

Best Value Review of Police Training

Force: Staffordshire Police

Date of Inspection: 23–24 February 2005



A Report by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary

ISBN 1-84473-526-5
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Published 2005

Context and Force performance

Context

Population served by the Force	1,048,973	
Number of police officers	2,324	
Number of police staff	1,321	
Number of special constables	413	
Budget for training for the financial year	Financial Value	Percentage of Overall Force budget
2003/04	Not asked	7.46%
2004/05	£2.59	1.7%

Performance

A baseline assessment of the force was undertaken between March and October 2004.

The findings of HMIC relating specifically to the HR area, can be found at:

www.homeoffice.gov.uk/hmic/staffsbaseline1004.pdf

Further details of the force performance can be found at www.staffordshire.police.uk

For details of the rationale and methodology for the Best Value Reviews and inspection of police training please visit www.homeoffice.gov.uk/hmic/training.htm

Findings

Area Examined	Findings
TRAINING STRATEGY	<p>HM Inspector was encouraged to see that the Force has Training and Development Strategy directly linked to Force HR Strategy.</p> <p>The strategy also includes evaluation and assessment and drives the CTP process (sometimes referred to as Force training strategy).</p> <p>The strategic approach provides for a strong relationship between the Training Department and operational policing making it responsive to training needs.</p>
QUALITY OF COSTED TRAINING PLAN	<p>HM Inspector was encouraged to see that the costed training plan supports the NCM methodology. It requires additional work in the detail to be wholly compliant with HOC 53/2003.</p> <p>Some areas of training across the Force have not been captured within the plan. Despite the efforts of the Training and Development manager.</p> <p>HM Inspector is firmly of the view that the Force Training Manager should have functional responsibility for all training in the Force.</p>
MONITORING COSTED TRAINING PLAN THROUGHOUT THE YEAR	<p>The CTP is monitored only once per year and is in fact a 'point in time'.</p> <p>Some analysis of 'planned' delivery against 'actual delivery' is evidenced, although this information is not used for management purposes.</p> <p>HM Inspector would encourage the Force to introduce a mechanism to monitor the CTP which includes involvement of the Police Authority, Force Executive and Training Panels.</p>

Area Examined	Findings
<p>TRAINING NOT INCLUDED IN THE COSTED TRAINING PLAN</p>	<p>HM Inspector was made aware that certain elements of training have been and continue to be omitted from the costing process. It is recognised that the Force Training Manager is seeking to address this.</p> <p>This is supported by the fact that this information was brought to light by the Force voluntarily and amounts to the hitherto unknown provision of all training events supplied by Divisional Training officers and some specialist areas.</p> <p>Please see comments re Quality of Costed Training plan above.</p>
<p>CLIENT/CONTRACTOR ARRANGEMENTS</p>	<p>The Force training strategy clearly sets out the respective role and responsibilities of both client and contractor. Training panels operate at a force and divisional level in an effective manner that has embedded the relationship further.</p>
<p>MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS FOR TRAINING</p>	<p>The Force Training and Development Manager currently does not have overall control of all training within the Force.</p> <p>Imminent organisational structural changes will achieve the removal of the Force Training Department from the central HR function. As from 1 April 2005 the Force Training and Development Manager will report directly to the ACPO Lead.</p> <p>HM Inspector found strong evidence of an effective transformational leadership style throughout the Training Department, with a culture of trust and empowerment.</p> <p>The effective management structure enables a strong dynamic communication flow in all directions within the Department and also into the operational arena.</p> <p>HM Inspector strongly encourages the Force to challenge the rationale of not having functional control of some training elements (for example, some specialist departments and Divisional Training Officers) within the direct professional remit of the Head of Training.</p> <p>Evidence of the effective functionality of such a structure is already present within the firearms training/operations element of the force.</p>

