

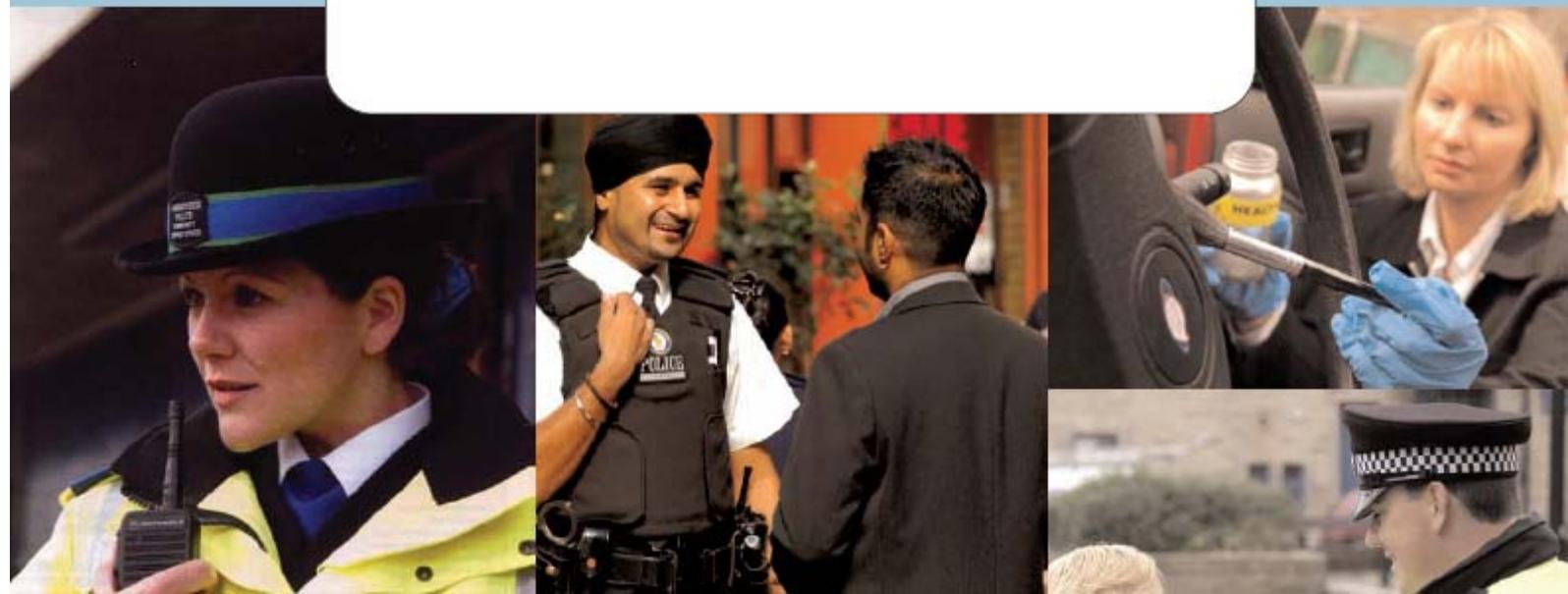
Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary



HMIC Inspection Report

Thames Valley Police Major Crime

July 2008



Thames Valley Police - HMIC Inspection Report

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Introduction to HMIC Inspections

For a century and a half, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) has been charged with examining and improving the efficiency of the police service in England and Wales, with the first HM Inspectors (HMIs) being appointed under the provisions of the County and Borough Police Act 1856. In 1962, the Royal Commission on the Police formally acknowledged HMIC's contribution to policing.

HMIs are appointed by the Crown on the recommendation of the Home Secretary and report to HM Chief Inspector of Constabulary, who is the Home Secretary's principal professional policing adviser and is independent of both the Home Office and the police service. HMIC's principal statutory duties are set out in the Police Act 1996. For more information, please visit HMIC's website at <http://inspectors.homeoffice.gov.uk/hmic/>.

In 2006, HMIC conducted a broad assessment of all 43 Home Office police forces in England and Wales, examining 23 areas of activity. This baseline assessment had followed a similar process in 2005, and thus created a rich evidence base of strengths and weaknesses across the country. However, it is now necessary for HMIC to focus its inspection effort on those areas of policing that are not data-rich and where qualitative assessment is the only feasible way of judging both current performance and the prospects for improvement. This, together with the critical factor that HMIC should concentrate its scrutiny on high-risk areas of policing – in terms of risk both to the public and to the service's reputation – pointed inexorably to a focus on what are known collectively as 'protective services'. In addition, there is a need to apply professional judgement to some key aspects of leadership and governance, where some quantitative measures exist but a more rounded assessment is appropriate.

Having reached this view internally, HMIC consulted key stakeholders, including the Home Office, the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) and the Association of Police Authorities (APA). A consensus emerged that HMIC could add greater value by undertaking more probing inspections of fewer topics. Stakeholders concurred with the emphasis on protective services but requested that neighbourhood policing remain a priority for inspection until there is evidence that it has been embedded in everyday police work.

HMIC uses a rigorous and transparent methodology to conduct its inspections and reach conclusions and judgements. All evidence is gathered, verified and then assessed against specific grading criteria (SGC) drawn from an agreed set of national (ACPO-developed) standards. However, the main purpose of inspection is not to make judgements but to drive improvements in policing. Both professional and lay readers are urged, therefore, to focus not on the headline grades but on the opportunities for improvement identified within the text of this report.

HMIC Business Plan for 2008/09

HMIC's business plan (available at <http://inspectors.homeoffice.gov.uk/hmic/our-work/business-plan/>) reflects our continued focus on:

- protective services – including the management of public order, civil contingencies and critical incidents phase 3 of the programme in autumn 2008/spring 2009;
- counter-terrorism – including all elements of the national CONTEST strategy;
- strategic services – such as information management and professional standards; and
- the embedding of neighbourhood policing.

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In addition, we are currently developing a scrutiny of strategic resource leverage, and are liaising with the Audit Commission on a methodology for the anticipated inspection of police authorities.

HMIC's priorities for the coming year are set in the context of the wide range of strategic challenges that face both the police service and HMIC, including the need to increase service delivery against a backdrop of reduced resources. With this in mind, the business plan for 2008/09 includes for the first time a 'value for money' plan that relates to the current Comprehensive Spending Review period (2008–11).

Our intention is to move to a default position where we do not routinely carry out all-force inspections, except in exceptional circumstances; we expect to use a greater degree of risk assessment to target activity on those issues and areas where the most severe vulnerabilities exist, where most improvement is required or where the greatest benefit to the service can be gained through the identification of best practice.

Programmed Frameworks

During phase 2 of HMIC's inspection programme, we examined force responses to major crime, serious and organised crime and neighbourhood policing in each of the 44 forces of England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

While this document includes the full graded report for the major crime inspection, the inspection relating to serious and organised crime is detailed in a separate thematic report.

Major Crime

This framework covers the force effectiveness and efficiency in dealing with homicide and other major crimes that will normally require a force to set up a major incident room. There is only one statutory performance indicator at present, although other indicators shown in the report facilitate appropriate comparisons of performance between forces; the indicators suggested give some context regarding the volume of such crimes, success in detections and trends over time, but they need to be interpreted with care. The assessment is primarily qualitative, with a judgement as to the extent to which the force predicts and prevents major crime as opposed to solely discovering and reacting to such crime. Major crime includes any investigation that requires the deployment of a senior investigating officer and specialist assets.

The grading system has changed this year to allow for a single ACPO threshold standard against which forces will be assessed as compliant, not compliant or exceeding compliance. It is recognised that collaborative arrangements can be used where appropriate. At a high level, the ACPO lead summarises the threshold standard as set out below:

- Intelligence – Compliance with the 2005 ACPO National Intelligence Model guidance on the shared understanding of and response to the risks and demands of the major crime threat, with effective intelligence and data sharing internally, with neighbouring forces and with key partners.
- Prevention – Effective proactive partnerships to prevent major crime in compliance with the European Convention on Human Rights; this includes precursor offending and options such as Osman warnings.
- Enforcement – Compliance with the 2006 ACPO *Murder Investigation Manual* and guidance in the 2005 ACPO major incident room standardised administrative

procedures, having sufficient resources to meet and manage the predicted demand and contingency to meet extraordinary demand from major crime investigation and review.

- Performance management and resilience – Efficiency through robust performance measures linking costs/resources, inputs and outputs to goals (ie the outcomes of reduction and prevention, detection and conviction work).

Future Programmed Inspections

Following these serious and organised crime and major crime assessments, HMIC plans work in the following areas:

Inspection area	Dates
Neighbourhood policing	April 2008 – September 2008
Developing citizen focus	April 2008 – September 2008
Civil contingencies	September 2008 – May 2009
Public order	September 2008 – May 2009
Critical incidents	September 2008 – May 2009
Professional standards	June 2009 – December 2009
Information management	June 2009 – December 2009
Leadership	June 2009 – December 2009

The Grading Process

HMIC has moved to a new grading system based on the national standards; forces will be deemed to meet the standard, exceed the standard or fail to meet the standard.

Meeting the standard

HMIC uses the ACPO agreed standards as the starting point for its SGC. The standards against which forces are measured are communicated to all forces and police authorities some time before the inspection starts. The standards are set at a level that ensures that risk to the public is identified, managed and mitigated as far as is feasible; all forces should find the standards achievable.

Exceeding the standard

Where a force can demonstrate capacity and capability that exceed the agreed national standards, it is expected that risk assessment and business cases justify the availability of 'additional' resources, and that they are deployed appropriately. For example, some forces require a higher level of capacity/capability to counter extraordinary threat levels or to discharge a regional or lead force remit. Without such a rationale, an over-investment would almost certainly represent poor value for money and thus attract criticism.

Failing to meet the standard

This assessment is appropriate when a force cannot provide evidence that it meets a number of significant criteria that correlate with the ACPO national standards. Where evidence is provided to confirm that the particular issue has been properly risk assessed and the risk is being managed, then the report may not necessarily draw an adverse conclusion. The assessment may also give some credit in situations where a force has the ability to remedy any deficiencies promptly, in terms of time and investment levels needed.

Developing Practice

In addition to assessing force performance, one of HMIC's key roles is to identify and share good practice across the police service. Much good practice is identified as HMIC conducts its assessments and is reflected (described as a 'strength') in the body of the report. In addition, each force is given the opportunity to submit more detailed examples of its good practice. HMIC has therefore, in some reports, selected suitable examples and included them in the report. The key criteria for each example are that the work has been evaluated by the force and the good practice is easily transferable to other forces; each force has provided a contact name and telephone number or email address, should further information be required. HMIC has not conducted any independent evaluation of the examples of good practice provided.

Force Overview and Context

Geographical description of force area

Thames Valley Police is the largest non-metropolitan police force in England and Wales. It serves the counties of Oxfordshire, Berkshire and Buckinghamshire, which cover an area of 2,200 square miles and have a population of 2.1 million, with over 6 million visitors annually. The force area encompasses 16 crime and disorder reduction partnerships (CDRPs), within the areas of two county councils (Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire) and seven unitary authorities.

Demographic profile of force area

The overarching economic position of the force area is one of prosperity with low unemployment and above-average earnings; although it must be acknowledged that there are some areas of deprivation. Steady and continued economic growth is predicted. In terms of demography, the Thames Valley area is experiencing continued population growth, most notably at Milton Keynes, Slough and Aylesbury. Some 6% of the population of the Thames Valley area is of black and minority ethnic origin, with a much higher proportion in the south-east of the area, particularly within the major population centres of Reading, Slough and High Wycombe. Current trends suggest that the area will see considerable population growth in the coming years, with likely growth of virtually every ethnic group.

Strategic priorities

The force's strategic priorities for 2008–11 are:

- to strengthen neighbourhood policing so as to respond to local need and increase public confidence;
- to develop its partnerships to reduce crime and disorder;
- to improve the service provided to victims, witnesses and the public;
- to protect communities from the threat of terrorism and organised crime;
- to use information and intelligence to be more effective;
- to develop its people to give the best service; and
- to improve the use of its resources.

