tactical options, reviews and supervisory responsibilities. Operational staff have demonstrated a high level of awareness of the changes in procedure.

### **Work in Progress**

- As of February 2006, there was a substantial backlog in initial assessment of, and visits to, very high-risk and high-risk sex and other dangerous offenders. This has now been largely addressed, but vigilance is needed to ensure that backlogs do not build up again. Performance management processes are now in place to maintain this performance.

### **Areas for Improvement**

- Child abuse work which falls outside the CPU remit is managed within the Area-based crime investigation units, accountable through Area commanders to the DCC.

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Performance in respect of these offences is included in the Area performance measures for violent crime, but is therefore more generic than specific in nature. Performance measures for the central CPU, though in place, are more quantitative than qualitative and thus cannot capture key dimensions of the work.

- The referral unit for child abuse enquiries is reported to be unable to keep up with its administrative tasks and cannot conduct proactive analytical work. This lack of capacity was recognised in a recent best value review, but funding problems mean that staffing has not increased.
- Although multi-agency partnership work in the CPU is effective, some child abuse enquiries are dealt with outside the unit on areas – for example those cases which fall outside the CPU's terms of reference, such as those occurring outside the family unit. In some of these cases, partner agencies are not involved until later in the process, which is a breach of good practice. In some cases where there has been a child-on-child assault, force procedures and good practice have not been followed and, instead of both children being dealt with as victims, one has been dealt with as a perpetrator. In a few cases, officers have dealt with reports of child assault within the home as domestic abuse rather than following the guidelines set out for child abuse enquiries in *Working Together*. This reflects a lack of qualitative assessment of child abuse enquiries on Areas.
- During child abuse enquiries, each suspect should (at a minimum) be checked on the national Impact Nominal Index (INI) to see if they are known to other forces. This takes place for those cases investigated by the CPU, but is not consistently done for those cases investigated by Area staff, who may therefore miss vital links across force boundaries in these enquiries.
- The Sunflower Centres represent good practice, but they do not cover the whole of the force area, and thus the level of service to victims of domestic abuse elsewhere is not as high. For example, the comprehensive risk assessment process applied by the Sunflower Centres is not used elsewhere in the force. While these centres are multi-agency-funded, and not all local authorities contribute (hence the limited coverage), the force needs to ensure that essential work such as risk assessment is undertaken consistently across the county.
- There is evidence that caseloads for domestic abuse staff on Areas are too high. For example, one unit on an Area was at the time of inspection four weeks behind in contacting victims of crime (other than those requiring a high priority response), and staff received very little direct management or support from supervisors.
- The performance management of domestic abuse on Areas does not contain a range of quantitative and qualitative assessments as the basis for judging and improving performance. It is limited largely to reporting on the arrest rate at scenes of domestic abuse. While there has been a significant increase in the level of arrests, there is evidence that inappropriate use of arrest powers is causing problems in child abuse enquiries.
- More staff will be required within specialist units if the force is to place domestic violence high on its list of priorities. At present, Areas have dedicated domestic violence officers but these have received piecemeal training and different Area domestic violence officers perform different tasks. Control room staff have received accredited training in handling the initial telephone response to reports of domestic abuse. However, Area uniformed staff (who respond to the initial reports of domestic abuse) have not received relevant training other than instruction on the force's positive arrest policy and general training

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during their probation. These and other problems have been recognised and plans are in place to address the training of operational staff. The force's aspiration is to combine certain functions in some form of public protection unit, but these plans are not well advanced.

- There is an absence of a well-defined management structure for dangerous offender management in the county overall. Clear lines of accountability have recently been put in place from the central team through to the director of intelligence, but accountability for the dynamic risk assessment of dangerous offender management on Areas was not evident during inspection.
- Although specialist staff have received appropriate accredited training, Area staff involved in the management of low and medium-risk sex and dangerous offenders, including supervisors who take a direct part in multi-agency meetings and risk management, have not received training to assist them in this role, particularly in their responsibility to conduct dynamic risk assessments.
- At the time of inspection, Areas demonstrated little ownership or understanding of level 1 (police-managed) offenders. A backlog in the visits that should be undertaken had built up, compounded by one of the two Areas not having access to the Violent and Sex Offenders Register (ViSOR) IT system which would have assisted them in this process. Supervisors of operational staff who conducted visits to registered dangerous and sex offenders did not take a direct part in supervising the quality of this work. The ViSOR system has now been rolled out to both Areas, managed by the detective inspector intelligence managers on either side of the county.

## 5 Providing Assistance (Domain 4)

### 5A Contact Management

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Direction of Travel</b>
<b>Good</b>	<b>Improved</b>

#### National Grade Distribution

Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
1	18	20	4

#### Contextual Factors

Since the 2005 baseline assessment, Northamptonshire Police's FCC has made significant improvements to working practices and processes. A new centralised CRIB and CMU (with screening and tasking responsibilities) have also been introduced within the FCC. FCC Managers have now successfully introduced the CRIB and the DMU into normal business practices and the effects on call volumes and customer satisfaction are beginning to be realised. The force has recently introduced new call-handling technology, which has facilitated the capture of demand data and also improved the management of calls from receipt to service fulfilment.

The introduction of a First Contact implementation project and manager means that all the salient recommendations and suggestions contained within *First Contact*, NCHS, the National Standard for Incident Recording, the HMIC baseline assessment 2005 and the QoSC, should now be achieved by means of a prioritised but co-ordinated approach.

#### Strengths

- The force has introduced a centralised helpdesk and set up a DMU and CRIB that have improved accessibility for the public and provided greater consistency in the service delivered by the FCC.
- The FCC is supported directly by a number of dedicated functions: a training department, a customer relations team, a systems administration team, a management information and resource planning unit and a finance officer. Significant investment has been made in this function over this baseline period, including the expenditure of £95,000 on a system of 'early call-back' to priority incident callers where deployment has not been possible within agreed service levels.
- Appointing a project manager within the FCC to manage the implementation of HMIC's *First Contact* thematic report, NCHS and the QoSC has paid dividends in identifying good practice nationally following the publication of last year's baseline assessment.
- The dedicated customer relations team manages customer expectations and relations, including complaints resolution and learning from mistakes. The marketing strategy covers visits to the facilities by, and talks to, members of the public, stakeholders and

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outside organisations. The team also visits local partnership and parish council meetings, and has a strong link with the professional standards department.

- The FCC has introduced an integrated call scripting process onto the command and control system, which has improved quality and speed of call taking.
- FCC senior managers convene a quarterly FCC staff consultative forum where issues, risks and initiatives are discussed and actioned. The systems administration team regularly selects groups of officers to assist in testing and trialling new systems and processes aimed at improving service delivery, and changes are made according to staff preference wherever possible.
- The DMU manages lower-priority incidents in real time by scheduling appointments for officers to attend at a time that is convenient to the caller. This process is already achieving significant improvement in resolving lower-priority incidents. Radio operators call back priority incident callers to provide reassurance and continually assess risk.