Area Examined	Findings
<p>IMPLEMENTATION OF:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing Learning • Training Matters • Diversity Matters • Foundations for Change 	<p>HM Inspector was encouraged to see clear and evidenced knowledge of the recommendations from <i>Managing Learning, Training Matters, Diversity Matters</i> and the <i>FfC</i> within the Training Department , each supported by an audit trail.</p> <p>The Force was subject of an ACPO level race and diversity audit carried out by Leicestershire Constabulary in February 2004 which showed only minor difficulties.</p>
<p>CURRENT IMPROVEMENT PLAN</p>	<p>The IP is a clear continuous and living document. There are few outstanding actions from the original improvement plan emanating from the Best value review. The Force has continued to use and update the plan to drive on going development of the training function.</p>
<p>MONITORING THE IMPROVEMENT PLAN</p>	<p>The IP is a standing agenda item at fortnightly Training Department meetings and the Force Training Panel. Its contents, targets and actions are robust and well understood by staff.</p> <p>HM Inspector notes that the Head of Training meets with the Police Authority on a monthly basis to discuss targets and progress. In addition quarterly updates are provided to the Personnel Committee in respect of a number of areas including IPLDP and Race and Diversity. The Head of Training also attends national and regional meetings with the Police Authority and APA on a regular basis.</p>
<p>QUALITY ASSURANCE PROCESSES</p>	<p>HM Inspector was encouraged to see that the Force actively pursues QA across the Training Department.</p> <p>Monitoring of the QA is weak across areas not under the functional control of the Force Training and Development Manager, due the level of autonomy provided by the devolved structure of the Force.</p> <p>There is a poor uptake of the application of the <i>Models for Learning</i> outside of the central Training Department due to unwillingness to embrace the practices by Divisional Training Officers despite instructions and guidance as to their use. This weakness is made more significant by the lack of a rigorous QA process operating outside the central Training Department.</p>

Area Examined	Findings
<p>EVALUATION OF TRAINING</p> <p>NOTEWORTHY PRACTICE</p>	<p>HM Inspector was encouraged to see that a Force Evaluator is in post responsible for all Training evaluations.</p> <p>Level 1 and 2 evaluations are carried out consistently within the Training Department but are disparate in those areas not under the control of Force Training and Development Manager</p> <p>Level 3 evaluation is carried out by the Training Department Team Leaders. Whilst not meeting the requirements for a clear break between the provider and evaluator as indicated in HOC 7/2005, the structural model applied is evidently successful when considered against the results achieved.</p> <p>The model is clearly well understood by staff, is dynamic, timely, and practical in its approach resulting in a high level of confidence in its application.</p> <p>The ethical issues which are of concern in HOC 7/2005 relate to the involvement of training staff in high level evaluation are minimised by the leadership and management role of the force evaluation officer who oversees the evaluation function.</p> <p>The evaluation officer reports to the Force Training and Development Manager.</p>
<p>COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN TRAINING</p>	<p>Good examples of community involvement were found including a successful process in the Stoke on Trent Division, where communities are engaged in a locally identified 'raising of public awareness in policing issues' project designed and delivered by Divisional Training Officers. Further good examples were found in relation to the Staffordshire Area Child Protection Training program.</p>
<p>COLLABORATION – EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS</p>	<p>HM Inspector was pleased to see an embedded and working partnership with Staffordshire University in respect of its Leadership Development Programme which is well managed and adds value.</p>
<p>COLLABORATION – OTHER POLICE ORGANISATIONS</p>	<p>HM Inspector was pleased to see good collaboration between the Force and West Midlands Police in respect of the Public Order Training Site at Royal Air Force Cosford, and inclusion of West Midlands Police trainee Detectives on initial CID courses, removing the logistical demands of students to travel when training is available locally outside their own Force area.</p>