Structural description of force area

The chief officer team comprises the Chief Constable, deputy chief constable (DCC), assistant chief constable local policing (ACC LP), assistant chief constable crime and criminal justice (ACC C&CJ), assistant chief constable operations (ACC Ops), and director of resources (DoR). The force is divided into five basic command units (BCUs): Berkshire West, Berkshire East, Buckinghamshire, Milton Keynes and Oxfordshire. There are five operational command units, namely the control rooms and enquiry department, tactical support, crime support, roads policing and professional standards.

The projected net revenue expenditure for 2008/09 is £356.1 million. Police officer strength has continued to increase during the past financial year, and at 31 March 2008 there were 4,257 police officers (4,185.8 full-time equivalent (FTE)), 2,956 (2,779.6 FTE) police staff, 246 special constables and 529 (521.2 FTE) police community support officers (PCSOs), assisted by some 600 volunteers.

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Key initiatives to improve performance during 2007/08

The following table provides a summary of performance achievements for the key strategic objectives and targets from the 2007/08 delivery plan.

Force performance summary for 2007/08		
Performance indicator	Target	2007/08 Outturn
To provide an effective and timely response focused on the needs of the citizen		
Satisfaction with overall service	80%	78.3%
Percentage of non-emergency calls received within the police enquiry centres (PECs) answered within national target of 40 seconds	90%	90.4%
Percentage of 999 calls answered within national target of 10 seconds	90%	92.3%
To conduct our policing in a neighbourhood policing style		
Total number of PCSOs employed	530	529
Percentage of PCSO time available for front-line duties	80%	81.0%
Number of neighbourhood policing teams (NPTs) (every neighbourhood in the force area to have an NPT)	265	265
To equip our front-line staff to deliver our objectives		
Percentage of police officer time available for front-line policing	64%	63.7%
Percentage of all staff (excluding student officers) having an initial performance development review (PDR) within three months of start of each financial year	85%	88.2%
Percentage of PDRs containing four objectives linked to the annual plan or three-year strategy	100%	Not yet available
To improve our performance – getting better at what we do		
Sanction detections	51,000	49,028
Offences brought to justice	49,500	51,192
Reduction in British Crime Survey comparator crime	- 3%	- 9.4%
Level of efficiency savings (half to be cashable)	3%	Not yet available
Sanction detection rate for offences of non-domestic violence involving injury	40%	33.8%

To protect the public from the risk posed by predatory offenders		
Number of sanction detections for domestic violence	6,700	6,485
Sanction detection rate for hate crime (racially/religiously aggravated offences, racist incidents and homophobic incidents)	670	691
To be ready and equipped to deal with major crime and critical incidents		
Minimum number of confiscation orders	134	135
Minimum value of confiscation orders	3,044,504	43,048,810

Note: Some figures are provisional pending audit

Other key corporate initiatives

In addition to the seven strategic priorities, there are a number of other priorities that the force believes underpin all its work. These priorities are outlined below.

Leadership is key to developing individuals and teams. Investment in leaders is therefore crucial to ensuring that all force staff are given the opportunity to reach their full potential. The force has made a substantial investment in leadership, career development and learning initiatives to support current supervisors and to prepare the future leaders of Thames Valley Police.

The full roll-out of neighbourhood policing teams (NPTs), made up of police officers, PCSOs, special constables and volunteers, has played a crucial role in providing greater visibility and reassurance in the local community.

By engaging more effectively with young people, the force ensures that they have a voice in the community; and by listening to them it is able to provide them with a more responsive service. The force has worked with its partners to identify at an early stage those who are at risk of becoming involved in anti-social behaviour or crime, and to help to divert them. It is helping to reduce persistent reoffending by making better use of restorative interventions for young offenders.

Through its drugs strategy, the force continues proactively to close down crack houses and cannabis factories and to tackle the drug dealers who prey on vulnerable people in its community. It works with its partners to ensure that it focuses not only on punishing, but also on rehabilitating the most problematic drug misusers through early intervention and appropriate referral to drugs intervention programmes.

With the assistance of partners, the force strategic roads policing strategy is delivering the Safe Drive Stay Alive theatre project, an educational initiative aimed at 16- to 18-year olds, highlighting circumstances that can lead to road traffic collisions and the tragic consequences which follow.

Through better resource management the force is ensuring that staff with specialist skills and expertise are appropriately matched to incidents and tasks. This has enabled police officers to get back to doing the job they are trained to do, concentrating on the areas of policing where they have the greatest impact. The force is seeking further opportunities to maximise the use of the extended police family and to develop the role of the police community support officer.

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The force has developed and implemented a productivity plan to maximise the use of its resources by improving efficiency and delivering value for money. This ongoing process enables the force to deploy its resources to where they are most needed by making savings and reinvesting in the priority areas.

Through Operation Quest the force has secured improvements for scheduled appointments that have resulted in improved customer satisfaction: tailoring resources to match victim requirements; increasing timeliness in responding to incidents; increasing opportunities for initial crime investigation; and bringing a greater focus on neighbourhood priorities for incident response.

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Inspection Overview and Context

Force Summary of Judgements

GRADE	Meets the standard
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Contextual factors

This element of the inspection report details Thames Valley Police's capacity and capability to identify and assess the risks from major crime, as well as its response in preventing and investigating these crime types, prioritising those which pose the greatest threat to individuals or communities.

	2006	2007	Change	MSF** group mean
Number of life-threatening and gun crimes per 1,000 population	0.303	0.246	-18.81%	0.330
Number of abductions per 10,000 population	0.000	0.000	0.00%	0.001
% of abductions detected/convicted	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Number of attempted murders per 10,000 population	0.136	0.126	-7.35%	0.096
% of attempted murders detected/convicted	86.21%	100.00%	+13.79pp*	84.77%
Number of blackmail offences per 10,000 population	0.827	0.229	-72.31%	0.165
% of blackmail offences detected/convicted	4.52%	18.37%	+13.85pp*	27.80%
Number of kidnappings per 10,000 population	0.411	0.416	+1.22%	0.298
% of kidnappings detected/convicted	37.50%	35.96%	-1.54pp*	44.29%
Number of manslaughter per 10,000 population	0.005	0.023	+360.00%	0.016
% of manslaughter detected/convicted	200.00%	40.00%	-160pp*	N/A
Number of murders per 10,000 population	0.070	0.093	+32.86%	0.101
% of murders detected/convicted	93.33%	80.00%	-13.33pp*	100.60%
Number of rapes per 10,000 population	2.099	1.884	-10.24%	2.324
% of rapes detected/convicted	18.04%	17.87%	-0.17pp*	20.16%

*pp' is percentage points.

**Most similar forces group for Thames Valley Police is Cambridgeshire, Essex, Hampshire, Hertfordshire, Kent, Northamptonshire and Warwickshire.

From the statutory performance indicator (SPI) data contained in the table above it can be seen that that the crime types of attempted murder, blackmail and kidnapping pose a threat to Thames Valley Police. The levels of offences per 10,000 residents for each of these crime types are among the highest in England and

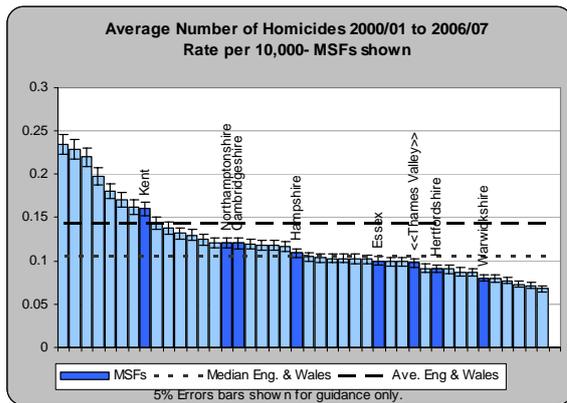
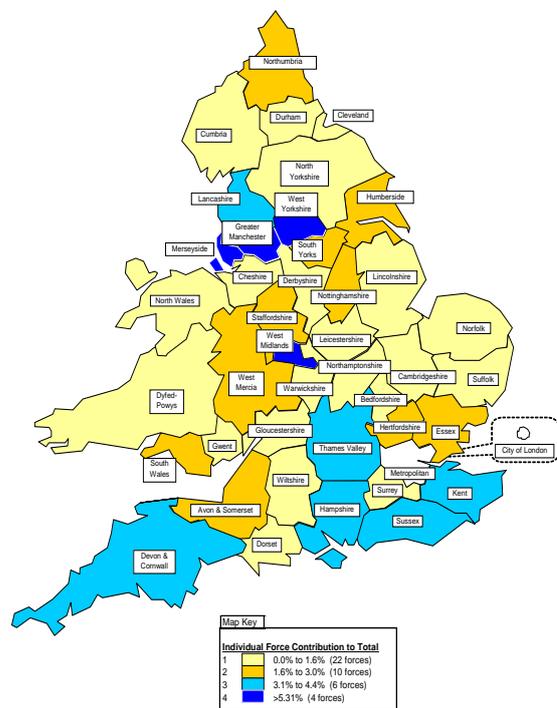
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Wales and are in excess of the most similar forces (MSF) average in each case. However, it should be noted that the levels of offences for attempted murder and (particularly) blackmail showed significant improvements in 2007.

The SPI data also indicates that major crime investigation by Thames Valley Police is not as effective as that of its peer forces. Thames Valley Police is performing at a level below the MSF average for all crime types with the exception of attempted murder, for which the force had a 100% sanction detection rate in 2007. It should also be noted that sanction detections have shown a significant improvement in the problem area of blackmail (although there is still a significant gap to the MSF average).

The National Protective Services Analysis Tool (NPSAT), released on 25 September 2007, revealed that Thames Valley Police faces a high level of demand in respect of the policing response to homicide offences.

Homicides (2001/02 to 2006/07), Contribution to Total, Excl. MPS

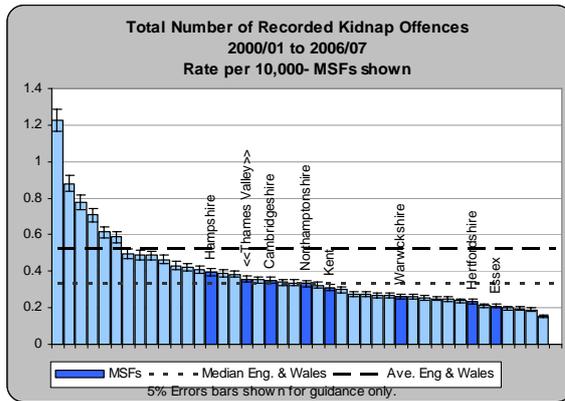


Although the rate of homicides is below both the MSF and national averages there has been a recent increase in offences.

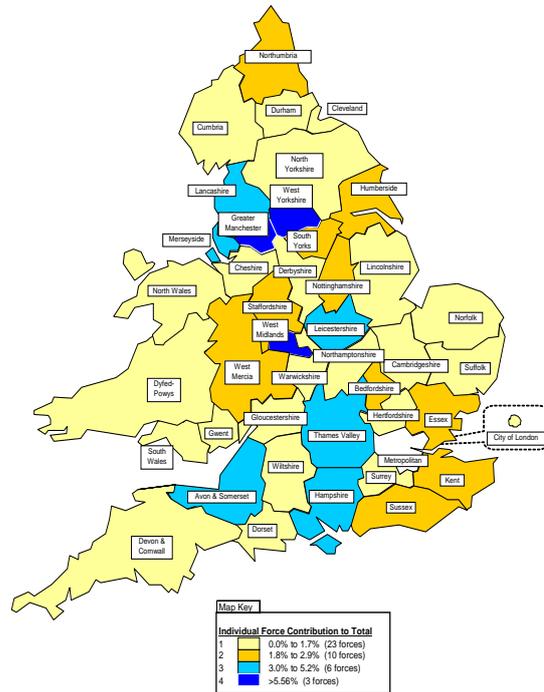
The Thames Valley Police area is bordered by three other forces which also indicate raised demand for this crime type.

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The NPSAT revealed that Thames Valley Police faces a high level of demand in respect of the policing response to kidnapping offences.



Kidnap (2001/02 to 2006/07), Contribution to Total, Excl. MPS



The rate of kidnapping offences is below the national average but has recently been above the MSF average and has suffered a small increase.