### **Work in Progress**

- A caller history database was being introduced at the time of inspection to provide call handlers with information and intelligence in relation to previous calls. This also enables radio operators to give intelligence to officers responding to incidents prior to their arrival at the scene.
- The voicemail system is not always responded to by staff. Recognising this, the force is in the process of setting standards for getting back to callers and a new voicemail policy is now in place. This will improve accessibility to staff, particularly community beat officers who, as part of SCTs, will all have dedicated mobile phones for direct contact by the public.

### **Areas for Improvement**

- There needs to be greater integration between the command and control IT system and the force crime recording system, as the lack of this is leading to duplication of effort, with staff keying the same information into separate systems rather than data being transferred automatically.
- A better fit between modelled staffing levels, actual staffing levels and demand would increase the force's performance in call handling and incident despatch.

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## GOOD PRACTICE

**TITLE: Demand Management**

**PROBLEM:**

The Demand Management Unit (DMU) was established in November 2005 with a primary role to manage and, where possible, resolve Grade 3 incidents (non-emergency calls which may not merit officer deployment). Incident resolution teams (IRTs) or Area customer service Units previously had responsibility for G3 incidents but frequently could not deal with them promptly and volumes of outstanding incidents built up. The DMU can better manage G3 incidents, providing a prompt service to meet customer needs and expectations.

**SOLUTION:**

The DMU is staffed by four PCs seconded from the Force Communications Centre (FCC) and four PCs from BCUs. The DMU works from 0700hrs until 2230hrs Sunday to Thursday and until midnight on Friday and Saturday nights. Each Area is required to resource attendance to those Grade 3 incidents that require deployment.

For those incidents where deployment is not required, DMU officers telephone the caller within 24 hours (as per the Graded Incident Policy) and try to resolve the incident over the phone. Very tight parameters are in place before the incident is closed as having been resolved by the DMU. The 'DMU resolved' tag is used only if a DMU officer has dealt with an incident in its entirety. DMU supervisors regularly screen and monitor BCU incident levels for Grades 1 and 2, and work closely with colleagues to ensure that all available resources are used to the maximum effect.

**OUTCOME(S): Benefits**

The volume of outstanding G3 incidents has significantly reduced with the introduction of the DMU. Staff from both the DMU and BCUs believe that the DMU has led to better management of Grade 3 incidents, enabling a better quality of service to the public.

Officers report having more time to focus on Grade 1 and 2 incidents, and provide a better quality of service to these incidents, while the IRTs have more opportunities to undertake proactive work.

**FORCE CONTACT:** Further details from ACC (TO)

**5B Providing Specialist Operational Support**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Direction of Travel</b>
<b>Fair</b>	<b>Stable</b>

**National Grade Distribution**

Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
0	23	19	1

**Contextual Factors**

The baseline assessment report for 2005/06 includes two additional elements within this area of policing, which last year predominantly dealt with firearms – namely public order and civil contingencies. Consequently the Fair grade does not reflect a worsening of the force’s firearms provision but rather acknowledges the overall level of service in all three disciplines. The force is progressing well with its firearms action plan and expects this to be completed by November 2006 in order to gain accreditation. There is a clear link between the firearms risk and threat assessment and all the firearms resources, structures and skills the force deploys to meet current known and future predicted demands.

The force has recently tested the setting up of a strategic co-ordinating centre for a terrorist incident, and has also conducted a flu pandemic exercise together with other services, and plans have been developed in the light of these. Work on developing contingency plans with partners has recently been started, following the prompt publication of a county risk assessment under the Civil Contingencies Act (CCA). Force business continuity plans are also being developed. A plan is being developed to address the insufficient number of fully public order-trained officers available for 24-hour deployment to guarantee meeting the force mutual aid commitment.

**Strengths**

- The force has completed a comprehensive firearms risk and threat assessment (February 2006) using a template which was recommended by NCPE in 2005. There is a clear link between this and all the firearms resources, structures and skills the force deploys to meet current known and future predicted demands.
- All firearms officers have immediate access to a full range of less-lethal options, including baton guns and Tasers. A police dog specially trained to support firearms officers is available for firearms incidents. Firearms and public order commanders, in liaison with tactical advisers, also have additional options including use of CS gas and smoke grenades.
- Silver firearms commander cover is provided by a cadre of 12 senior officers who have passed a nationally accredited course. This recently restructured cadre provides sufficient resilience and enables commanders to become more experienced, as they are called on to perform this role more frequently than before. The force has trained three of its four chief officers to Gold level for firearms and critical incidents.

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- Regular firearms meetings are held with representatives from all relevant firearms disciplines, Areas, and the FCC. Standing agenda items are training, incident debriefs, and deciding and progressing firearms policy. The format of the debrief presentations is particularly effective in ensuring that the organisation learns from the points raised.
- All the specialist services within the operations department, including dogs (which provide MISPER search and drugs/explosives detection capability) and air operations, are tasked at both the force level and the department's own tasking and co-ordination meeting. A daily conference call between the department and Areas provides the tasking link and performance reality check.
- The force has in place an integrated intelligence system accessible to all staff that is used to manage intelligence gained from all departments, with a central link to external partners and agencies via the FIB.
- Public order is identified within the force strategic assessment as part of ASB and violent crime, and is included in the force control strategy within public protection. The strategic assessment has been used to identify and react to potential disorder.
- The force recognises the value of gathering community intelligence. A force community tension team is in place to co-ordinate this activity and identify triggers for preventive action. Since the July 2005 London bombings all operational staff have been made more aware of the need for such intelligence through guidance leaflets and a marketing campaign.
- A system is in place whereby crime and community intelligence in relation to potential major incidents is passed to the emergency planning team for analysis and review of existing plans and development of new plans; this system would cover events such as the fuel dispute or a flu pandemic.
- The Chief Constable chairs the LRF. The tactical subgroup of the LRF has a wide representation including all the key stakeholders. This and other working groups provide an appropriate multi-agency structure that has promptly completed risk assessments as required by the CCA. Meetings are held with the Fire Service to prioritise risk and to share what information it has on site-specific contingency plans.
- The head of the FCC chairs the county local resilience forum communication group, on which all partners are represented. While there is no formal plan, communication arrangements are in place for specific contingencies. The force uses nationally developed promotional materials, locally badged, and the website is a proven method of communicating advice widely to the public.
- The force has arrangements for the call-out and activation of force staff to respond to a major incident. There are sufficient trained staff, equipment and facilities to provide an initial response to such an incident in most key areas, specifically in casualty bureau and body recovery and identification. In other specialist areas mutual aid arrangements are in place to provide resources. There is a plan to match existing staff skills against a national template to ensure that future major incident training is more focused and prioritised.

### **Work in Progress**

- A new mobilisation plan was partly, but not fully, tested during a triple fatal accident and subsequent gridlock on the M1 motorway. The intention is to test the plan fully in the near future as part of a regional exercise.