Area Examined	Findings
ADOPTION OF NATIONAL GUIDANCE	<p>The Force Training and Development unit has adopted the <i>Models for Learning</i> and consistently applied them for all training delivered centrally. However consistency of approach now needs to be applied across those devolved areas of training for which the Force Training Manager has currently no functional control.</p>
MAIN AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE FORCE	<p>The Force has identified the following areas for improvement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● costing of all training; ● QA/evaluation process on Divisions; and ● the Force Training Manager to have functional control of all training within the Force.
APPLICATION OF THE 4Cs SINCE THE REVIEW	<p>Staffordshire Police conducted a Best Value review in 2002, with the last update to the IP being in January 2005. HM Inspector was pleased to find that the Force Training and Development Department continues to adhere to the principles of Best value, indicative to this are the recent changes made in respect of the introduction of the latest pursuit policy by the Driving school.</p>
INTEGRATION OF THE INTEGRATED COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK	<p>HM Inspector was pleased to see that the Force has embraced the ICF completely and that it is embedded.</p> <p>HM Inspector notes the high esteem with which the organisation is held by Skills for Justice as a positive role model in relation to its application of the requirements of HOC 14/2003.</p>
MONITORING PROCESS AND COMPLETION OF PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT REVIEWS FOR POLICE OFFICERS AND POLICE STAFF	<p>HM Inspector was pleased to see that the Force has established a robust electronic PDR process. This enables instant access to all relevant persons within the process.</p> <p>HM inspector would support the further on going work to enhance day to day monitoring of the process and production of management information.</p>

Area Examined	Findings
<p>BUSINESS PLANNING FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF TRAINING</p>	<p>The business planning cycle takes place at the same time as the corporate cycle, however the business planning process is a ‘stake in the ground’ rather than a living continuous approach, which is not informed by the totality of the Force training requirement.</p> <p>HM Inspector would support a review of the Training Department business planning cycle to enable more accurate information around the training requirement to inform the corporate plan.</p>
<p>PRIORITISATION MODEL FOR TRAINING</p>	<p>Prioritisation of training occurs through a filtered process which involves divisional and force training panels, PDR process and individual requests for training on local form 65T.</p> <p>There is evidence to show that prioritisation of training is made against local force and national requirements and is driven by budget availability on divisions. This process appears to fulfil the Force training requirements.</p>

Recommendations

Recommendation 1

HM Inspector recommends that the Force training plan is developed to ensure it captures all training in the Force irrespective of where or by whom it is provided

Recommendation 2

HM Inspector recommends that the Force develops a costed training plan that is aligned to the guidance given in relevant Home Office Circulars

Recommendation 3

HM Inspector recommends that the Force develops a comprehensive Quality Assurance process for all training, irrespective of where or by whom it is provided. The Quality Assurance process should be regularly monitored

Recommendation 4

HM Inspector recommends that the Force develop a mechanism to ensure that accountability for standards, costs and planning for all training rests with a single source, irrespective of where in the Force or by whom it is provided

Recommendation 5

HM Inspector recommends that the Force evaluates its prioritisation mechanism for training to ensure it is fit for purpose

Judgements

Judgement 1:

The Training Department is held in positive esteem and is clearly valued by the Force. There is significant evidence of positive engagement between the Training Department and operational policing with an intelligent customer/client process. The training that falls within the remit of the Department is incorporated into the costed training plan to make it wholly compliant with the relevant Home office circular.

It is clear that the Training Department and its success has been achieved through the application of transformational leadership style, slim management structure, good communications and a developed culture of trust and empowerment. Without exception staff were found to be very positive and professional in their approach

There is clear evidence of force and regional collaboration ensuring that best practice is identified and adopted. Further development needs to occur to ensure that the force training manager has functional responsibility for all training and in particular to ensure a robust Quality Assurance process applicable to all training in the force.

HM Inspector concludes therefore that the quality of the service is **'good'**

Judgement 2:

HM Inspector considers that the Best Value review process was undertaken in line with national guidance. There is clear evidence that the improvement plan has been successfully actioned and continues to be used as a living document to drive the development of the training function in order to impact on performance in the work place.