The Thames Valley Police area is bordered by three other forces which also indicate raised demand for this crime type.

The force strategic assessment (FSA) demonstrates a clear understanding of the historical, current, predicted and emerging trends in major crime and the interventions required to tackle these.

The force has identified its major crime priorities within the force control strategy (FCS). The force strategic intelligence requirement (SIR) has a clear focus on the continuous search for information on the crime types identified. Within the documentation supplied by the force, these issues have largely been identified and addressed, with some exceptions which have been shared with the force.

The force has invested suitable resources in interventions to maximise harm reduction, to minimise risks to the public and to inhibit major crime. In particular, Thames Valley Police’s role in the provision of investigation into domestic extremism for regional and national partners is noteworthy and should not be underestimated.

This inspection assessment reveals that the force demonstrates maturing processes in its approach to managing major crime. In making this judgement, HMIC recognises collaborative agreements with forces in the South East region and the Serious Organised Crime Agency (SOCA).

Intelligence

Summary – The force has sufficient dedicated analytical resources at present to meet the identified demands from major crime, supplying dynamic intelligence products that drive the energies of the force. The force has fully committed to its major crime investigations with the requisite staff, accommodation, equipment and funding; however, analysts are fully stretched with current demand.

Strengths

- There are a sufficient number of dedicated analysts, and some research support, within the force intelligence bureau (FIB). They are line-managed within the FIB by the DI and professionally managed by the principal analyst.
- The structure appears to be effective; staff are working to capacity and provide sound analytical products and support at level 2.
- Within the crime support department there are 21.5 posts with two vacancies. (Six are dedicated to major crime.) There are 27 analyst posts on the five territorial basic command units (BCUs), of which six were vacant at the time of the inspection (see areas for improvement).
- The FIB control desks are divided into 'people' and 'property' desks with two analyst and two researcher posts on each desk. (People desks deal with violent crime, drugs and OCGs, while property desks deal with domestic burglary, commercial burglary and vehicle crime.)
- The FIB analysts produce a series of market profiles that are monthly, bi-monthly or six-monthly. (For example there is a monthly drugs profile and a bi-monthly firearms profile, and work is in progress on a monthly rape/sex offender profile and bi-monthly human trafficking and prostitution profiles. The property desk produces a monthly high-value vehicle theft from burglary profile and a distraction burglary profile, as well as a bi-monthly metal theft profile.) Their timely update is managed using a spreadsheet and the operational review meeting provides oversight.
- The quality assurance of analytical products is the responsibility of the analyst managers. Reality checking is carried out with the force lead or the person commissioning the analytical product. Consultation takes place to ensure that products match requirements (see work in progress).
- The force is now using the 'intelligence tracker' spreadsheet and as a consequence intelligence sharing with the South East regional intelligence unit (SERIU) is improving.

Work in progress

- The forensic analyst post is new to the FIB and is separately financed. It supplies analytical products for DNA, fingerprint and shoeprint evidence and provides support for the investigation of linked and series crimes. Although the product is descriptive at present there is emphasis on improving its analytical content.
- While there is evidence of some quality assurance being undertaken for National

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Intelligence Model (NIM) products, the principal analyst fulfils this role in lieu of the appointment of a lead analyst for major crime. The consultant analyst takes responsibility for reviewing the products supplied by FIB analysts. Quality is maintained through the use of a quality assurance framework.

- There is currently a requirement for some performance information to be supplied by BCU intelligence analysts. A separation is needed between their work and that of the dedicated performance analyst. The force is piloting a revised system of performance management that includes the role of analysts (Operation Quest). Rationalisation of roles should result (see areas for improvement).
- The regional counter-terrorism unit is due to be located within the Thames Valley Police area during the 2008/09 financial year.
- A lead analyst for the major crime team (MCT) is being recruited.

Areas for improvement

- The capacity of analysts is being stretched in order to complete the second phase of OCG mapping. The force should review its future capability and capacity beyond this work, in particular the positioning of FIB analysts and operations analysts, while maintaining sterile corridors. This review should include the researcher role, as there is little research support for operational analysts (see work in progress).
- The force has not been able consistently to supply staff to work at the SERIU owing to its location outside the force area.

Summary – The force seeks and shares intelligence about level 2 and level 3 major crime types through partnerships. This work is assessed to be adequate and improving. The force community impact assessments (CIAs) to evaluate risk following major crime are adequate.

Strengths

- CIAs are routinely requested in order to inform major crime strategies. They are generally commissioned through the local BCU or area commander and are in the main completed by the local community and diversity officer (CaDO) (see areas for improvement).
- CIAs for some crimes are recorded on the force crime system locally known as CEDAR and cross-referred to the senior investigating officer's (SIO's) investigation strategy (see areas for improvement). CIAs are completed for a wide range of crimes and major incidents – examples include Operation Caddy, murders, floods and Operation Pentameter.
- The major crime team relies in the main upon intelligence-sharing relationships at BCU and local police area (LPA) level. While there is a force community and diversity unit, the network of local CaDOs, together with neighbourhood policing teams (NPTs), is the main conduit for information exchange. This information exchange is covered by memoranda of understanding (MOUs) and information-sharing agreements with strategic partners such as health and social services, in accordance with management of police information (MoPI) principles (see work in progress). Multi-agency public protection arrangements (MAPPA) and

domestic abuse information-sharing arrangements are well established.

- There are agreed information-sharing protocols with a wide range of partners, including Trading Standards, Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) and the UK Border Agency (UKBA). Most have nominated owners with the FIB having overall ownership and oversight of all MOUs.
- Level 2 intelligence products such as kidnap and murder analysis are subject to limited sharing, which tends to be with law enforcement agencies rather than statutory or business partners. Recently the rape problem profile has been sanitised in order that it can be more easily disseminated (see work in progress).
- Processes exist to sanitise sensitive intelligence streams and add them into the crime intelligence system (CIS) database. This intelligence is governed by NIM guidelines and is shared with other forces and statutory partners in a dynamic way. Routine information exchange at level 2 is through the FIB intelligence reader who acts as a single point of contact (SPOC).
- The major crime analysts develop a range of analytical products, although they do not have distinct portfolio responsibilities. Analysts are dedicated to major crimes to provide subject profiles and other investigative products such as association charts, telephone analysis and sequence of events charts.

Work in progress

- A comprehensive homicide prevention strategy is being developed which addresses homicide in its widest sense, including honour killings and those precursor crimes such as domestic violence, knife crime, kidnap and hate crime. Each theme has a designated lead and analytical background and is monitored using the red/amber/green status. Actions are listed under prevention, intelligence, enforcement and organisational learning. The strategy will be delivered in 2008/09.
- The interim director of information management is currently mapping all information-sharing protocols and other information-sharing arrangements with partners with a view to putting in place a standardised approach and review mechanisms. This work will be completed within the 2008/09 financial year.
- It is recognised that more formalised information exchange at level 2 is required. Discussions are taking place between the crime support department and BCU commanders to identify how best to share information with partners so as to inform preventative and enforcement strategies.
- A training programme for CaDOs has been started (two separate training packages were delivered in the last year). Additionally, some ad hoc training has been given to CaDOs by major crime detective inspectors (DIs).

Areas for improvement

- The new neighbourhood analyst posts should help to improve the quality of CIAs, which are widely used at present but tend to be descriptive rather than analytical.
- CIAs should be regularly reviewed and updated to ensure that the measures identified to minimise risks are actioned and completed.

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Summary – The FSA has analysed the trends in relation to major crime sufficiently. As a result, the FCS is found to be similarly thorough. Problem profiles for homicide, rape and kidnap are extensive with links to force- and BCU-level plans. There is sufficient evidence that the force understands the threat posed by other life-threatening issues.

Strengths

- The FSA product is controlled and monitored by the strategic planning department and is strongly driven by the Chief Constable. Review of the FSA is carried out on a rolling basis with formal documented reviews every six months.
- The FSA dated September 2007 details all the major crime types that Thames Valley Police is addressing, including homicide, serious assault, kidnap, sex offences, robbery, arson and domestic and child abuse.
- The FSA identifies control strategy themes and breaks these down into threats, current activities, barriers and recommendations for action, including multi-agency action. Intelligence products such as market profiles are developed under each of these control strategy themes on a regular basis, some as frequently as monthly, and the main products are managed through a spreadsheet held within the FIB. Emerging threats are identified through environmental scanning and other analysis tools such as PESTLE (political, economic, social, technical, legislative and environmental) which utilise national and regional threat intelligence.
- Problem profiles have been completed for homicide, kidnap and rape. These problem profiles consider precursor crimes and often inform the reduction strategies.
- The force strategic intelligence requirement covers a variety of crime types, including domestic and child abuse, burglary and robbery, serious injury, gun crime, kidnap and so on. While specific groups such as paedophile rings and dangerous offenders are not explicitly referred to, cross-cutting themes and NIM processes are likely to identify emerging threats in these areas.
- One of the six main objectives within the force strategic plan 2005–08 is to “be ready and equipped to deal with major crime and critical incidents”.
- At LPA and BCU level plans mirror some of the control strategy themes; however, it is accepted that at this level police and crime and disorder reduction partnerships (CDRPs) are focused through government targets towards volume crime.
- The force has developed a joint strategic assessment with partners, and targets for major crime are joint targets insofar as they relate to both police and partners; for example the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) has targets for timeliness of review of files.

Work in progress

- The force is currently developing its existing neighbourhood profiles in order better to understand the vulnerabilities of geographic communities. However, this process needs to be expanded to include those communities, either virtual or

geographic, that cross NPT areas. The introduction of the neighbourhood analysts should help achieve this.

Areas for improvement

- No significant areas identified.

Summary – Trend analysis and problem profiles have only recently begun to be shared with partners, though they are regularly shared with BCUs. There is emerging a trigger plan and escalation process for ‘hot briefing’ either when there is a significant change in the major crime threat or where the nature of the analysis demands a fast response. Information-sharing protocols with key partners, such as social, health and probation services, are effective. The force can demonstrate that it is on track to reach full MoPI compliance by 2010.

Strengths

- Thames Valley Police borders nine other police forces and four Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) regions; this in itself presents significant challenges in sharing information and intelligence in a dynamic way. Previous favourable comment which concerns the sharing of information with partners and other law enforcement agencies.
- The force has provided substantial examples of occasions where it has dynamically shared intelligence with other partners and law enforcement agencies, such as Operation Scout, Operation Harriet, Operation Caddy, Operation Mitre and Operation Haul.
- Where there is a significant change in threat or a need for a fast response within a major crime enquiry, the force has processes in place, including real-time scanning by the major crime analysts, in order to consider a fast or dynamic response.
- Major crime enquiries use proactive intelligence-gathering techniques and the products of these inform SIO tactical and investigative decision making.
- Emerging threats, linked series of crimes and investigative opportunities concerning major crimes are identified by the various desks within the FIB.
- There is good intelligence sharing with partners at level 1, such as local authorities, housing associations, drug and alcohol action teams (DAATs), drug and alcohol reference groups (DARGs) and MAPPA.
- The force has undergone a peer review of intelligence management, prioritisation, analysis, co-ordination and tasking (IMPACT) arrangements and the favourable results and good practice have now been shared across the region.
- The inspection found good evidence to demonstrate appropriate use of national central databases, including the Serious Crime Analysis Section (SCAS), injuries and National Policing Improvement Agency (NPIA) databases.

Work in progress

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- The interim director of information management is the tactical lead on ensuring that the force action plan for MoPI is pursued. The deputy chief constable (DCC) provides strong strategic direction through his chairmanship of the information management board, to ensure compliance. The Police Authority (PA) has been briefed concerning this area of business. The Chief Constable's management team (CCMT) has agreed to MoPI champions at BCU level. It appears that the force is on track to reach full MoPI compliance by 2010.

Areas for improvement

- While there is good evidence of routine intelligence sharing through MAPPAs arrangements, and some concerning crime themes (for example the sharing of the rape profile), a more consistent approach needs to be taken to sharing level 2 intelligence with statutory partners in order to encourage and improve crime prevention activity.
- The FIB people team should include portfolios such as paedophilia and internet pornography, and use intelligence from diverse areas such as the high-tech crime unit, MAPPAs meetings and other partners to develop proactive targeting.