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- Some roles within the operations department (such as public order, tactical advice, the firearms tactical unit and some major incident specialisms) are at risk of a lack of resilience because individuals perform multiple specialist roles. Work is ongoing, locally and regionally, to address this through succession planning and improve the appropriate diversification of skills.
- The force acknowledged that the accreditation and re-accreditation process for Silver commanders needed to be developed. A new accreditation policy has recently been adopted (following a best practice model from Leicestershire Police), and the first stage of Silver training delivered; the whole process was NCPE-compliant by September 2006. Regional training for firearms commanders has also been initiated.
- The force has participated in several multi-agency exercises over the last 12 months, including a flu pandemic exercise. However, having recently invested in more staff for the emergency planning unit, the force intends to take an even greater part in multi-agency major incident exercises and develop the process by which the learning is passed to staff with key roles.

#### **Areas for Improvement**

- Although it has complied promptly with the publication of risk assessments as required by the CCA, the force has not yet developed emergency plans with partners, also a statutory requirement. At present there is little sharing of information to develop such plans; the intention is to improve information exchange with LRF partners in conjunction with work on risk assessments.
- The force does not have a sufficient reserve of public order-trained officers who are available 24/7 to guarantee its mutual aid commitment of one police support unit. At the time of inspection an action plan was being determined by the chief officer team in order to increase the number of public order-trained officers on incident response teams. More recently, the chief officer team has agreed that 90% of all response team staff will be trained over the next three years.
- There are sufficient public order-trained commanders available throughout the force at present but no refresher training programme and no call-out arrangements for public order Bronze and Silver commanders.
- The force has developed a matrix of all business activities and has in-depth business continuity plans for priority activities. There was a recent test of this preparation involving the use of a Gold command team during industrial action by some police staff. However, the business continuity command structure, at force or area/departmental level, is unfamiliar to staff. This situation would impede the force's ability to resume the affected area of business as quickly as possible.
- Critical incident training and awareness are inadequate at both operational and strategic levels. A Centrex trainer delivered critical incident training in May 2006 to targeted members of staff at inspector level and above. However, the force needs to determine how to provide additional training for managers and improve operational awareness.

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**5C Strategic Roads Policing**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Direction of Travel</b>
<b>Good</b>	<b>Stable</b>

**National Grade Distribution**

Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
0	7	33	3

**Contextual Factors**

Roads policing in Northamptonshire continues to develop and improve, with a large investment in training and development continuing into 2006/07, to ensure that the workforce has the skills and abilities to meet the demands of roads policing for the future. The priorities of the roads policing unit remain casualty reduction and support of force priorities. Performance has increased across the board over the last 12 months, with an increase of over 30% in arrests for casualty reduction and key crime offences. Killed or seriously injured (KSI) figures continue to improve in line with the government target. The casualty reduction partnership continues to evolve, and has voluntarily increased its own KSI targets to avoid complacency and sustain motivation. In addition the success of driver education and rehabilitation schemes continues. The devolved collision investigation team continues to develop excellence in road death investigations and performs well in line with file quality and submission targets.

**Strengths**

- The local policing plan identified casualty reduction as a priority for 2006/07. Both the force strategic assessment and the roads policing strategic assessment adopt the ACPO and Department for Transport strategy in terms of denying criminals use of the roads and preventing terrorism and ASB on the roads, as well as casualty reduction.
- The force's automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) team is tasked along NIM principles, within the national roads policing intelligence framework, to target level 1 and 2 criminals who use the road.
- A dedicated and experienced collision investigation team, including forensic collision investigators, investigates all fatal and serious road traffic collisions in compliance with the national *Road Death Manual*. Traffic SIOs are appointed for every road death. These are inspectors/sergeants who have received the Centrex Initial Management of Serious Crime training, and therefore have full understanding of managing crime scenes and ongoing investigations.
- An effective county-wide casualty reduction partnership actively engages with other agencies and organisations across a wide range of roads policing activity. At the end of 2005/06, the force reported a 46% reduction in the KSI category, meeting the 40% national reduction figure well ahead of the target date of 2010. To ensure continuing momentum, the casualty reduction partnership has set a new 50% reduction target for 2010. The reduction in child KSIs stands at 41%, against a national target of 50%.

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- Innovative work with the motorcycling community has led to a significant reduction in accidents involving motorcycles. There are two schemes established to improve young driver and rider behaviour, each with over 1,000 participants; both schemes have won national awards.
- The force safety camera partnership has contributed significantly to road safety, helping to reduce casualties on priority routes by 33% over five years. The partnership actively involves community volunteers in areas where speeding is identified as a community issue.
- Specialist roads policing resources are intelligence-led and tasked using NIM principles. An operational performance group in the operations department liaises daily with Area intelligence staff to ensure effective tasking of roads policing resources. The motorway patrol uses the PIKE database to ensure effective targeting of passenger and goods vehicles with a history of traffic offences.

#### **Areas for Improvement**

- While some roads policing performance is reported to the force-level MPG, it does not monitor roads policing activity against the departmental roads policing priorities.
- The force has identified that more specialist skills training is required for relevant roads policing staff on road freight issues, such as dealing with hazardous chemicals-related incidents.

## 6 Resource Use (Domain B)

### 6A Human Resource Management

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Direction of Travel</b>
<b>Fair</b>	<b>Improved</b>

#### National Grade Distribution

Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
2	18	23	0

#### National Position

The PPAF indicators on sickness and medical retirement continue to be key quantitative measurements of human resource (HR) performance. Increasing significance is being given to the completion of performance development reviews (PDRs) within 60 days of due date. PDRs should be intelligence-driven and link to other HR processes such as promotion and career pathways.

While most forces have conducted some basic workforce planning, this has yet to be extended to all staff, ranks and grades. Workforce planning often concentrates on basic succession planning for key operational police officer posts. Most forces now have a full range of policies to support the work/life balance, often going beyond their legal obligations. The majority of forces need to develop an effective mechanism to manage demand, which ensures that they allocate resources to peak periods. There is limited evidence to show that supervisors and managers have been adequately trained in effective resource management.

Although annual staff satisfaction surveys are common, applying the learning from these surveys, and from employment tribunals, accidents, injuries, complaints and grievances, could be developed further. Much health and safety activity in forces is owned by a handful of key individuals and is rarely integrated fully into day-to-day activity, other than monitoring of accidents, injuries and near-misses. Few forces have accident/injury reduction targets or effective performance management of health and safety activity.

#### Contextual Factors

The HR team's performance is improving overall, and is increasingly aligned to performance and operational needs. The HR team has been restructured to ensure that it is aligned to the force's needs and goals. HR is becoming much more integrated into management of the force, especially in operational areas, and of its becoming more proactive and influential in key decision-making forums. Occupational health, safety and welfare are delivering proactive and innovative practices to keep people at work. Basic areas of HR activity, such as attendance rates and the use of disciplinary processes to manage performance and attendance issues, are showing improvements. The workforce and succession planning unit is producing management information and trend analyses that enable HR to identify

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emerging issues and to manage them proactively. Recruitment and selection processes are compliant with National Occupational Standards and the Integrated Competency Framework and have been robustly tested.