In line with the leadership, management style and culture of the Training Department, HM Inspector acknowledges the commitment of the staff to the continuous professional development of the department and their own.

HM Inspector is pleased to note the realignment of the Force structure that will allow for the force training and development manager to answer directly to the ACPO lead.

HM Inspector concludes therefore that the prospects for improvement are **'excellent'**

For further information on the judgement criteria refer to Appendix H/Annex A of the below document.

BEST VALUE AND PLANNING GUIDANCE FOR POLICE AUTHORITIES AND FORCES

Adult Learning Inspectorate

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The Adult Learning Inspectorate undertook an assessment of several training sessions. A summary of their findings is shown below:

Achievement and Standards

- Most courses are attendance only courses, however where courses are subject to assessment of the learner there are good achievement rates.
- On driver training courses, where there is competency based assessment, approximately 97 per cent of learners achieved the level of competence required to achieve the standard or advanced level qualification last year. All of the learners who have completed the leadership development course achieved the Staffordshire University accredited certificate in management. Most learners additionally achieved the Institute of Leadership and Management qualification at level 3, 4 or 5, depending on their job role.
- Learners make satisfactory progress. On driving courses, learners progress from being graded as showing potential in week one to achieving the required standard in week four. In theory sessions, where learning is checked before and after the session, learners demonstrate satisfactory improvement of their knowledge and understanding.

Quality of Education and Training

- All of the three driver training sessions were of a good or very good quality. Driver training is well-planned to facilitate learners' progress. Each day, learners and trainers agree an individual action plan for each learner which is referred to constantly throughout the drives. Instruction is highly individual and based on the learner's development needs. There is regular and relevant setting of homework and pre-session reading to support learners with the following day's planned activities. Trainers are very supportive and encourage peer and self-evaluation throughout the course. They are quick to confirm where learner's skills have improved. Trainers make good use of questioning to challenge learner's driving techniques. Learners practice a range of activities in a safe environment including night drives and two car pursuit runs.
- Some aspects of theory training are satisfactory. Learners are involved well in discussions and encouraged to agree solutions and identify best practice. There is effective development of learners' knowledge and understanding, particularly about legislation. Trainers use good practical examples to illustrate theory. Although lesson plans exist, that have clear aims and objectives, trainers do not always use these when delivering their training sessions.

- Planned practical or group activities did not always take place due to lack of time. Too much emphasis and time was spent on theory input. Lesson plans do not contain sufficient differentiation of activities to accommodate the wide range of expertise and existing knowledge in the groups. Most rooms are set out in a horseshoe seating style, which works well for discussion purposes, but learners have insufficient space or work surfaces to use their files, learning resources and take notes or work through activities.
- There has been some development of e-learning for independent study by learners and most divisions and the training centre at Stafford have open-access computer based study rooms. Where these programmes have been accessed, learners have found them useful, in particular when preparing for sergeant's exams. Some learners find it difficult planning and finding time to use e-learning around work commitments.
- There are good practical facilities for driver training, including a skid pan which gives learners a challenging facility to test their skills. At the training centre in Stafford, learners can use the gym and fitness facilities. For much of the year, training rooms are very hot and uncomfortable. Some of the training rooms are particularly noisy from street noise when windows are open. Few of the rooms have appropriate furniture for theory work. Learners have no suitable table or surface to complete written work, and files and learning resources are usually placed on the floor.
- All trainers have trainer qualifications and are either working towards or hold assessor qualifications. Trainers are encouraged by managers to further their careers and apply for promotion while working as trainers. They regularly update their skills and knowledge. Police staff trainers have a good understanding and appreciation of different roles, through spending time working and shadowing police officers and staff at work. Learners value the trainers' expertise and often maintain contact after the course has ended for specialist advice and guidance. New trainers are supported well by managers and peers through their induction and trainer training.
- Learners complete knowledge checks regularly during their training. Trainers use these well in identifying specific issues for learners with the subject, checking prior knowledge and assessing progress. There are good examples of where initial assessment has been used to create individual learner's programmes, especially on driver and IT training. Trainers' feedback to learners is helpful, supportive and developmental. Competency based assessment is well-used and established on driver training courses. Learners on driver training receive very frequent feedback, often four or five times a day, leading into a daily recorded assessment of progress.