Summary – In respect of major crime, the force profiling of vulnerable locations and communities is developing, with evidence that the impact of OCG activity is partially understood. As a result, future risks and threats across the force area are identified.

Strengths

- The force's LPAs, through demographic and social trends analysis, have produced detailed demographic profiles of the force area's 265 identified neighbourhoods that are available on the Knowzone intranet site. A document entitled *New and Emerging Communities in the Thames Valley* has been produced that uses a wide range of data and looks at future trends. Both products link into the FSA. The strategic co-ordinating and planning (SCaP) team uses PESTELO (political, environmental, social, technological, economic, legal and organisational) as an environmental scanning tool and also profiles communities.
- Community profiling has taken place for specific major crime operations. Some analysis of vulnerable locations and communities has been undertaken as part of the OCG mapping process.
- Gold groups are called at the early stages of critical incidents and the involvement of communities usually informs plans to prevent the escalation of major crime, as well as reducing fear and assisting with communication and reassurance.
- The MCT has also completed investigations involving less obvious communities, such as Operation Harriet (businesses and pharmaceutical industries), Operation Dehort (commercial communities) and Operation Shore (hard-to-reach communities).
- The force diversity unit works with BCUs and identifies national best practice to scope new and emerging communities and creative ways of engaging them. Examples include the setting up of a Polish information line, the establishment of

the Romanian Roma working group, and Operation Canary (which tackled an immigration scam involving wide-ranging groups of immigrants).

- MAPPA arrangements are sound.

Work in progress

- Social network analysis helps the force to understand the harms caused to vulnerable people and can be a predictive tool. All BCUs have been tasked to work with partner agencies in order to identify new and emerging vulnerable communities. Such work complements intelligence obtained as a result of homicide and kidnap profiles. These profiles have identified an increase in both victims and offenders from new and emerging communities.

Areas for improvement

- No significant areas identified.

Summary – The force strategic risk register is reviewed monthly by the DCC, who oversees the force risk management group. Each identified risk for major crime has a current and effective action plan, and these are robustly monitored and controlled.

Strengths

- Each BCU and department assesses risk for inclusion within its risk register. These registers inform the planning process. There is an escalation process for identified risks to be considered by the risk management group and where necessary elevated to the strategic risk register.
- The crime support department risk register contains some 19 identified risks. There is a scoring matrix that scores the risk in terms of impact and likelihood. An electronic log monitors movements of risk and evidences escalation and action.
- Registers identify organisational and operational risks, and sometimes a combination of the two, such as a failure to resource major crime incidents adequately.
- Within each risk register is a control plan which documents the risk, current controls (graded red, amber and green), risk control actions, ownership of actions and completion date, along with a comment field. Risks are resourced as necessary. De-escalated risks may result in departmental action plans that are then overseen by department heads or local business managers.
- The risk scoring matrix is used both operationally and organisationally as supporting evidence within bidding processes for additional resources.
- There are a number of risks identified within the crime support department risk register that impact upon major crime policing, for example a lack of trained resources to respond adequately to crimes of kidnap, a failure to identify trends and therefore prevent homicide or serious injury, and a failure to manage high-risk offenders effectively.
- The force risk management group feeds identified force risks to the force resilience panel that monitors and maintains risk against the critical functions

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within the organisation, for example ensuring that the right people with the right skills are readily available.

- There is clear connectivity between the way the force manages risk, contingency planning and BCU/department business plans, all of which help to inform the decision-making process to resource the identified risk.

Work in progress

- No significant areas identified.

Areas for improvement

- While positive comment has been made above, it is evident that business continuity arrangements are not as advanced as is the risk management process. The force should accelerate its business continuity plans to match the degree of rigour applied to the management of risk.

Summary – The force is not fully collaborating with all the others within its region to provide the same level of access and interrogation to its intelligence systems. None of the force operational databases is searchable from outside the force. The recommendations from the Richard Inquiry are however being progressed.

Strengths

- There are established links with other law enforcement agencies – for example SOCA staff are located within the FIB.
- BCU public protection units have strong links with MAPPA partners and good information sharing. But not through interoperable systems, as the Thames Valley Probation Service does not yet have access to the Violent and Sex Offenders Register (ViSOR) (see areas for improvement).
- Force prison intelligence officers have access to the Her Majesty's Prison Service intelligence system.
- FIB staff have access to all force information technology (IT) systems, including HOLMES, ViSOR, the firearms licensing system, Locard (forensic system) and automatic number plate recognition (ANPR), and external systems such as Experion and Moneyweb. These are used to aid investigations and identify trends and patterns for inclusion within various intelligence products. Within the FIB there is an intelligence reader who acts as the SPOC for external intelligence enquiries and dissemination.
- HOLMES (version 11c) is networked across the force. A practical solution has been developed to counter the lack of interoperability between HOLMES and the CIS: this involves major crime enquiries having a dedicated intelligence cell that includes analytical support. Local intelligence officers are attached to enquiries where appropriate.
- The force has undertaken effective linked HOLMES investigations with other forces, for example Operation Hansel, Operation Orb and Operation Harriet.
- The forensic analyst role provides a link between the CEDAR crime recording

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system, the CIS, the DNA/footprint index and LOCARD. The analyst produces a monthly forensic profile.

- There has been significant investment in both mobile and static ANPR cameras. Both are used to assist operations. The mobile units are managed through the roads policing department and are regularly tasked through NIM processes. A Thames Valley Police SIO wrote the national investigator's guide to ANPR. Other forces' hot lists are regularly accessed.
- The IMPACT nominal index (INI) is operational within the force, which has just completed the pilot scheme. Usage has been extended beyond the child protection and sexual crimes unit into major crime, serious and organised crime and special branch.

Work in progress

- While there is some evidence of IT interoperability in the form of a limited capacity for cross-system searching using Crystal software, interoperability of intelligence systems within the force remains a weakness. Work is in progress to deliver an operational data store that will be an integrated depository for information from legacy systems. Procurement for this system will be concluded within 2007/08.
- The interim director of information management is the tactical lead to ensure that the force action plan for MoPI is pursued. The DCC provides strong strategic direction through his chairmanship of the information management board, to ensure compliance. The Police Authority has been briefed concerning this area of business. The CCMT has agreed to MoPI champions at BCU level. It appears that the force is on track to reach full MoPI compliance by 2010.

Areas for improvement

- With the exception of MAPPA, ViSOR, national firearms licensing management system (NFLMS), INI, and prison intelligence, there is little evidence that the force has interoperability with external IT systems as a routine.
- There is a need for the force to scope its current and planned IT solutions and infrastructure for analytical work (including ANPR) in order to improve interoperability.
- The force should review its current system within major crime for disseminating intelligence, including the sharing of HOLMES data between enquiries.

Summary – The force has a case review policy that is generally applied, ensuring that current major crime cases are reviewed in accordance with ACPO guidance; the policy is effective.

Strengths

- There is a dedicated major crime review team (MCRT) within the crime support department that reviews major crime and critical incidents where risk dictates, when requested by an SIO or through managerial intervention. The skill base within the team is very broad, with experience of major crime, child abuse, serious and organised crime, family liaison and financial investigation.

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- The force has a major crime review and investigation deferral policy which was last reviewed in January 2007.
- The MCRT also conducts cold case reviews of outstanding and unsolved cases of rape and homicide. It has scoped all outstanding enquiries and has identified exhibits and case papers. Using a case prioritisation matrix it has ordered and reduced the list of cases. The prioritised cases unsolved cases of sexual assault are being further investigated, the latter under Operation Sisco. All cases are managed using spreadsheets, and while there is no dedicated analytical resource this can be obtained through the tasking process. The MCRT staff are HOLMES-trained.
- The force has obtained monies from the Police and Crime Standards Directorate and Operation Advance in order to progress new DNA techniques for historical sexual offences. It has also submitted a further funding bid for £220,000, 80% of which is for forensic examination.
- When DNA profiles are obtained the case is subjected to a tasking process within the review team, and if necessary the enquiry can be escalated for an MCT to progress the investigation.
- Reviews include both detected and unresolved cases as well as fatal road traffic collisions. There are three time stages for these reviews, and the reviews seek to ensure that the investigation is thorough, that good practice is identified and that no investigative opportunities have been missed.
- The BCU crime managers review all stranger rapes at or before 28 days.
- Undetected homicides and other high-profile investigations have an initial review by an appointed officer within the first 7 to 10 days, then all undetected homicides are progress-reviewed at 28 days.
- Thematic reviews are undertaken where there have been unsuccessful prosecutions or successful appeals. All unresolved homicides, stranger rapes and fatal road collisions are reviewed every two years by the MCRT.
- All reviews are subject to agreed terms and conditions between the head of MCRT and the acting assistant chief constable (ACC) (crime and criminal justice (C&CJ)) or the head of crime support. There are tight timescales for the reviewing officer's report to be submitted to the acting ACC (C&CJ) or the head of crime support.
- The force submits returns to the National Centre for Policing Excellence (NCPE) for rape and has improved its performance in its data submissions to the NCPE SCAS. The force has a violent crime officer within the FIB who manages the SCAS process and who searches systems for offences.
- 'Masterclass' events are held to share learning and good practice among detectives and other staff. The force is an active participant in regional conferences, practitioners' meetings and national groups such as the national surveillance group.

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Work in progress

- Various training providers are being scoped to provide a reviewing officer course. These include South Wales Police, the NPIA and Dream Policing, although the latter provider's course is not accredited. Initially the MCRT superintendent, the detective sergeant (DS) and the operations manager will attend.
- It is unusual for critical incidents that have been subject to an ACPO gold group to undergo a structured debriefing. The incident is broken down into either constituent parts or functional groups and then subject to structured de-briefing. Overarching learning is then identified and fed into the organisational learning model that is being developed by the crime support department for delivery in 2008/09.
- This model manages learning from operational debriefing, new legislation and case law, external agencies and risk. Issues are screened and, if time-critical, are fast-tracked to the head of department. Non-time-critical issues are risk-assessed, checked against policy and presented to the department senior management team for decisions on actions. Learning can be escalated to the chief officer/MCRT meeting or can result in actions such as dissemination, updating of force policies or the 'Knowzone' intranet site or implementation of change through the SCaP change model. Changes are detailed within the change register, prioritised with rationale and monitored.

Areas for improvement

- Significant operations such as Operation Neon have been operationally debriefed to identify learning. Partners including the CPS have been involved, but this process needs to become more routine and appropriate learning should be shared. There is an opportunity for the force to draw together learning strands from other departments such as the professional standards department (PSD), operations and learning and development in much the same way as it manages risk across the force, which will provide a systemised process for organisational learning.

RECOMMENDATION 1

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that the force should enhance its processes and systems in order to evaluate its tactics and capability of its assets to effectively identify and develop organisational learning opportunities.

Summary – The force tasking and co-ordination (TCG) process operates satisfactorily to deliver suitable responses to managing major crime threats. Documentation examined reveals a sound understanding of historical, current and predicted demand.

Strengths

- The force has robust NIM tasking and co-ordination processes at both level 1 and level 2. BCU tasking mirrors that of the crime support department. The acting ACC (C&CJ) chairs both level 2 pre-tasking and tasking meetings. Partners and other forces are invited to attend as appropriate.
- Beneath the force tasking systems sits a rigorous process whereby departmental

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and operation leads chair pre-meetings. These use NIM principles and provide focus for the higher-level tasking process.