### **Strengths**

- During 2005/06 the number of working hours lost by police officers and police staff as a result of sickness fell significantly compared to the previous year. This fall placed the force below the national average, with the police staff sickness absence level particularly low. The force occupational health and welfare department is an effective and integral part of the force strategy to 'manage down' sickness absence. A range of attendance interventions is available, fast-tracked when necessary, and funding has been identified to continue these initiatives within the strategy for a healthy police service.
- The force has a workforce and succession planning unit within the HQ HR department, the head of which chairs a fortnightly staff planning group with all the key HR business partners. The unit and meeting bring together all work on workforce planning, including succession planning and skills requirements. During 2006/07 a new skills management protocol and policy is being implemented to improve further the identification and management of skills requirements across the force.
- A regular force-wide staff opinion survey is used to assess organisational and staff health. An analysis and summary are published in the force newspaper and on the intranet, and emerging issues are taken forward.
- Completion rates of PDRs for all staff are high (95%), and the system is a key part of promotion and specialist appointment processes. There is evidence that some quality assurance of objective setting takes place, and that PDRs are starting to drive organisational performance.
- Regular reviews take place of all staff on both restricted and recuperative duties, to balance their individual medical needs with organisational requirements. In addition, the force has reviewed all staff who have taken medical retirement over the previous seven years.
- There is an HR strategy (2006–09), and an HR delivery plan (2006/07) that incorporates many key aspects of HR management including police reform and workforce modernisation. The PA was involved in the strategy's development. Owners and timescales are identified in the delivery plan, and it is reviewed and monitored at a force level and by the PA.

### **Work in Progress**

- There is limited health and safety awareness, understanding and ownership across the force. However, at the time of inspection work had started to develop a new health and safety plan, with the assistance of external consultants, and to drive this forward together with training of supervisors and managers. In addition, risk assessments specific to new roles such as that of PCSO have also been undertaken. In August 2006 the force reported that this work was almost complete.

### **Areas for Improvement**

- Workforce planning objectives are contained in the HR strategy but the force has yet to develop and publish a workforce plan that takes account of medium- to long-term operational priority needs. Not all Area and HQ department business plans identify

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local HR priorities. HMIC acknowledges that there is national work currently being developed around workforce modernisation principles, and that this will enhance the force's ability to progress some aspects of this work.

- Workforce modernisation is understood within the force, and some preparatory strategic work has been completed, but the HR implications are yet to be fully considered and applied as part of the HR strategy. For instance, at present there is limited use of identified career pathways.
- The arrangements for monitoring and evaluating accident/injury 'near-misses' need to be developed, as not all such incidents are recorded through standardised procedures, thereby limiting opportunities for organisational learning.

**6B Training, Development and Organisational Learning**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Direction of Travel</b>
<b>Good</b>	<b>Improved</b>

**National Grade Distribution**

Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
3	11	27	2

**National Position**

Learning and development (L&D) is a key driver for forces to improve performance. The requirement is for the right staff to have the right skills in the right place and at the right time in order to achieve or support operational performance.

HMIC has awarded a Good grade where key criteria have been met. Notably, where there is a clear distinction between the role of contractor and client, with the full and sustained involvement of a chief officer and the Police Authority. There should be a single post with accountability for all L&D products and services. Another prerequisite is an L&D strategy which is fully compliant with Home Office guidance and supported by a business plan, an improvement plan and a fully costed 'planned' and 'actual' delivery plan. Finally, a Good grade reflects robust quality assurance and evaluation processes, with clear evidence that the force is engaged in collaborative activity.

**Contextual Factors**

This section summarises the results of improvement activities that have been undertaken since the last inspection. It facilitates an understanding of the context within which such activities have taken place, together with an understanding of the outcomes. The force was graded Fair during the 2004/05 baseline process, with a number of recommendations made for improvement.

- The learning and development (L&D) department has been working extensively with the Centrex quality assurance department to ensure that a comprehensive quality assurance process exists for all learning and development.
- Since the 2005 inspection, the L&D department has reviewed collaboration with external organisations. As a result, the force now has formal protocols and an agreement with Northamptonshire University. This partnership will strengthen community engagement, increase inter-professional development across the county, and improve the quality of learning product offered.
- The L&D manager is responsible for the costing and planning of all L&D across the force. This ensures that a corporate approach exists and that the correct priority is given to L&D needs as they arise.

## Strengths

- The force engages well with other forces in the region. Two examples are the joint funding of a regional training and development unit, which ensures that on all L&D projects a regional perspective is taken; and collaboration on crime skills training, for which needs are pooled and programmes delivered regionally, improving the availability of training while reducing the cost.
- The force has introduced a skills management protocol, which synthesises working practices between the L&D function and the workforce succession planning function. This ensures that organisational skills gaps are both predicted and catered for. As the skills management protocol identifies key business owners for skills across the organisation, it has led to an improvement in prioritising training needs.
- The force has conducted regular customer surveys since 2002. These have enabled the L&D department to gain a better insight into the needs and perceptions of its customers. For the 2005 staff survey the L&D department worked closely with the corporate development department to design a new set of questions which, for the first time, began to measure leadership capability against a predefined set of principles. The findings of the resultant survey have led to specific actions being taken.
- PDR processes are embedded within the force and the L&D department. All members of the department have biannual performance reviews and moderation sessions, facilitated by the HR department.
- The L&D department has been commended for the progress it has made in mainstreaming diversity across all its training programmes. A number of events have been held, attended by forces across the UK and by Centrex. Such work ensures that diversity strands are a 'golden thread' throughout all L&D programmes.

## Areas for Improvement

- While it is apparent that the PA has an active and participative relationship with the force in respect of the L&D function, its involvement in the monitoring process would benefit from more structured and detailed recording. PA attendance at the training and development subgroup, where key priorities regarding L&D are decided, would be beneficial to the force.
- The L&D department can evidence early signs of good consultative working relationships with its community but, these relationships need to be strengthened and formalised. The force aims to work closely with Derbyshire Constabulary which has an established training IAG, that learns from noteworthy practice in this area.
- The L&D department needs to improve its ability to conduct dynamic risk assessment. Work is in progress in order to improve this position.
- The L&D department needs to review all L&D policies and procedures systematically, as part of its ongoing quality assurance commitment. This will ensure that policies and procedures are relevant and in keeping with the needs of the force.

**6C Race and Diversity**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Direction of Travel</b>
<b>Good</b>	<b>Stable</b>

**National Grade Distribution**

Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
0	14	27	2

**Contextual Factors**

A clear strategic direction on diversity incorporates national documents as well as local perspectives and objectives, with clear links between the diversity governance structures and operational effectiveness at area level. Monitoring is carried out across all six strands of diversity, with updates provided to the PA. Positive action initiatives are on track, for example the reasonable adjustments process in place under the DDA, and strong relationships have been developed with internal support networks to improve the effectiveness of diversity policy. All policies and procedures are updated to reflect new or amended legislation. Robust procedures are in place to manage grievance and disciplinary matters through close links between the professional standards department, staff associations and support networks.