- The range of training available during the inspection week was particularly narrow. In the five weeks leading up to inspection, a wider range of courses were delivered including probationer, diversity, special constables, personal safety, crime and driver training. No IT training has taken place recently although this is planned for later in the year when the new system is available. No data was available about training in firearms, dog handler or divisional training. (note to HMIC: this may be worth following up to see if there is an issue with the availability of IT, firearms, dog handler and divisional training – see also leadership and management).
- There is good local community and guest speaker input into some of the courses, for example in diversity and crime training. Learners on the family liaison officer course particularly value the links they make during training sessions with members of external organisations. On probationer training, productive role plays are arranged with the Crown Prosecution Service to develop learners' skills in a court room in a safe environment.
- Trainers give effective support for learners' vocational learning needs. Where learners have not been successful in achieving their qualification, additional support and tutorials have been organised at work for them. All learners have access to welfare arrangements through Staffordshire Police.
- There has been good collaboration with regional forces to respond to "foundations for change". Members of the training and development unit at a range of levels, including managers, administrators and evaluators, share best practice with three regional forces. This has been particularly productive in co-delivering and hosting a regional crime training programme, developing e-learning packages and producing a mock exam which has significantly improved pass rates. The skid pan and a trainer for learners on driver training is well-used by a number of police forces and the public. The leadership development programme has been developed well with Staffordshire University to ensure that it meets the current and future needs of the force and managers.

- Training offered centrally is well-managed. There is good communication in trainer and management team meetings. Trainers and managers are clear about roles and responsibilities in the training and development unit. Many of the training teams successfully integrate police officers and staff working alongside each other as trainers. There has been good progress made in mapping training to national occupational standards and developing trainers to be assessors and internal verifiers. Special constable training is co-ordinated centrally to meet the needs of learners and the force. There are good links between training and the PDR process. Local and force training panels identify training needs and develop the training strategy and plans. There is no overall training plan that brings together the centrally and locally delivered training. It is not easy to identify at any one time all the training currently being delivered across Staffordshire as a percentage of the overall training as some training is devolved locally to divisions. At divisional level, there are sometimes gaps and delays in the training being offered. For example, in one division stinger and tracker training has not been available for a considerable amount of time. Quality assurance arrangements are currently insufficient and too informal for locally delivered courses. (HMIC to follow up whether this model provides good value for money at divisional/local level as there was no training being offered during the inspection week).
- Staffordshire police has well-established quality assurance arrangements for centrally provided training and a dedicated team of evaluators. Centrally offered training is evaluated thoroughly through questionnaires, trainer's evaluations and post course measurement of how learners transfer skills into the workplace. A wide range of mechanisms are used for the post-course evaluation, including trainer visits to the workplace, telephone interviews, feedback from community support groups and sampling learner's evidence videos and computer records from work. Course evaluations are used well to develop programmes and make changes to courses. Each trainer is formally observed twice a year by one of the training managers and, on a regular basis, informally by peers. The appeals process is promoted well throughout the training centre.

Noteworthy practice

Staffordshire Police use some innovative and particularly effective methods being used for the level 3 evaluation (transference of skills into the workplace) and level 4 (impact on the police force). Some of these are detailed below:

- success of the rape investigation course is evaluated through feedback from community rape support groups about how officers are dealing with victims of rape.
- the driving course manager analyses statistics about accidents involving officers, response times and prosecutions of police officers for driving offences to measure the impact of the training.
- on PNC training, learners' records and logs they have created at work are "dip sampled" to assess their quality. The training manager has assessed time and cost savings through more staff being given PNC training.



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

www.homeoffice.gov.uk/hmic