



West Mercia Constabulary

Baseline Assessment

October 2006



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Introduction to Baseline Assessment

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

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

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

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

Priority Frameworks

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

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

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- protecting vulnerable people;
- neighbourhood policing; and
- leadership and direction.

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

Force Amalgamations

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

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

The Grading Process

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

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Service delivery grade

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

Excellent

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

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

Good

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

Fair

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

Poor

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

Direction of Travel Grade

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

Improved

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

Stable

This denotes no significant change in performance.

Declined

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

Good Practice

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

Future HMIC Inspection Activity

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

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

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

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

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

Force Overview and Context

Geographical Description of Force Area

West Mercia Constabulary (WMC) is responsible for policing an area of 7,428 sq. km, consisting of the counties of Shropshire and Worcestershire and the unitary authorities of Herefordshire and Telford and Wrekin. Geographically it is the fourth largest force in England and Wales and is the largest land-locked force. There are 13,621 km of roads in the area, including sections of four motorways; the M5, M50, M42 and M54.

There are five territorial policing divisions: South Worcestershire, North Worcestershire, Herefordshire, Shropshire, and Telford and Wrekin. Each of these is coterminous with its county council or unitary authority. The main headquarters site is based at Hindlip, near Worcester.

Although predominantly rural, there are five large urban areas, namely Worcester, Redditch, Hereford, Shrewsbury and Telford. The area is a mixture of countryside, new and growing towns, manufacturing towns and prospering smaller towns. Areas of West Mercia are deemed 'sparse' in population terms; Herefordshire is particularly sparse, with over 50% of the people in the county living either in or within five miles of Hereford city centre.

There are 11 crime and disorder reduction partnerships (CDRPs) within the force area.

Demographic Description of Force Area

The resident population is 1,173,200, 2.3% of whom are of black and minority ethnic (BME) origin, which equates to 489 residents to every officer. The five divisions and their respective policing challenges are diverse, both demographically and geographically. According to the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2004, some of the most deprived wards in the country are to be found within the area served by WMC. These are mainly clustered around Telford, Kidderminster, Redditch, Worcester and Hereford.

Structural Description including Changes at Chief Officer Level

The command team comprises the Chief Constable; the deputy chief constable (DCC), who was appointed in 2005; two assistant chief constables (ACCs), one of whom was also appointed in 2005, with responsibility for territorial operations and specialist operations; and the director of finance, who holds the portfolio of administration and finance. The director of strategy and organisation manages the 4000+ strategic programme. Total police officer and police staff strength is approximately 4,100, of which 1.4% are BME and 41% female.

The detailed breakdown is 2,425 police officers, of whom 22% are female; 1,684 police staff, 284 special constables and 87 police community support officers (PCSOs), shortly to be enhanced by a further 118 PCSOs in 2006/07.

The force estate consists of 59 police stations (Home Office definition) and uses or occupies a further 44 properties.

Strategic Priorities

Two years ago, WMC and the Police Authority adopted a new organisational strategy entitled '4000+ An Even Better Place'. This vision reflects the 4,000-plus police officers, police staff and volunteers working for the force, and brings together the force's:

- Four Tracks of Policing (local policing; responsive policing; targeted policing, and policing partnership);
- Four Better Outcomes (reduced crime, increased detections and more offences brought to justice; public reassurance; reduced disorder and anti-social behaviour; and reduced road casualties); and
- Four Key Principles (performance focus; integrity; quality people, and embracing diversity).

This holistic approach reflects a conscious and deliberate decision to build on existing good work already undertaken and to deliver continuous improvements where appropriate.

Impact of Workforce Modernisation and Strategic Force Development

Workforce modernisation will include the full use of the wider police family in line with the police reform agenda. Opportunities will include the use of non-warranted police staff in roles in both the provision of level 1 local (neighbourhood) policing, eg PCSOs, and level 2 protective services, eg accredited financial investigators.

Major Achievements

The foremost achievement of West Mercia Constabulary is the sustained level of performance it delivers to its citizens. The Force has experienced year on year reductions in the levels of violent crime and continues to show impressive performance in relation to volume crime reduction. A good example was Operation Christmas Presence which focussed on violent crime and anti-social behaviour, particularly in the vicinity of licensed premises. The use of high visibility patrols, engagement with licensees coupled with an effective media strategy were successful.

One of the developments undertaken this year is to better align the Force planning process with performance management and NIM processes. This activity aided the linkages of the strategy groups to each other and service delivery which allowed the financial and resource planning process to be driven more bottom up than previously.

The Chief Officer team has continued with its strong and productive relationship with the Police Authority which has brought some stability to the force during periods of uncertainty

Major Challenges for the Future

Given the recent successes of the Force and the extremely positive image that it has established locally, maintaining and building upon its current high levels of performance provides a significant challenge in itself - particularly in relation to achievements in respect of volume crime reduction and detection.