**Strengths**

- The Diversity (confidence and equality) Strategic Board, together with its practitioners' working group, oversees the progress of the race equality scheme, the Gender Agenda, the race equality programme and Breaking Through action plans.
- The force equality and diversity action plan incorporates all the recommendations contained within recent key national reports. The restorative conferencing initiative is used to mediate and resolve internal grievances and conflicts and was identified as good practice by the Morris Inquiry. Force systems have been amended to cater for the Civil Partnerships Act and the force is currently preparing for new legislation including the disability equality and the gender equality duties.
- Government and partners direct academic institutions to the force as an exemplar employer, for assistance in specific areas of research, and for academic inputs by the ACC (support) and the force diversity manager.
- All six strands of diversity are incorporated in the force's race and diversity equality scheme (2005–08) and feature in impact assessment. There is a significant number of trained impact assessors, including all policy writers and a number of force IAG members. A mechanism is in place to ensure that no new or revised policy can be published without an equality impact assessment.
- There is clear evidence of staff access to policies and procedures dealing with the full range of work/life balance working arrangements. Regular staff opinion surveys show a consistently increased confidence among staff to discuss and manage

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diversity issues with colleagues and managers. For example, the percentage of staff who think equality and diversity issues are effectively managed in the force rose from 82% in 2004/05 to 90% in 2005/06.

- The force has taken a range of steps, co-ordinated through a disability project group, to comply fully with the DDA. There is evidence of ongoing 'reasonable adjustments' being made for staff, and the force has for many years held the Two Ticks national accreditation for providing fair opportunities for training, access and jobs to those with disabilities. Recent completion of the disability standard public-sector benchmarking exercise showed very positive results, which were communicated in the local press.

### **Work in Progress**

- The progression of female and BME staff to higher ranks and specialist departments continues to be monitored by the force. Improvements have been made during the last 12 months, specifically with regard to specialisms in the operations department. For example, several female officers have been recruited as firearms officers.
- The proportion of police recruits from BME groups in 2005/06 was 0.81%, well below the proportion of people from BME groups in the economically active population of 4.5%. This also represented a significant reduction fall from the period January to December 2004, when the BME recruitment level stood at 3.4% of all recruits. However, 3.3% of the force's police officers were from BME groups, against a Home Office target of 3%. A number of focused recruitment events are used to encourage BME and female candidates to join the force, and the Black Police Association is engaged with the recruitment team to try to attract more BME candidates. The minorities liaison officer post has also now been filled.

### **Area for Improvement**

- Monitoring of sickness absence to identify patterns and trends is not yet conducted against the six strands of diversity to ensure there is no disproportionality.

**6D Managing Financial and Physical Resources**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Direction of Travel</b>
<b>Good</b>	<b>Stable</b>

**National Grade Distribution**

Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
1	11	24	7

**Contextual Factors**

This assessment is based on the force’s self-assessment return and HMIC’s own findings, as well as on a consideration of the Police Use of Resources Evaluation (PURE) conducted by the Audit Commission’s appointed auditor for the force. Set out at the end of this report are the appointed auditor’s summarised scores for each theme covered by PURE. Separate, more detailed reports on PURE have also been issued by the appointed auditor for the force.

Work on preparing for force mergers has had a significant impact on Northamptonshire Police’s finance department and other support services.

The published budget report for 2006/07 sets out a three-year forecast of expenditure and the impact on council tax. The budget does not anticipate a reduction in police officer posts but does envisage that more officers will be deployed on operational activities and plans a reduction in police staff of 33 posts. These cuts may impact on operational capability, but this could be offset by the planned recruitment of 98 additional PCSOs.

Changes in the police funding formula have benefited the force – previously it was a net loser under the ‘floors and ceilings’ arrangement, losing in excess of £5 million over three years to subsidise other forces. In 2006/07 it will receive £807,000 in ‘damping grant’ to achieve the minimum grant level. Reserves have been reduced in order to pay for capital infrastructure projects, and also to subsidise council tax by £750,000 in 2006/07. The treasurer notes that these one-off uses of reserves will significantly compound budget pressures and costs in future years.

**Strengths**

- Financial management arrangements are robust and the force continues to manage its resources effectively. Key elements of medium-term financial planning and budgetary controls are in place, while efforts to move to more strategic financial planning, linked to corporate planning, reflect good practice. Financial forecasting is effective and the force predicts its 2005/06 outturn to be within 0.4% of the cash limit budget.
- The director of resources, a qualified accountant, has chief officer status and is a full member of the chief officer team, providing strategic financial and operational input. She has considerable credibility as both a chief officer and a leading player on the finance/resources stage.

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- Chief officers meet with the Area senior management teams periodically to hold them to account for both performance and resource management. The director of resources also holds quarterly meetings with Area commanders and departmental heads to discuss resourcing issues.
- The majority of budgets are devolved, with area commanders and departmental heads supported and trained by the finance department. Each Area and department has a management accountant, supported by locally based finance officers. The force has a mature and highly devolved financial management culture, underpinned by rigorous financial controls.
- A good working relationship exists between the PA treasurer and the director of resources; a documented protocol helps to avoid duplication of effort and ensure a consistent approach to issues.
- The force has an established term contract with professional consultants who provide advice on estates-related matters. All projects involve structured consultation with operational colleagues.
- The force is actively considering collaborative arrangements with other agencies. Examples include new customer contact centres in Rothwell and Desborough local authority areas, together with the new Corby Civic Hub project, which should be completed during 2008.
- The force's expenditure on premises is below the MSF average. The force participates in the national benchmarking system, and in fact the head of property services currently chairs both the policy and user groups. The results of the 2004/05 inter-force reports are being used to target cost reductions – eg in evaluating cleaning tenders.
- The activity analysis return rate has increased to over 95% under the aegis of the activity-based costing (ABC) steering group (chaired by the director of resources) and findings inform financial planning and service delivery.
- As part of the financial monitoring process the force uses in-year resource reprioritisation to identify savings and efficiencies.
- The new head of procurement has strengthened contract management and is engaging with the Police Excellence in Procurement Strategy and working closely with other forces in the region. The supplier base is being reviewed.
- Realignment of the base budget to reflect operational need has improved in the 2006/07 budget round; areas of significant growth include DNA and interpretation services.
- Transport costs are falling; interestingly, the force shares its transport manager with Leicestershire Constabulary, which may presage future developments.
- Northamptonshire is an area of population growth and is at the centre of the Government's housing growth agenda for the next 20 years. The force is working with neighbouring forces to ensure that community safety and police infrastructure are not overlooked at the planning stage.

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### Work in Progress

- The force is aware of the importance of improving the data collection process for ABC. Northamptonshire has done significant testing of electronic data collection, and the results of this work will be presented to the force for evaluation (and eventual force-wide roll-out) after October 2006.

### Areas for Improvement

- Although the force participates in the national benchmarking clubs it does not make use of all the data available. In particular, as the force itself recognises, it needs to use such data to develop an energy strategy.
- The force has fewer police officers per head of population than its MSF average. However, the cost per police officer is the highest in the MSF and overall expenditure on the policing service per head of population is above the MSF average. The force also has above-average expenditure on supplies and services.

#### **Audit Commission: Police Use of Resources Evaluation**

#### **Force and Authority: Northamptonshire**

<b>Element</b>	<b>Assessment</b>
Financial management	3
Financial standing	3
Internal control	2
Value for money	2

Key to grades:

1. Below minimum requirements – inadequate performance
2. Only a minimum requirement – adequate performance
3. Constantly above minimum requirements – performing well
4. Well above minimum requirements – performing strongly

The judgements are made by auditors under the Code of Audit Practice and in accordance with guidance issued by the Audit Commission.