- The force's response to major crime tends to be reactive by nature; however, there are detailed market profiles for each of the major crime types, such as kidnap, gun crime and large scale cannabis production (cannabis factories). Certain crimes types tend to be allocated to the OCG investigation team, as the MCT focuses on homicide and kidnap. Operation Harriet is the exception to this, being a major crime investigation that evidences good tasking and co-ordination within NIM principles.
- The force has undertaken a detailed kidnap profile that has been mapped across the force area and that has identified significant kidnap hotspots.
- A detailed homicide profile has been produced which shows a method-based breakdown.
- Once trends or crime themes are identified, these are quickly elevated through the tasking and co-ordination group (TCG) meetings for action to be considered.
- The force crime meeting, chaired by the DCC and attended by BCU and LPA commanders, is held prior to the level 2 TCG meeting, which is chaired by the acting ACC (C&CJ). This crime meeting links NIM and performance together and maintains continued operational activity towards control strategy themes. There is some evidence that preventative activity is co-ordinated through BCUs and LPAs at these meetings, for example during Operation Blunt.
- Tasking decision-making rationale is carefully recorded at all levels: this includes policy logs, the development of operational strategies, tasking minutes, written entries in the risk register, review documentation and decisions not to resource. A methamphetamine problem profile was requested and it was subsequently identified through analysis that this was not a significant crime problem.
- On the adoption of a major crime enquiry the operational strategy considers the level of resourcing. Resourcing levels were found to be appropriate and are reviewed regularly by the SIO and management processes, including TCG and review. Furthermore, systems and processes closely monitor the progress of the investigation in light of allocated resources.
- The NPIA carried out NIM compliance and follow-up checks within Thames Valley Police during 2007/08.

Work in progress

- A comprehensive and detailed homicide prevention strategy has just been developed. Action now needs to take place across the force in order to achieve the identified preventative aims. Owners are being identified and action is due to commence in March 2008.

Areas for improvement

- Major crime analysts should review force activity against crime reduction measures, for example Operation Blunt and the homicide prevention strategy, in order to measure outcomes, identify best practice and inform decision making on the development of future tactics.

- The force should be developing practical information sharing with partners at level 2 in order to predict future demand and provide the analytical rigour needed for the products outlined in the above area for improvement.

Summary – Due to appropriate training, the force’s awareness of diverse community needs during major crime investigations is consistent and developing.

Strengths

- Other than the computer-based diversity training, there is little formal training given to major crime staff regarding diverse communities. However, there are many examples of these staff being formally briefed by members of diverse communities as the need arises.
- Positive comment has been received from community leaders and imams regarding an SIO’s sensitive management of the need to undertake a second (defence) post-mortem of a murder victim, ensuring that this event occurs at the earliest opportunity and thereby allowing the victim’s family to make prompt funeral arrangements.
- The force diversity unit and the BCU community and diversity officers CaDOs are the designated force experts, and their advice is sought by SIOs investigating major crimes that impact on members of diverse communities. The links and knowledge acquired during major crime investigations are passed through CaDOs and the force diversity unit in order to update and maintain knowledge at headquarters (HQ) level.
- The major crime department has given reciprocal training to the CaDOs in order to improve the quality of CIAs.
- The family liaison officers (FLOs) receive refresher training, including on emerging issues such as diversity needs and specific inputs in relation to the main recognised faiths and associated cultural issues. Where appropriate each enquiry will have an FLO from the MCT and a deputy from a BCU so that both can learn from the experience.
- Learning is also identified at community meetings held by LPA or BCU commanders and attended by major crime SIOs and staff.
- There is diversity training within professionalising the investigative process (PIP) and there has been some training regarding forced marriages.
- Police enquiry centre (PEC) staff have received specific diversity training and there are diversity advisers who work in the control room to provide advice and guidance. In order to utilise the language skills of force staff, there is a skills database on the command and control system providing contact details. Good use is also made of the language line.
- The force makes good use of various national facilities such as the NPIA operations line the National Community Tension Team and the Faith, Language and Culture database to identify investigations with similar experience of particular communities.

Work in progress

- No significant areas identified.

Areas for improvement

- As there is no in-force training for DSs, a training needs analysis should be completed and consideration given to high-level diversity training for this critical group of managers, since they would not have received this under the PIP.
- The force diversity unit, in conjunction with the learning and development unit, should scope the diversity training needs of major crime staff: for example, some forces have arranged input to their surveillance teams from black and minority ethnic staff regarding surveillance considerations within diverse communities.

Prevention

Summary – The force has geographically based independent advisory groups (IAGs) and these are frequently used in the management of major crime investigations. There is evidence of joint working with statutory and non-statutory partners in order to reduce and prevent major crime.

Strengths

- The force has established IAGs geographically located within each of the BCUs. Members of the IAGs are called upon to provide advice during major crime investigations, for example Operation Mitre, Operation Caddy, the Khalili murder and the Bura attempted murders (see areas for improvement).
- Gold groups are frequently held for critical incidents and major crimes, and these are often attended by statutory partners although only occasionally by IAG members.
- During most live major crime enquiries the responsibility for community reassurance falls upon the SIO. Subsequently this becomes the responsibility of the local commander.
- The CIAs for some major investigations are recorded on CEDAR, which allows activity to be monitored, controlled and measured. This activity identifies threats and ensures that police action continues into the future in order to reassure the communities affected.
- The force holds a database of individuals who possess enhanced knowledge of and skills relevant to specific diverse communities and areas of interest, and this allows for a bespoke IAG to be formed to advise on a specific incident.
- Thames Valley Police has a Government Office for the South East-funded campaign to reduce the level of alcohol-related violent crime. Successful tactics include Pubwatch, Nightsafe, taxi marshals, proactive licensing officers, bar accreditation schemes and the use of A&E trend data.
- The force strategy for managing knife crime is Operation Blunt. Tactics include education, theatre-based workshops (e.g. The Frontline) and the use of search arches. Partnership working and management within strategic partnership

tasking are sound.

- Activity to reduce serious crimes involving offenders with mental health problems includes a six-monthly meeting chaired by the Thames Valley Partnership, rigorous MAPPA processes and local multi-agency meetings regarding anti-social behaviour.
- There are good arrangements for missing person investigations, with new policy and a missing person's database.
- There are good community and partnership prevention activities at local level through DAATs, CDRPs etc.

Work in progress

- No significant areas identified.

Areas for improvement

- The force should review current IAG arrangements to consider whether central or themed IAGs would be beneficial. This review should also consider levels of training, vetting standards, consistency and terms of reference for IAGs currently at BCU and LPA levels. It should scope the makeup of the IAGs to ensure that members represent the needs and views of all vulnerable communities.
- Following the aborted attempt to develop a sexual assault referral clinic (SARC) within Aylesbury primary care trust (PCT), the force is looking to set up a virtual SARC linking services across various health authorities, although this is still in the initial stages of discussion. The force is building relationships with service providers at this stage.

Summary – Effective contingency plans are in place to minimise the impact of any escalation of a major crime incident. The inspection teams found that ‘golden hour’ principles were sufficiently understood by call management staff and first responders.

Strengths

- All Thames Valley Police staff have electronic access to the Knowzone intranet site, reference databases and the list of standard operating procedures (SOPs). The SOP for unexplained deaths has hyperlinks to a database covering deaths in institutions. This SOP has been circulated to all DIs.
- The major crime lead for unexplained deaths has given lectures to criminal investigation department courses, masterclasses and sergeants’ training to raise awareness of the role of SIOs, the preservation of scenes and the ‘golden hour’ of investigation.
- Control room staff have been given training on golden hour principles and terrorism, along with a specific input from special branch.
- Each BCU has a small 24/7 cadre of officers listed on the command and control system available to assist with scene guarding or preservation and other key roles such as DI, DS and intelligence.
- As crime investigations become more protracted, an escalation process uses either intelligence officers from the BCU area intelligence team, call-out dedicated major crime intelligence officers or officers from the FIB.
- The force follows the guidelines on major incident room standardised administrative procedures (MIRSAP) and invariably uses HOLMES or CLIO as an information management tool.
- The force operates a gold, silver and bronze arrangement for the command of incidents. While there is no written procedure, there are adequate out-of-hours on-call systems, both formal and informal, for the contact and deployment of specialist staff.
- Within the HQ crime department there are formal on-call arrangements for SIOs, key major incident suite (MIS) staff and crime scene investigators (CSIs). There are less formal arrangements for all other specialisms and roles. There is adequate specialist capability regarding the response to both major and serious and organised crime, and there is flexibility within the infrastructure to deliver according to need.
- There is a tiered approach to crime scene management through CSIs and crime scene managers (CSMs). The latter manage all aspects of forensic retrieval at significant crime scenes. Call handlers have received input from the CSI trainer on crime scene preservation.
- Murder enquiries have allocated funds depending on category; however this does not cover the first 24 hours of BCUs’ response to crimes. This arrangement improves efficiency and also maximises the use of BCU staff, as they are ultimately responsible for their initial costs.

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- Force control inspectors are trained and have the delegated authority to authorise armed response vehicles to arm themselves.
- There is a good level of understanding of golden hour (known locally as first response or early steps) issues and actions that are required to be taken at crime scenes such as those of homicides, suspicious deaths and fatal accidents.
- The local resilience forum chaired by the DCC has new terms of reference, a delivery plan and a new risk register which co-ordinates the activities of police, fire, health and ambulance services and the military in order to minimise the impact of a critical incident or major crime.

Work in progress

- The crime support department has developed its business continuity plan, which includes staffing and location issues. This has been circulated to the senior management team for comment. There are links to the force risk register and the force risk manager will be assisting with a tabletop exercise to test the continuity plan in March 2008.
- The control room staff have received training on how to manage reported kidnaps; they have drop down menus to assist them and they will be undertaking an exercise in March 2008 to test the force's response to this type of incident.
- While there is a 24/7 capability to search across all systems, managed through the control rooms and enquiries department, it is recognised that there is a need for intelligence support for crimes in action. Work is in progress to develop the role of the intelligence research bureau to provide this function, but there are significant staffing gaps at present.

Areas for improvement

- Thames Valley Police officers have in the past had aides-mémoires and personal data assistants; however, these have been withdrawn or fallen in to disrepute. As a result officers need to rely upon information held on the Knowzone intranet site or reference databases, and in practice officers on the ground will not have access to these other than through control room staff.

Summary – The threats from precursors to major crime offending are analysed adequately.

Strengths

- There is a homicide reduction working group chaired by the acting ACC (C&CJ) which has wide-ranging attendance. This multi-disciplined group consists of specialist and BCU staff and actively works towards homicide reduction.
- There is analysis of the current and future demand from major crime types and precursors to these offences (see areas for improvement).
- The force has a good understanding of the threats arising from risks that have been identified in the FSA and market profiles.
- Analytical work on precursor crimes has been completed by FIB analysts, and this provides a clear understanding of the risks posed by kidnap, domestic abuse

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and prostitution (see areas for improvement).

- The force has undertaken campaigns to reduce the number of firearms incidents involving replica guns, and a specific operation to reduce the availability of illegal firearms and ammunition (Operation Octane). Prevention strategies for victims, vulnerable people and locations are implemented. Additionally, the force has undertaken high-level media campaigns such as Operation Blunt and Operation Hangover (jointly with Hampshire) which have sought to reduce homicide.
- As a high proportion of kidnap is domestic-related the force has focused its prevention and investigation strategy, internal communications and managerial interventions towards domestic abuse (including forced marriage).
- Information and intelligence sharing with partners regarding MAPPAs offender issues is good. MAPPAs offenders are managed centrally and the force has established MAPPAs processes to reduce the risk posed by dangerous offenders.
- The FIB analysts and researchers carry out key word searches to identify precursor offences. The force has chemist officers who monitor the purchase of precursor chemicals.
- The strategic planning department completes a monthly environmental scanning report that identifies emerging issues and, through the force intelligence requirement, flags the need for market profiles to be developed.
- Domestic homicide features highly in prevention and a preventative approach using the SPECSS+ risk model is used. The current reduction in homicides may prove to be linked to both this approach and positive interventions by all staff; however, this requires further analysis.
- The force makes active use of CIAs to engage with communities in order to prevent crimes and reduce community tension.

Work in progress

- Best practice and a risk analysis system which identifies honour-based violence are being rolled out across the force and new policy is currently being written.
- An updated firearms suppression strategy based upon NPIA guidance is being finalised and will be published in 2008/09.

Areas for improvement

- The force needs to carry out more detailed analysis of precursor sex offences such as indecent exposure, voyeurism and theft of underwear. These crimes should be identified at the earliest possible stage, either by responding officers or by control room staff.
- While the major crime department has six analysts, they do not have portfolio responsibility and where they do produce analytical products these tend to be backward-looking. The force needs to review this capability, measured against the roles within the FIB, in order to make sure that real-time analysis of precursor crimes is taking place to identify trends in major crime.