**6E Information Management**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Direction of Travel</b>
<b>Good</b>	<b>Stable</b>

**National Grade Distribution**

Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
1	9	31	2

**National Position**

The convergence of information and technology streams, and in particular the developing role of the chief information officer, is focusing attention on how forces corporately govern information. The aim in this assessment is to differentiate between forces that are taking an information-based approach to delivery and those that are technology-driven. A raft of emerging standards – notably Management of Police Information (MoPI) – is defining metrics against which performance can be measured, and these will ease the challenge in future assessments. Equally, the need for forces to develop medium-term planning, to consider national strategy in their local planning, and to reflect the requirements of the information technology infrastructure library (ITIL) have all provided some clear measures of success.

It has been a particularly challenging 12 months for forces' information services, as much development work was postponed because of amalgamation proposals. This backlog will need to be addressed in 2006/07, together with work on shared approaches to bridge the level 2 shortfall. The challenge of providing information for the cross-regional information-sharing project (CRISP) and the emerging IMPACT system is considerable. This may require the development of 'confidential' networks and work to meet the requirements of the Unified Police Security Architecture (UPSA) as well as MoPI. These carry as yet unquantified but very considerable costs, as well as resulting in major business change. With constrained budgets and increasing demands, the future poses real challenges as to how forces will manage their information assets.

**Contextual Factors**

The present information and communications technology (ICT)-related capabilities of Northamptonshire Police largely stem from a major change in the provision of budgets and resources that has been sustained for six years. During 2006/07, several key national and local projects will be completed, thus enabling the advancement of ICT services directed via the information systems (IS)/IT strategy. Progress has been made with local initiatives that are aligned with national directions and strategic intentions, such as the ISS4PS position. The force will therefore have a range of forward-looking technologies capable of exploitation by operational and business functions – for example NSPIS case interactions with criminal justice partners, ANPR advancements, the mobile National Automated Fingerprint Identification System, video conferencing, force intelligence system/IMPACT data access, inter-force data sharing via links to WAN or the Criminal Justice Extranet (CJX), and

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Permex, among many others. However, further progression will require continued investments in devices, systems, skilled ICT specialists, and a general raising of the skill level of the user base. In addition, there is a danger that increasing and competing demands upon the force and on ICT services may jeopardise the timely completion of projects that will ensure IMPACT readiness and will have operational benefits.

### **Strengths**

- The head of ICT is a qualified ICT professional who, as a member of all the key force strategic meetings, is able to direct ICT strategy. In addition, the head of ICT is the owner of the entire ICT network with strong links to data protection, information security and freedom of information.
- The force has a detailed and comprehensive IS/IT strategy (2005–10) and business development plan, in line with the force capital programme. The strategy links to the local policing plan and national strategies including the Police Science and Technology Strategy. The strategy has also been updated to align with IMPACT and NCPE codes.
- The ICT steering group's work is supported by two subgroups (managing knowledge and facilities management). Both subgroup meetings, held twice a month, are chaired by the ACPO lead and have broad representation including all staff associations.
- All main ICT development projects are managed using accredited methodology tailored to the size of the project, with monthly updates reported to the ICT steering group. In this way annual and longer-term ICT business planning is closely monitored and focused on force priorities.
- The force is fully compliant with the provision of all required information to the Criminal Records Bureau, and with the stipulation that data to populate the INI should come from an approved list of source systems.
- The force is proceeding with its plan for Extract, Transfer and Load in relation to the IMPACT programme, and this has been agreed with the programme team.
- The force is completing a major upgrade to its network bandwidth capacity, begun in 2005 and now considered capable of delivering a level of data transfer and telephony that will meet future organisational needs.
- The ICT helpdesk has regularly monitored service level agreements, with targets benchmarked against the East Midlands region, which it met in full in 2005/06. The force user satisfaction survey confirms that the majority of customers feel service levels are good to high.
- The information security officer sits within the professional standards department. In liaison with the head of ICT, an information and security strategy has been implemented through a range of policies and backed up by CJX accreditation. A force-level information and communication strategy group oversees direction of the strategy.
- Critical systems have been identified on a system owners' matrix. Business continuity and disaster recovery arrangements for key systems, including Airwave and command and control, are in place. The force control centre provision has been tested. A risk management group is in place to review and direct this area of business.

### **Work in Progress**

- The force has confirmed that work is progressing in conjunction with the national IMPACT project team to complete Cross-Regional Information Sharing Project update provision within agreed timescales. The force has worked and continues to work closely through the regional IMPACT co-ordinator to ensure that it responds to required changes in format and timescales.

### **Areas for Improvement**

- Not all critical force functions and departments have fully developed business continuity plans. In addition, there is no formalised business continuity Gold or area command structure that is widely known by force staff.
- In 2005 the force identified that, though it was currently serviceable, there was a significant risk of breakdown to the microwave system in the short- to medium-term. The completion of replacement work is planned for 2006-07.

**6F National Intelligence Model**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Direction of Travel</b>
<b>Fair</b>	<b>Declined</b>

**National Grade Distribution**

Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
0	19	22	2

**Contextual Factors**

The force has embraced the concept of NIM, sought to embed it within its operating procedures, and is continuing with work following HMIC and PSU/NCPE assessments. The force is committed to making sure that it not only continues to meet the NCPE minimum standards, but also enhances them wherever possible, to derive the performance benefits that can be accrued from NIM.

There has been significant investment in IT to support the intelligence function and briefing processes, but there remains some work to be done, including ensuring that there is a high corporate standard for the delivery of briefings and debriefings to match the technical investment that has been made.

Corporacy in NIM products such as problem and target profiles is evident at both levels 1 and 2. With the rationalisation of areas in April 2006, this corporacy has been extended to the timing of level 1 and 2 tasking and co-ordination meetings, which will make the process more effective in supporting areas or dealing with identified level 2 issues more quickly. Strategic assessments are used to set and address control strategy and intelligence requirements, with strong partnership engagement at level 2 strategic meetings. All control strategy priorities show clear intelligence, enforcement and prevention priorities, and the latest intelligence requirement demonstrates clear requirement at level 2 in terms of 'What we need to know'.

**Strengths**

- The strategic assessment process includes a recommendations meeting involving partner and statutory agencies, where informed debate is undertaken in relation to recommendations contained within the assessment. This meeting informs the priorities contained within the control strategy.
- The joint PSU/NCPE assessment in February 2006 commended operational performance groups (OPGs) on areas as good practice. Headed by a chief inspector, each group has two detective inspectors, one to manage assets and resources and one to act as the 'enforcer' to ensure that tasks allocated to each area through NIM processes are acted upon. This results in a very tight control of operational activity when combined with daily and fortnightly tasking processes, aligned to NIM requirements.
- The performance of source handling staff, who are centrally controlled, is now measured by quality and outcomes (such as the number of arrests and detections and the quantity

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of property/drugs seized as a result of the information they submit from covert intelligence sources) rather than outputs (such as the number of intelligence logs they submit).