Summary – The policy covering threat to life is fully accessible to staff and reasonably well understood and implemented. There is some evidence of regional and cross-border operations where such threats exist.

Strengths

- The force has a detailed threat to human life SOP that is well-managed, accessible to all staff via the force intranet system and subject to frequent update. It has been revised following recent case law and includes cross-border arrangements.
- The SOP includes an escalation process that is dependent on the risk identified and the nature of the threat. Prevention tactics are considered and used, for example arrest of the subject or potential victim and overt disruption – these tactics are generally considered in conjunction with the use of Osman warnings and are frequently used where firearms are suspected.
- The rationale behind the decision made and options discounted is recorded as a policy decision. Each level of risk has a process and authorising level attached to it and in each case specialist advice and knowledge is sought.
- Cross-border transfer of risk decisions are made following discussion between both police forces at head of specialist operations level.
- Osman warnings are submitted electronically and entered onto the CIS, and the FIB maintains a register that can be accessed 24/7, although this requires FIB staff callout.
- The numbers of Osman warnings issued fell to 25 in 2007 with no repeats.
- Staff are aware of and understand the SOP, including the use of the Osman warning as a tactic, but knowledge is not comprehensive.
- Activations within the control room concerning addresses where Osman warnings apply highlight trigger plans and the control room inspector is informed.
- Osman warnings issued as part of a major crime inquiry are recorded in the policy book and the risk is continually reviewed, usually by a DI.
- The homicide prevention working group chaired by the acting ACC (C&CJ) is the driving force behind the integrated homicide reduction strategy, which includes the use of Osman warnings as a tactical option.

Work in progress

- No significant areas identified.

Areas for improvement

- No significant areas identified.

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Summary – The force has a witness protection capability supported by dedicated covert resources within a covert building. The force operates to a SOP that replicates ACPO guidelines and is promulgated to and understood by dedicated staff, with limited understanding on the part of other staff. The force is collaborating with other forces and partners.

Strengths

- The inspection found that the force has witness protection policies in place and a good understanding of the need for tactics, covert resources and witnesses to be protected and for individuals to be offered anonymity where appropriate, and of the mechanisms by which these aims can be achieved.
- There is an SOP in place that caters for the protection of vulnerable persons involved in the judicial and investigative process. This SOP is confidential; however, sanitised information is included on the crime support intranet site which guides officers and refers them to the witness protection unit staff in complex cases (see areas for improvement).
- The SOP provides clear guidelines as to what action should be taken when considering placing an individual under the witness protection scheme. The home force completes risk assessments and then trigger plans are developed.

Work in progress

- There is recognition within Thames Valley Police that witness protection is an area for development. It is a subject of both South East regional collaboration and a similar project led by Hampshire Constabulary. Regional witness protection units share good practice, and when a new subject is protected liaison takes place with the host force to ensure effective protection and target-hardening arrangements.

Areas for improvement

- There is currently no formal stand-alone policy for witness protection; however, it does operate to an effective SOP that meets force needs. Once new ACPO guidelines have been agreed and published, a policy will be written.

Summary – The force has a limited but developing system to monitor the impact of preventative and enforcement activity. There is evidence that the broad range of community policing assets is partially used to help understand levels of harm in the community.

Strengths

- The major crime intelligence cell has very strong links to the local intelligence teams and often a local intelligence officer is attached to a major crime inquiry.
- Use is made of the local knowledge and community links of both NPTs and CaDOs. These, together with the social network analysis and vulnerability matrix, are used to assess the impact of operations (see areas for improvement). This is a detailed and considered process (conducted through NIM meetings) which reviews community impact and fear of crime indicators, harm to persons and/or property indicators, and vulnerability measures.
- Additionally, the force makes use of its monthly citizen focus survey to help

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gauge the impact of preventative and enforcement activity. This survey identifies issues at neighbourhood level, although these are not aggregated up across communities (see areas for improvement).

Work in progress

- The force is developing a community information system that will record local information about themes or general areas that do not warrant inclusion as intelligence on the CIS. Information contained within this system will be shared with identified partners and will be subject to freedom of information principles and automatic deletion after agreed timescales.

Areas for improvement

- Plans to bring about normality to areas that have been affected by major crime should fully articulate the arrangements made jointly with communities, community representatives and partners to bring about this result, and identify measures that will be used to monitor that the activities have been effective.
- While it is acknowledged that the force has completed some results analysis for some significant operations (eg Operation Falcon), a more structured approach to this analysis needs to be taken to monitor the impact of preventative and enforcement activity. An analyst should complete this task in every case, using open and closed sources including partnership intelligence and data. The NPTs, key individual networks, IAGs and neighbourhood analysts should be included in this process.
- SIO policy files should identify the local intelligence requirements of geographical areas as well as the operational and evidential intelligence requirements of the major enquiry. The force should consider how the data obtained from its monthly citizen focus surveys is analysed and used to improve understanding of the impact of harm in communities.

RECOMMENDATION 2

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that the force should develop a structured approach to results analysis for major crime in order to monitor the impact of preventative and enforcement activity.

Summary – The inspection found evidence that the force sometimes considers relevant professional standards issues in the operational planning for major crime work. There is a comprehensive security policy in use to ensure that staff are appropriately vetted commensurate with exposure.

Strengths

- HMIC examined the PSD and found that there are security policies and protocols in place that are current. There is a quarterly security committee meeting chaired by the DCC that discusses all aspects of physical and operational security with appropriate subgroups.
- The PSD is a well-resourced department which has its own proactive arm and surveillance capability, carrying out anti-corruption enquiries which are prioritised through a dedicated PSD tasking process.

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- There is a dedicated unit led by the former head of crime support. The unit covers force security, vetting, freedom of information and data protection. It is responsible for the security of physical assets, IT systems and information and gives practical advice and guidance. At the start of each major crime investigation, a risk assessment is carried out and where necessary guidance is sought from the force security manager. For category A investigations, the force security manager will give a briefing to the investigating teams.
- Thames Valley Police is committed to combating all forms of corruption within the organisation, and to ensure that the highest levels of ethical standards and behaviour are observed the inspection team was provided with sensitive information concerning operational tactics, which appear to be robust and further comment will not be made in this report owing to operational security.
- All major crime operations use HOLMES, which provides a clear audit trail of its use information security.
- All sensitive posts requiring vetting have been identified and post-holders have been appropriately vetted. All new joiners (officers and staff), transferees and officers rejoining under the 30+ scheme are further vetted. All contractors and their employees given access to police premises are vetted.
- The chair and vice-chair of the Police Authority, chief executive and treasurer have all been vetted to an appropriate level.

Work in progress

- The unit is soon to move into a new department led by the head of information management; it will continue to be within the portfolio of responsibilities held by the DCC and to operate in line with MoPI best practice.
- While systems are in place to identify corruption, for example the integrity line and supervisor training, work is also in progress to test officers in sensitive posts for drug and alcohol use (see areas for improvement).

Areas for improvement

- Consideration should be given to training a cadre of operational security officers.
- There is a need to extend the current regime of random drug and alcohol testing to more mainstream posts.

Enforcement

Summary – Governance arrangements for major crime investigations are wholly effective, with appropriate use made of IAGs and community membership of gold command support groups.

Strengths

- The chief officer structure and governance arrangements are appropriate and have been subject to recent change with regard to major crime. The ACC (operations) formerly, as ACC (specialist operations), had specific responsibility for major crime and chaired the pre-tasking (sensitive) and force-level tasking

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meetings. The acting ACC (C&CJ) (formerly the head of crime support) is the interim chief officer who now has this responsibility. Pre-tasking (sensitive) and force-level tasking meetings exhibit a high level of knowledge, understanding, intrusive management and challenge.

- The Police Authority has established a code of corporate governance that provides clarity of roles for the authority and the Chief Constable. The Chief Constable provides monthly verbal reports to the full Authority meeting and individual chief officers report as appropriate. The authority has actively secured funding for improved protective services.
- The vice-chair and an independent member of the Authority attend the crime support department performance review meeting which is newly formed. Vetted members who attend give a redacted update to the full authority. Authority members and officers attend force and BCU performance meetings and occasionally BCU tasking meetings.
- The force has established IAGs geographically located on each of the BCUs and members provide advice during major crime investigations, such as Operation Mitre, Operation Caddy and the Rehman murder investigation (see areas for improvement). IAGs are routinely consulted to inform policy, pre-planned operations and policing activity, including spontaneous events.
- Gold groups are frequently held for critical incidents and major crimes, and these are attended occasionally by IAG members (who play an active part) and often by statutory partners. Authority members and officers attend all gold groups.

Work in progress

- The force has proposed joint key performance indicators and targets with the Authority (within a three-year strategy for 2008–11) to reduce serious acquisitive crime and increase detections; reduce assaults with injuries; improve sanction detections for serious violence and sexual offences; protect communities from the threat from terrorism and organised crime; and increase the number of OCGs targeted and disrupted. There are also implied joint targets within this strategy that link to public service agreements 23 and 24.

Areas for improvement

- Consideration should be given to risk-assessing IAG members and vetting them as appropriate to the identified risk.

Summary – The ACPO lead and other members of the chief officer team are fully trained in the management of linked, series and serious crime. These officers are supported by staff who have undergone adequate training and testing in critical incident command, CIAs and policing in partnership.

Strengths

- There is resilience within the chief officer team, with two of the three ACCs trained in the role of officer in overall command (OIOC) of linked and series crime. The ACC (operations) has experience of being an OIOC in linked series investigations, such as Operation Harriet and Operation Haul.

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- The ACC (operations) and acting ACC (C&CJ) have both completed the management of linked serious crime (MLSC) course, as have five SIOs. Two SIOs have experience of managing linked series crime, for example in Operation Harriet and Operation Hansel. In both cases MLSC methodology has been adapted for these particular investigations. The head of the crime support department is scheduled to attend SCIMITAR and MLSC courses.
- All current SIOs have taken the Hydra interactive SIO course. Furthermore, these officers are supported by staff who have undergone adequate training and testing in critical incident command, CIAs and policing in partnership.
- There is a 24/7 superintendent Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984/critical incident rota accessible through the force control room. This rota is supported by other specialist functions such as firearms, operations, public order, negotiation, CaDOs, the PSD, welfare and media. BCUs also have their own on-call rotas including a DI, intelligence officers and CaDOs.
- Assess to communities and IAG support is facilitated through the on-call critical incident superintendent and CaDO. Local ownership is preserved; the LPA or BCU commander will respond regardless of whether they are on call.
- CIAs are routinely requested in order to inform major crime strategies. These are generally commissioned through the local BCU or area commander and in the main completed by the local CaDO.
- The CIA process is monitored by the duty gold commander and force CaDO, who liaise with the National Community Tension Team.

Work in progress

- It is anticipated that Operation Hansel will be included within the new NPIA MLSC syllabus that will be published during 2008/09.

Areas for improvement

- No significant areas identified.

Summary – The force’s performance in the investigation of major crime is monitored through a regime that reviews each operation in terms of cost and some outcomes, but is not yet fully mature in terms of measuring inputs and outputs.

Strengths

- Within the tactical assessment document there is a specific section that outlines the desired outcomes and measures for each operation.
- The MCRT within the crime support department concentrates its activities upon major crime and critical incident review, in circumstances where risk dictates or when requested by an SIO or through managerial intervention. There is a formal policy for the review of homicides and stranger rape cases; furthermore, there is an unresolved case prioritisation matrix for both current and cold unsolved crimes, but such reviews do not always occur.
- Reviews include both detected and unresolved cases as well as fatal road traffic

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collisions. There are three time stages for these reviews: all stranger rapes are reviewed by the MCRT detective superintendent at 28 days or before; homicides have an initial review by an appointed officer within the first 7 to 10 days; and all undetected homicides are progress-reviewed at 28 days.