### **Work in Progress**

- The emphasis in the past has been on compliance with NIM rather than the effectiveness of the process. In the future, the effectiveness of NIM structures will be measured as part of the Focus performance review process for Areas (and ultimately departments).
- Community beat profiles contain information on where crime is happening across the force, but not necessarily on who is believed to be committing this crime, nor on prolific offenders resident/active in an Area. This makes it harder for new staff to understand the Area on which they are working, and for incident response teams to gain local knowledge of the Area to which they have been assigned. The force is in the process of developing intranet sites to share this information, though not all links are yet active.

### **Areas for Improvement**

- Problem profiles have been completed in a limited number of areas (five in total) but there are no plans in place to refresh them on an ongoing basis. The constraint is the limited analytical and research capacity in the FIB.
- There is no corporate standard for knowledge and understanding of intelligence and intelligence systems and products across the force, although a formal intelligence training structure is now being developed.
- At the level 1 tasking and co-ordination meeting, representatives from other agencies, such as local authority staff and housing officers, are present and contribute. However, partners and other agencies are not present at the level 2 tactical tasking and co-ordination meeting.
- The level of technical support available to supervisors for the briefing of staff does not match up to the quality of their briefing skills. In particular, they are not provided with intelligence products to support them in this task, for example when the intelligence department does not work seven days per week. There are also reports of delays to intelligence being placed on the briefing notes, and of infrequent updates to the system in some parts of the force – for example a crime series that took three days to appear on the operational briefing note. The force is addressing this issue through its preparations for the introduction of the national briefing model.
- The analytical/research capacity within the FIB is insufficient for current demand, and the situation is exacerbated by limited capacity at Area level. Requests for analytical products have been put on hold during the completion of the strategic assessment, and there is no dedicated analytical capability for the level 2 team. A bid for additional capacity (for force and Areas) was agreed but has been put on hold due to lack of funding.
- The force uses the ComPaSS database, its own force intelligence system and beat profiles to hold community intelligence. However, there is a need to improve the interoperability between ComPaSS and the force intelligence system to ensure that, when required, all relevant intelligence can be identified.
- There is no link between the force intelligence system and the HOLMES IT system used in major crime/murder enquiries, and consequently intelligence uncovered during such

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enquiries is not available to intelligence staff across the force to inform other intelligence products, unless specifically entered by incident room staff. SIOs now have a responsibility to ensure that this is done.

- The process of integrating NIM processes and the delivery of NHP is still at an early stage of development. The intelligence function needs to be more engaged with the NHP project to support this area of work, specifically in developing joint tasking, the use of NIM products at neighbourhood and SCT level, and reviewing the capacity of analysts to support the roll-out of SCTs.

## 7 Leadership and Direction

### 7A Leadership

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Direction of Travel</b>
<b>Fair</b>	<b>Not Graded</b>

#### National Grade Distribution

Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
0	4	35	4

#### Contextual Factors

The last year has seen continued change, with the implementation and development of the NPM and a focus on performance management and improvement. Significant progress has been made in developing leadership competency across the force, reviewing and refining the NPM; and re-aligning resources to support force priorities within tight budgetary constraints.

Despite the significant and fundamental changes that the force has been through, performance in most areas has been maintained or improved during this period. Satisfaction and morale, as evidenced by the staff opinion survey, are encouraging and are a reflection on the active commitment and leadership of the chief officer team and their investment in engaging with leaders at all levels of the force.

Approximately one-third of leaders at sergeant and inspector levels have been in post for less than two years, and further improvements have been made in competency, skills and engagement of leaders at all levels to encourage and support them in changing culture and improving performance. Examples include leadership seminars and the introduction of structured training for officers and police staff through the Initial Leadership Programme.

#### Strengths

- The Chief Constable is considered by staff to be passionate and committed to improving the force's performance. He inherited a difficult legacy of yawning gaps on volume crime performance with peer forces but has appropriate and credible plans to close them. The Chief and DCC have worked tirelessly, and to good effect, to drive through performance improvement and maintain staff commitment and morale.
- As part of the ongoing leadership seminar programme, a series of 'Focusing performance through leadership' seminars in early 2006 demonstrated the standards required from all staff, especially supervisors and managers within the two restructured areas. Topics covered included an update on national issues, developing the right culture, addressing poor performance (for example through achieving minimum levels of supervision and 100% completion of PDRs), quality of service and the Victims Charter.
- The chief officer team is now settled and has a good breadth of experience and enthusiasm.

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- Commitment and progress on police reform are evident, with the second highest ratio of police staff to officers in the country, an extended policing family strategy, the use of detective support officers across the force (with commitment to expand this in 2006/07), and the established use of custody assistants. Despite stringent budgetary constraints, realignments have been made to allow a growth in police staff posts overall, many of which are in the crime and community department.
- The effective management of the significant changes needed to implement the NPM and the Area mergers is demonstrated by a continued improvement in most areas of performance, a 7.9% reduction in crime, and rising staff morale – as evidenced by the staff opinion survey. Indeed, the survey shows that satisfaction and morale levels have improved in many areas, especially among police staff. Police officer sickness absence has fallen by 27%, placing the force above the MSF average.
- The chief officer team reviews the force financial position monthly and realigns resources to support operational performance – for example, to provide funding for Operation Tiger, tackling vehicle crime.
- Leadership levels have been enhanced by increased numbers of sergeants and inspectors and an improved leadership development programme, aimed at both officers and police staff.
- Working relationships with the PA are very positive, with a healthy degree of challenge and scrutiny by members but, overall, a supportive environment.
- The *Making the Difference* statement of force vision and values is widely and consistently used and displayed, and is central to force policies and plans. The strategic plan, the LPPP, and policies on contact management for the FCC are being finalised, and a leaflet on the Victims' Code is available on the force intranet and will be issued to all officers. An example of the setting of high standards is the DCC's order reinforcing dress standards, issued in February 2006, which is being rigorously enforced, with challenge by peers being encouraged and taking place.
- The chief officer team has recognised the change management required as the force undergoes a sustained period of change. 'Managing performance through change' seminars for all leaders, designed as part of this process, include the use of consultants specifically to tackle change management. A leaflet derived from these seminars has been distributed to all managers.
- Against this background of change, the 2005 staff opinion survey showed that key measures such as staff satisfaction and morale had remained stable, but police staff satisfaction showed significant improvement on the 2004 survey. Of 72 areas reported on, 50 showed improvements in satisfaction, of which 25 were statistically significant; the remaining 22 areas showed a reduction or no change in satisfaction, though only three of these were statistically significant.
- The DCC is the ACPO national lead for age discrimination, under the race and diversity business area, and the ACC leads the ACPO Working Group on Human Rights. Chief officers attend meetings of force support networks (such as Spectrum, the Women's Forum, the Black Police Association (BPA) and the CPA) to offer support, and also give opening speeches to all diversity courses to demonstrate visible commitment. The Chief Constable meets regularly with the BPA.
- A chief officer visibility programme is in place, with chief officers making regular visits to areas and departments and going out on patrol frequently with officers. The 'Ask the

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Chief feature on the force intranet has made the Chief Constable more accessible, and he personally responds to the many questions and comments which are sent in and subsequently published.