- Thematic reviews are also undertaken where investigations are discontinued or where there have been unsuccessful prosecutions or successful appeals. All unresolved homicides, stranger rapes and fatal road collisions are reviewed every two years.
- All reviews are subject to terms and conditions agreed between the head of MCRT and the ACC (C&CJ) or the head of crime support. There are tight timescales for the reviewing officer's report to be submitted.
- Reviews are completed at the end either of an enquiry or of a trial, and include a wide range of police functions that have been involved, such as forensics, intelligence and surveillance. The resultant learning, while immediate for the people involved, is captured organisationally within changes to SOPs, policies and guidance on the crime support intranet site.
- Learning issues that come to notice in fast time are cascaded. Operation Quelch is an example of the first responding supervisors being formally debriefed together with the MCT. Where there is significant learning, for example in the case of Operation Salvini, the case officer presents this to peers; and in the case of a recent child murder key members of the investigation team held a masterclass event. Each department also has its own hot debriefing sessions, which complement the MCT process. There have also been welfare debriefing sessions following traumatic events such as child deaths.
- The MCTs have two training days per year, at which attendance is mandatory for all officers and staff.
- At the outset of a major crime investigation a budget is set. In the case of homicides each major crime category has a pre-designated overall spend limit in accordance with MIRSAP guidance. Forensic budgets are pre-designated to category A, B and C major crime investigations. The spend throughout the life of an enquiry is closely monitored by the SIO and the crime support business manager. There have been recent improvements in the allocation of a major crime devolved budget which now includes most of the real-time spends within an investigation, such as overtime, agency staff, fleet and hire vehicles (see areas for improvement).
- Managerial reporting processes, including the TCG, monitor spend against profile and the intended outcome of the enquiry. Where the MCT takes on a slow-time operation, funding is provided through the bidding process and is considered through the tasking and co-ordination process. The level 2 TCG has changed its format and now reviews historic bids to assess the relative financial productivity of the monies that have been allocated.
- Some major crime investigations, such as Operation Octane, have been very rigorously debriefed.
- Other resource data, such as data on sickness, abstractions and training, is

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monitored and forms part of the crime support performance group meeting. In order to produce more timely and user-friendly financial data, budgets have been streamlined and financial data is now also included within the crime support performance group meeting, which is diarised to coincide with the preparation of monthly accounting information.

Work in progress

- No significant areas identified.

Areas for improvement

- The force has improved its understanding of the costs associated with significant elements within a major crime investigation, but a more detailed breakdown, for example covering cost of technical support, undercover officers (other than overtime), interpreters and telephone work, would be beneficial to enable operations to be fully costed and efficient decisions to be made regarding the use of investigative tactics.
- While the crime support business manager manages and monitors spend, the force should consider employing a resource manager in line with MIRSAP guidelines in order proactively and dynamically to manage resourcing decisions and spend within enquiries.

Performance management and resilience

Summary – The inspection team found a sufficient investigative capability in force to meet predictable major crime investigation demands; however, collaborative agreements with SOCA and other forces in the South East region exist and are deployed as appropriate. These are considered adequate to meet normal and extraordinary levels of need. Force procedures to manage human resources provide sufficient protection for the investigative capability.

Strengths

- Following the force review of capability and capacity to tackle major crime as part of the strategic force programme, a business case proposing a three-year growth bid was accepted along with capital bids to improve the estate and develop IT. The MCT is now in its third year of growth, and in total MCT officers and staff have grown from 71 in 2005/06 to a projected 112 in 2008.
- The dedicated MCT is divided into two geographical teams (East and West). Each is led by a detective superintendent and four DCIs (shortly to become five), all SIOs, who have geographical responsibility for major crime on the five BCUs. The current detective superintendents are career detectives with varying degrees of detective experience at DCI level, allowing for lateral development of suitable officers (see work in progress).
- MCT growth, together with reduced homicide numbers, has significantly reduced the abstraction of BCU staff. However, HOLMES indexers, FLOs and specially trained sex offences officers will always be drawn from BCU staff, as the numbers within the MCT are limited – for example six HOLMES indexers and 32 FLOs.
- BCU intelligence officers spend some of their time assisting the MCT. There is

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also a reserve list of previously trained MCT officers now working on BCUs who can be called in to assist major crime investigations at times of extreme demand. All abstractions from BCUs are recorded on a spreadsheet and rigorously monitored. The resilience panel monitors standards and the protective services panel is signing off all work to increase capability and capacity.

- There are adequate out-of-hours on-call systems, both formal and informal, for the contact and deployment of specialist staff (formalised for SIOs, MCT intelligence officers, ACC, gold command, negotiators, the authorities bureau, scene of crime officers, the PSD, welfare, BCU DIs, BCU intelligence and media liaison). MCT officers and staff work Monday to Friday over extended hours and have a small team rostered to be on call at weekends. These arrangements are constantly tested in real-life events. Access to specialist resources is dynamic, timely and reliable.
- The MCT exists to investigate homicides, kidnaps and stranger rapes, but it will take on major crimes as appropriate.
- Category C homicides have been investigated or resourced by BCUs, but more recently the MCT has adopted these enquiries or has given SIO oversight.
- Kidnap and extortion offences are investigated by nationally trained and accredited MCT SIOs, drawing upon specialist staff as required (eg surveillance, firearms).
- There is flexibility regarding the numbers of MCT officers and staff allocated to enquiries (within set minimum levels) and equal flexibility over siting of the major incident room (MIR). The MIRs (with one exception) are new facilities and are appropriately equipped, including networked HOLMES. Each is large enough to run multiple enquiries simultaneously, and is managed by a DI who fulfils some of the role of office manager and acts as deputy SIO for all enquiries undertaken from that location (see work in progress).
- The investigation of road deaths is undertaken by trained roads policing unit SIOs who are supported by two dedicated MIRs.
- All MCT staff are appropriately trained (see areas for improvement). Within the MCT there are 37 officers who are tier interview trained to level 2, 10 at level 3 and one at level 5, along with two accredited PIP 3 SIOs; the remaining SIOs are PIP 3-registered and are progressing towards accreditation.
- There are adequate systems and processes for the investigation of sudden and unexplained deaths, in particular those within military establishments and hospitals. MOUs exist with prisons, the military and PCTs. There are good working relationships with the Health and Safety Executive. MOUs are reinforced through the attendance of SIOs at regional and local meetings. Unexplained deaths tend to be reported through the PECs and identified and monitored by the FIB people desk (see areas for improvement). There is a good understanding of corporate manslaughter issues, which feature within Initial Crime Investigators' Development Programme training.
- Call handlers, control room staff and their supervisors are trained and skilled in receiving information and effectively deploying first responders to potential major

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crimes and critical incidents. First responders and their supervisors have good knowledge of 'golden hour' issues. The Knowzone intranet site and the reference database provide guidance and are networked across the force.

- There are sound arrangements to respond to all homicides and unexplained deaths, including a tiered call-out for scenes of crime staff (see work in progress). The force has a large goods vehicle that can deposit a mobile office at a crime scene to enable on-site packaging and examination of exhibits.
- A wide range of specialist and technical resources has been provided from either within or outside the force in fast time. In slower time there are examples of analytical, financial and agency support procured for MCTs.

Work in progress

- The Aylesbury MIR is undergoing refurbishment and extension (to be completed during 2008/09).
- The force has recruited its first scientific support tactical adviser, who will be the SPOC for major crime (to be in place during 2008/09 after vetting).
- In order to improve workforce succession planning, a workforce profile has been created together with a career development policy. The latter allows officers to be progressed within intelligence and investigative roles. The head of crime support owns the succession planning.
- All SIOs have been trained through attending the national SIO course. The force has five SIOs (three detective superintendents and two DCIs) who are fully PIP 3-accredited; three of these have moved to new roles. Within the current MCT, two SIOs (detective superintendents) are fully accredited, while the three DCIs are PIP 3-registered and are working towards accreditation.
- Detective constables (DCs) and DSs are being registered within the PIP level 2 programme. The force PIP board has agreed a process of accreditation; however, some roles within major crime are not easily suited to the restrictive national guidelines, resulting in significant PIP 2 accreditation gaps.

Areas for improvement

- While all SIOs have had appropriate training, for example in management of linked and series crimes, most are not PIP 3-accredited at this time, although they are all registered and some have been temporarily accredited on the basis of experience.
- The six analysts within the MCT do not have portfolio responsibility, and the analytical products they produce tend to be backward-looking. The force needs to review this capability, measured against the roles within the FIB, in order to make sure that real-time precursors and real-time analysis of pre-cursor crimes is taking place to identify trends in major crime.
- There needs to be a review of the capacity of each MIR to store exhibits.
- There is a need to introduce a more formalised process to monitor unexplained and sudden deaths, to allow the early identification of patterns and links.

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- Consideration should be given to the opportunity of using the HOLMES system when investigating category C homicides.
- A training needs analysis for MCT DIs and DSs needs to be completed. As numbers are low, operational competence supported by up-to-date training is critical to the effectiveness of the MCTs.
- There is potential to loan MCT investigators (in the short term) to the specialist operations unit and to BCUs, as there has been a reduction in the number of homicide investigations and there are some examples of where this has taken place. These arrangements will need careful management so that these resources can be quickly returned to MCT should demand rise or should there be a need for a rapid response to a crime in action. Alternatively, the defined role of the MCT could be expanded to cover additional responsibilities such as cold case review of sex crimes, or new crimes such as identity fraud or organised and internet paedophilia.

RECOMMENDATION 3

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that the force should introduce a process to monitor unexplained and sudden deaths which will allow the early identification of patterns and links.

Summary – Specialist and covert investigations are resourced through a robust infrastructure that is proven to be effective. There are written and verbal collaborative agreements for the provision of specialist covert resources which proved effective when implemented. The inspection found evidence of proactive and reactive use of these assets across a wide range of offences.

Strengths

- There are adequate out-of-hours on-call systems, both formal and informal, for the contact and deployment of specialist staff. These arrangements are constantly tested in real-life events. Access to specialist resources is dynamic, timely and reliable.
- There are two full surveillance teams trained in a variety of covert tactics, which can conduct technical deployment. These are supported by the urban surveillance unit, which is more specialist in nature, being CROPS and firearms-trained.
- There is no armed surveillance capability outside the urban surveillance team, and as a consequence the force relies upon specialist firearms officers from the operations department. Each BCU has a source management unit led by a DS with a dedicated controller. There is an accredited dedicated level 2 source handling unit. Handlers and controllers are embedded within tasking and intelligence meetings and significant covert human intelligence source tasking is evident at all levels; however, a tasking document is being developed to monitor this.
- Financial and economic crime investigation is the remit of the economic crime

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unit (ECU). A dedicated team investigates level 2 offenders and offences, and financial investigators (FIs) located on BCUs have responsibility for level 1 crimes and suspicious activity reports. FIs are also appointed to assist with major crime investigations.

- The ECU DI attends national and regional CIFAS (the UK fraud prevention service) meetings to discuss fraud prevention and in particular identity fraud in collaboration with the banking community.
- Operation Falcon is a long-term campaign, in partnership, to stamp out Class A drug dealers, reduce drug-driven crime and disorder and enhance treatment opportunities for addicts.
- There has been significant investment in high-tech crime capability and capacity that has reduced backlogs and improved effectiveness. However, this is a growth area of work and staff have very high workloads.
- The forensic investigation unit has seen significant investment and growth. Significant collaborative work has taken place and cost savings have been redirected within the unit to provide an enhanced service, for example to the footwear unit. There were no identified gaps found within the forensic services provided for the investigation of major crime; many staff have significant specialisms such as CBRN (chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear). Performance management of forensic science is sound.
- BCU FLOs are seconded to major crime enquiries but this does not present a problem to BCU and LPA commanders.
- There are dedicated case and exhibits officers for each major crime investigation.
- The operations department provides timely police search of area support.
- HOLMES is used in all MCT investigations.
- The authorities' bureau contains five SPOCs who have extensive experience of specialist telephone investigations. All major crime intelligence officers can deal with Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA) issues and phone data interpretation.
- There are good collaborative arrangements for targeting major crime with neighbouring forces and other law enforcement agencies.
- Thames Valley Police shares specialist resources and technical equipment with neighbouring and surrounding police forces, for example in the case of Operation Haul. Collaborative arrangements are supported by MOUs.
- The force is an active partner in the South East collaboration programme and is leading on four of the nine work strands. These are advanced search, technical support, fingerprints and screening and submissions units. Outside the South East collaboration programme, the force collaborates across a range of business functions, including participation in the Chiltern transport consortium and the Chiltern air support consortium. Furthermore, there are joint media arrangements with Hampshire Constabulary, for example on alcohol-related violence. Thames

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Valley Police and Hampshire Constabulary have appointed a joint director of information and communications technology.

Work in progress

- The previous promotion policy was impacting upon the specialist skills within the crime support department; to overcome this problem, career pathways and succession planning are being developed so that officers do not return to BCUs upon promotion.

Areas for improvement

- The force should consider a review of the surveillance team against workforce modernisation principles and actively recruit members to the team to reflect more accurately the profile of the community it operates within.
- In terms of high-tech crime, there is a need for the force to develop an e-crime policy, preferably with regional support, based upon NPIA guidance (once this is published). An investigative capacity will then need to be established, preferably exploiting collaborative opportunities.

Summary – The force has a full-time and dedicated case review team that is always deployed when historical major crime cases are reviewed, and sometimes when current cases are reviewed, in accordance with ACPO guidance. Case review work is effective and efficient.

Strengths

- The dedicated MCRT is led by a detective superintendent, assisted by a principal investigator (police staff), a DS, six DCs and one FI. The review policy has recently been updated to include reviews at initial stages, 7 to 10 days and 28 days. The MCRT detective superintendent reviews all stranger rapes at 28 days or sooner; undetected homicides have an initial review by an appointed officer within the first 7 to 10 days and all undetected homicides are progress-reviewed at 28 days.
- Thematic reviews are undertaken where there are unsuccessful prosecutions or successful appeals. Furthermore, all unresolved homicides, stranger rapes and fatal road collisions are reviewed every two years by the MCRT. All reviews are subject to terms and conditions agreed between the SIO and the ACC (C&CJ) or the head of crime support. There are tight timescales for the reviewing officer's report to be submitted to the ACC (C&CJ) or the head of crime support.
- The MCRT conducts cold case reviews of outstanding and unsolved cases of rape and homicide. It has currently scoped all these outstanding enquiries and has identified exhibits and case papers. Using a case prioritisation matrix it has ordered and reduced the list of cases. It is currently working on a number of historical unsolved homicides and has identified a significant number of outstanding cases of sexual assault which can be further progressed, a proportion of which have been prioritised and are being further investigated under Operation Sisco (the force's response to prioritising this backlog.)
- All cases are managed on spreadsheets, and while there is no dedicated analytical resource this can be obtained through the tasking process. The use of HOLMES is decided upon on a case-by-case basis and there are suitably trained staff within the team.
- Most of the exhibits relating to the outstanding murders and sexual offences have been identified, and prior to their submission to the forensic science laboratory a submissions meeting takes place involving forensic staff, at which cost, evidential value and opportunities for evidence are agreed and documented.

Work in progress

- No significant areas identified.

Areas for improvement

- While the unsolved murders and unsolved sexual assault cases have been scoped and prioritised, the subsequent investigation of these cases is beyond the capacity of the MCRT. More creative solutions are needed to increase capacity and so enable the Monday morning TCG meeting to allocate more resources to this important area.
- Once a forensic match is identified this should be risk-assessed at the Monday morning TCG meeting, where consideration should be given to using HOLMES to manage the case if it is unlikely that the offender will be immediately traced.

RECOMMENDATION 4

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that the force should identify processes and resourcing solutions to reduce the number of unsolved murders and sexual assault cases.

Summary – The inspection found that the force was predominantly compliant with the relevant ACPO standards of the murder investigation manual (MIM) and MIRSAP.

Strengths

- During the fieldwork phase the inspection team checked and can verify that appropriate ACPO manuals of standards and guidance, both hard copy and electronic versions, are adequately circulated and easily accessible to appropriate users.
- The force RIPA compliance has recently been reviewed by the surveillance commissioners and was found to be satisfactory with only minor recommendations for improvement.
- The force is compliant with the MIM and MIRSAP, except that the HOLMES office manager role is not always filled as the responsibilities of this role are shared between the HOLMES receiver and the system supervisor. The force is aware of this gap and will always risk assess decisions not to comply and document them the policy file.
- A strategic decision has been made not to recruit MIR researchers with monies directed to the employment of crime analysts. There are six such analysts and a lead analyst for the MCT is being appointed.
- Policy files are completed in all major crime investigations and are in the main included on HOLMES. Sensitive policy and decision making are recorded on paper policy files. Decisions not to pursue a line of enquiry or to tolerate a threat will always be recorded.

Work in progress

- The most recent inspection by the Interception of Communications Commissioner's Office (carried out in March 2007) was generally positive and noted marked improvement in compliance with RIPA and its code of practice. However, there are some outstanding recommendations which are to be progressed.

Areas for improvement

- An operational security officer should review compliance against ACPO manuals of standards for covert policing and other relevant manuals within live operations.

Recommendations

RECOMMENDATION 1

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that the force should enhance its processes and systems in order to evaluate its tactics and capability of its assets to effectively identify and develop organisational learning opportunities.

RECOMMENDATION 2

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that the force should develop a structured approach to results analysis for major crime in order to monitor the impact of preventative and enforcement activity.

RECOMMENDATION 3

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that the force should introduce a process to monitor unexplained and sudden deaths which will allow the early identification of patterns and links.

RECOMMENDATION 4

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that the force should identify processes and resourcing solutions to reduce the number of unsolved murders and sexual assault cases.

Appendix 1: Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations

A

ABC	Activity-based Costing
ABE	Achieving Best Evidence
ACC	Assistant Chief Constable
ACPO	Association of Chief Police Officers
APA	Association of Police Authorities
ASB	Anti-social Behaviour

B

BANES	Bath and North East Somerset
BCS	British Crime Survey
BCU	Basic Command Unit
BME	Black and Minority Ethnic

C

CAIT	Child Abuse Investigation Team
CDRP	Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership
CID	Criminal Investigation Department
COG	Chief Officer Group
CPS	Crown Prosecution Service

D

DC	Detective Constable
DCC	Deputy Chief Constable
DCI	Detective Chief Inspector
DI	Detective Inspector
DS	Detective Sergeant
DDA	Disability Discrimination Act

DV Domestic Violence

DV Domestic Violence

E

ECM Every Child Matters

F

FIG Force Intelligence Group

FTE Full-time Equivalent

G

HMI Her Majesty's Inspector

HMIC Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary

HQ Headquarters

HR Human Resources

I

ICIDP Initial Crime Investigators Development Programme

ICT Information and Communications Technology

K

KPI Key Performance Indicator

L

LSCB Local Safeguarding Children Board

M

MAPPA Multi-agency Public Protection Arrangements

MARAC Multi-agency Risk Assessment Conference

MSF Most Similar Force(s)

N

NBM	Neighbourhood Beat Manager
NCPE	National Centre for Policing Excellence
NIM	National Intelligence Model
NPIA	National Policing Improvement Agency

P

PACT	Police and Communities Together
PCSO	Police Community Support Officer
PIM	Performance Improvement Meeting
PIP	Professionalising the Investigative Process
PPAF	Police Performance Assessment Framework
PPU	Public Protection Unit

Q

QoSC	Quality of Service Commitment
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R

RSO	Registered Sex Offender
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S

SARA	Scanning, Analysis, Response, Assessment
SDVC	Specialist Domestic Violence Court
SGC	Specific Grading Criteria
SMB	Strategic Management Board
SMT	Senior Management Team
SPI	Statutory Performance Indicator
SPP	Special Priority Payment
SSN	Safer Stronger Neighbourhood

T

TTCG Tactical Tasking and Co-ordination Group

U

UKBA UK Border Agency

V

ViSOR Violent and Sex Offenders' Register

Appendix 2: Developing Practice

<p>INSPECTION AREA: Major Crime</p>
<p>TITLE: Revised force kidnap response</p>
<p>PROBLEM:</p> <p>In 2005 it was identified that all aspects of the force's response to kidnap needed reviewing. The initial response was often very variable. The kidnap manual and training were aimed at the most serious offences of kidnap. Domestic kidnap fell outside the scope of the manual, and the force had experienced a domestic kidnap resulting in a homicide.</p> <p>A high-profile, full-blown kidnap with full National Crime Squad response generated a good deal of organisational learning, prompting a review.</p>
<p>SOLUTION:</p> <p>To enhance organisational learning, a multidisciplinary group reviewed and developed all aspects of the force kidnap response.</p> <p>Significant products included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • assessment of the kidnap problem in the force area and a kidnap problem profile; • a rewritten initial response; • all potential kidnaps referred to a trained major crime SIO for risk assessment 24/7; • enhanced training for SIOs and key major crime staff, especially intelligence officers; • an SIO aide-mémoire; • training for all control room staff; • joint major crime training with negotiators and firearms silver commanders; • development of an intelligence cell to support crimes in action; • purchase and use of the CLIO system to manage kidnap investigations; and • equipping and use of covert operations rooms (Loddon Valley and Long Hanborough, both dual-purpose). <p>Key to this is the initial risk assessment by a trained SIO. This process, adapted from the conflict resolution model, involves a continual cycle of reviewing intelligence, assessing threat, reviewing powers, setting policy, and identifying actions and tactical options.</p> <p>The following classifications are often used by SIOs to determine the potential risk to a hostage and therefore the level of response required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • immediate risk to life or of serious harm; • risk to life or of serious harm;

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- concern for welfare; and
- information does not support kidnap.

In the first two categories, major crime SIOs command the investigation until the hostage is recovered, whereupon the investigation is handed back to BCUs. The latter two categories are generally dealt with at BCU level, as are kidnaps reported after the event.

OUTCOMES:

The kidnap response is a significant strand of the force's homicide prevention strategy. The processes in place ensure that all potential kidnaps are risk-assessed by trained SIOs, dealt with consistently and given a proportionate response. The potential for a critical incident has been significantly reduced. The kidnap response has also identified a hidden demand.

In 15 months the SIOs assessed 143 kidnaps. 13% (19 offences) were assessed as an immediate threat to the hostage and nearly half (68) as a risk to life or of serious harm. Hostages were confirmed or suspected in around 50% (74) of cases but complaints were only made in 19 cases. There were 110 arrests.

Demands were received in 19% (27) of reports. Negotiators were deployed in 15% (22) of incidents, and 10% (15) involved a firearm of some kind. Some 23% (33) of responses involved other forces, the other force being the Metropolitan Police in almost half of these cases. Some 6% (9) of cases had an international dimension.

Finally, the number of crimes in action being dealt with by major crime has increased dramatically.

FORCE CONTACT:

Detective Superintendent George Turner, tel: 08458 505505

INSPECTION AREA: Major Crime

TITLE: Development of the senior identification manager role and Thames Valley Police mass disaster response

PROBLEM:

Following a review of the force's ability to deal with disasters, the role of the force senior identification manager (SIM) was developed and significant weaknesses in a potential mass disaster response were identified.

SOLUTION:

The force identified the need to train enough SIMs to provide resilience in this area, and then conducted a two-day review of its ability to deal with a mass disaster. The responsibility for developing this response fell to the SIMs and the HQ operations department.

The various disciplines within mass disaster response were examined and weaknesses addressed. Solutions and recommendations were identified and measures put in place to provide resilience and strengthen the force position.

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The most significant weakness was initially identified as the casualty bureau, which did not have sufficient trained staff. A recruitment process was undertaken via the force newspaper, and this resulted in over 100 members of staff being trained in casualty bureau input and collation roles.

Five mortuary managers were trained, and annual body recovery/mortuary training is being undertaken to maintain sufficient resilience in these areas.

Training has been given to all sergeants and inspectors in survivor reception, scene protection and hospital documentation, and initial police learning and development training is given concerning scene cordons.

Attendance at the quarterly regional SIM meeting has enabled the force to compare its progress with that of other forces. A state of readiness diagram using the traffic light analogy has been developed to demonstrate the position of each force.

OUTCOMES:

The force casualty bureau has been initiated a number of times this year and has been able to receive calls very quickly.

The force now has good resilience regarding mortuary response, disaster victim identification body recovery, trained SIMs, FLO support and forensic management.

Further improvements in hospital documentation teams and scene management are being advanced.

The force is currently learning lessons from the Phuket plane crash, which tested a number of these disciplines.

FORCE CONTACT:

Acting Detective Superintendent Rob Mason, tel. 08458 505505