- The force is recognised as one of the best forces nationally in terms of the proportion of officers on the HPDS scheme and the support offered to scheme members – currently eight officers, ranging from sergeant to chief inspector – and potential applicants.

#### **Areas for Improvement**

- The morale of operational staff, particularly first- and second-line supervisors, has come under considerable pressure during the last 12 months as the force strives to deliver improved performance. The force rightly has high expectations of its staff, which the chief officer team communicates effectively, but the increase in intrusive supervision has come at the same time as an almost unprecedented level of change. The chief officer team needs to recognise this, and ensure appropriate support is given, if the changes implemented in the force are to be embedded, and performance is to continue to improve.
- The strength of the message from the chief officer team on the need to improve the sanction detection rate is apparent, and is to be commended. Previously the emphasis had been on crime reduction; however, the chief officer team must now maintain a balance between the need to achieve reductions in crime and the need to improve sanction detection performance.
- There has been extensive support and challenge by the PA in recent years in the area of performance accountability for volume crime. To enable the PA to examine a broader range of police activities, the force should work collaboratively with it to improve the latter's understanding of level 2 criminality and strategic risk management in protective services.

**7B Performance Management and Continuous Improvement**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Direction of Travel</b>
<b>Fair</b>	<b>Stable</b>

**National Grade Distribution**

Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
0	12	26	5

**Contextual Factors**

The performance analysis capability of the force has been significantly expanded, and this investment in staff and systems is reflected in new performance support products that have been rolled out to provide accessible performance data products at force, area, team and individual officer level. The MPG and departmental performance group structures provide systematic review and challenge of performance. The development of focus performance review has been a major change in the force’s approach to inspection, compliance and performance improvement, with regular ACPO accountability visits to areas.

There is a clear plan for the further improvement of the force’s performance management approach, with focus performance review being rolled out to all operational areas. Departmental performance review and the new approach to departmental business planning represent a strong commitment to developing a driven planning and performance regime for all non-operational departments. Ambitious plans exist to improve performance analysis packages; recent investment in new analysis packages will support this process in the next financial year. The last year has seen a marked improvement in the force’s approach to activity analysis campaigns, but over the coming year the challenge remains to realise the potential of this analysis to support decision-making, planning and performance processes.

**Strengths**

- The consistency, accessibility and reliability of performance data and analysis have improved markedly over the last 12 to 18 months, and there is now a good range of performance analysis products across the force, which will be further developed over the coming year.
- Performance accountability and review has again seen marked recent improvement, with approaches such as the MPG, Focus performance review of Areas, and re-launched PDRs delivering a very much more focused and challenging performance management system.
- Performance seminars were introduced in 2004 and the force is currently delivering the fifth series of seminars for all leaders in the organisation, both officers and police staff. These enable direct communication and discussion with leaders in relation to performance, leadership skills, change management and so on, with the aim of emphasising and developing the performance culture.

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- The PA has a direct hands-on role in aspects of the performance monitoring process, and there is effective involvement in performance review, shaping strategic priorities and target setting.
- Two particular examples over the last year illustrate how survey data has directly impacted on practice. The survey of non-emergency caller satisfaction helped to shape the FCC and DMU design. The community survey in Queensway, Wellingborough, supported the roll-out of the first SCT, and will be adopted for further roll-out of the SCTs force-wide.
- The development of the Area OPGs has improved tasking and accountability processes for Area staff by relentlessly driving and challenging performance.

### **Work in Progress**

- Collaborative work with the PSU (now part of the PCSD) has identified areas of non-compliance with the new SOPs for crime investigation. The force is redirecting existing managerial resources, as well as buying in additional capacity, to implement a reality-checking process (including random auditing) to ensure that SOPs are being complied with.
- Support departments are not held to account as robustly as Areas through the Focus performance review process. The departmental performance group has partly addressed this issue over the last year, and the force is in the process of expanding the Focus performance review process to its support functions. This could not be achieved before each support department had an effective business plan against which performance could be measured. Business plans are now being developed, and a number of departmental performance reviews have been scheduled for 2006/07.

### **Areas for Improvement**

- The performance culture still needs to be embedded further in the organisation, with all staff being able to recognise the role that they play in crime reduction and detection.
- The alignment of strategic planning, NIM and finance processes within the strategic planning cycle needs to be improved. In particular, alignment between the policing plan priorities and the force's strategic assessment under NIM is more general than specific and planned, and the financial planning cycle is described as effective but running to different deadlines.
- The force has improved its capability to conduct activity analysis campaigns, but needs to improve further in terms of using such analysis to shape decision making, planning and performance management. An action plan is still being developed and implemented to improve the use made of activity analysis.

## Appendix 1: Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations

### A

ABC	activity-based costing
ACC	assistant chief constable
ACPO	Association of Chief Police Officers
ANPR	automatic number plate recognition
ASB	anti-social behaviour
ASBO	Anti-Social Behaviour Order

### B

BME	black and minority ethnic
BPA	Black Police Association

### C

CAT	community action team
CCA	Civil Contingencies Act
CDRP	crime and disorder reduction partnership
CJD	criminal justice department
CJX	Criminal Justice Extranet
CMU	crime management unit
ComPaSS	community profiling and problem solving
CPS	Crown Prosecution Service
CPU	child protection unit
CRIB	crime recording and investigation bureau

### D

DCC	deputy chief constable
DDA	Disability Discrimination Act
DMU	demand management unit

**E**

EMSOU East Midlands special operations unit

**F**

FCC force communications centre

FCTT force community tensions team

FIB force intelligence bureau

FSS forensic science service

**H**

HMIC Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary

HOLMES Home Office Large Major Enquiry System

HQ headquarters

HR human resource

**I**

IAG independent advisory group

ICT information and communications technology

INI IMPACT Nominal Index

IT information technology

**K**

KSI killed or seriously injured

**L**

L&D learning and development

LAA local area agreement

LCJB local criminal justice board

LPP local policing plan

LRF local resilience forum

**M**

MISPER missing person

MPG managing performance group

MSF most similar force(s)

**N**

NCHS National Call-Handling Standards

NCPE National Centre for Policing Excellence

NHP neighbourhood policing

NIM National Intelligence Model

NPM Northamptonshire Policing Model

NSPIS National Strategy for Police Information Systems

**O**

OPG operational performance group

**P**

PA Police Authority

PCSD Police and Crime Standards Directorate

PCSO police community support officer

PDR personal development review

PNC Police National Computer

POCA Proceeds of Crime Act 2004

PPAF policing performance assessment framework

PPO prolific and priority offender

PSU Police Standards Unit

PURE Police Use of Resources Evaluation

PYO persistent young offender

**Q**

QoS  
QoS

quality of service commitment

**R**

RRAA

Race Relations (Amendment) Act

**S**

SAR

suspicious activity report

SCT

safer community team

SIO

senior investigating officer

SOCA

Serious Organised Crime Agency

SOP

standard operating procedure

**T**

TFMV

theft from motor vehicle

TWOC

taking [of vehicles] without consent

**V**

ViSOR

Violent and Sex Offenders' Register

VSS

victim support service