The sizeable increase in the force's capacity and capability with regard to protective services, which is being developed at the same time as 145 Local Policing Teams are being embedded in communities throughout the Force area, provides a further challenge for the Force to meet in terms of workforce planning.

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

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1 Citizen Focus (Domain A)

1A Fairness and Equality in Service Delivery

Grade	Direction of Travel
Good	Stable

National Grade Distribution

Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
0	15	28	0

Contextual Factors

Active leadership is provided by the Chief Constable, who chairs the strategic diversity group, which includes representation from the force's three independent advisory groups (IAGs). The force has implemented a three-year diversity strategy that is supported through strategic and tactical diversity groups in order to improve service delivery. A race equality scheme (RES) has also been published and a dedicated equality scheme and compliance manager appointed with the responsibility of maintaining compliance with the Race Relations (Amendment) Act (RRAA) across force policies and procedures. Specialised and experienced facilitators and advisers are in post covering BME, faith and religion, gender, and sexual orientation/identity strands.

Hate crime is a priority within the West Mercia crime strategy 2004–07. Hate crime is monitored through the force intelligence bureau (FIB) to identify patterns, vulnerable communities and individuals, and a community impact assessment (CIA) system enables the force to gauge community tension and respond appropriately. Each division has dedicated hate crime investigators who meet on a regular basis, inviting representatives from internal support groups and IAGs. The force has a hate crime co-ordinator, and a hate crime champion has also been appointed to oversee the co-ordination at a strategic level.

Divisions operate with community forums made up of key elected community members with some having subgroups monitoring hate crime, stop/search activity and the impact of police activity on the community. The force has also established ethnic and employment monitoring groups, chaired by members of the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO).

Efforts have successfully been made to embed diversity throughout training, with all staff undergoing diversity training that incorporates the requirements of the RRAA.

Strengths

- The force has implemented a three-year diversity strategy that is supported through strategic and tactical diversity groups. It has also established an ethnic and employment monitoring performance group, which monitors the impact and trends of activity from both an internal and external perspective.
- A lawfully compliant RES has been published and a dedicated equality scheme and compliance manager has been appointed who has the responsibility for maintaining force action plans and compliance with RRAA across all force policies and procedures.
- The force has robust performance measures in place for management and identification of hate crime. Investigations are carried out and managed by the hate crime unit and incidents flagged. Hate crime is monitored through the FIB in order to identify risk factors for potential victims, crime patterns and vulnerable communities. A CIA system enables community tension to be gauged and responded to in an appropriate manner. Each basic command unit (BCU) has dedicated hate crime investigators, representatives from internal staff support groups and IAGs, which drive cultural change and commitment to reducing hate crime incidents.
- The force is one of the four managing forces within the True Vision scheme. This third party reporting method is available for use across the force and is promoted at key community events such as the Telford Gay Fun day and North Worcestershire division open days. The force has also been effective in promoting and hosting hate crime awareness sessions for adults with learning disabilities. A multi-agency leaflet is used to educate individuals with learning disabilities on how to identify hate crime and where to go for help.
- The force has an effective process in place to scrutinise all incidents of hate crime. Victim satisfaction surveys, ethnic monitoring and stop and search data are shared with local forums to ensure transparency and to improve local service and understanding. The detective inspector in the hate crime unit oversees and co-ordinates activity at a strategic level and brings divisional practitioners and IAG members together at the hate crime forum.
- The force has three established IAGs, which include representation for domicile travellers; lesbian, gay, bisexual and transsexual (LGBT); disability and special needs. IAG members are used widely for a number of activities, including policy formulation, internal and external consultation and divisional/force level support for critical incidents.
- The force disability IAG is currently working with the estates department on a programme of work to achieve Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) compliance, for example through the ongoing installation of ramps and widening of doorways to improve access for wheelchair users at police stations. One member of the IAG recently won an award for 'Effective Partnership', which was presented at the national IAG conference in 2005.
- Continued efforts are being made to embed diversity throughout specialist training – for example, firearms trainers work closely with members of the community in order

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to identify cultural and community issues. Diversity trainers are supported and encouraged to attend events such as the police diversity trainers network and have access to an independent counsellor.

- Specialist training is provided to all hate crime investigators through headquarters specialist staff, with diversity being included on the Initial Crime Investigators' Development Programme (ICIDP) course. Specific training on the provisions and responsibilities associated with the RRAA is delivered to all members of staff.
- The force training strategy 2006/07 is incorporated into the costed training plan. Every member of the organisation has a performance development review (PDR) diversity priority that supports the force's key diversity principles. Specialised experienced facilitators and advisers are in post, covering BME groups, faith, religion, gender and sexual orientation strands.

Area for Improvement

- Statutory records on disability are incomplete and the force has identified the need for a disability audit to be conducted, as part of its wider collaboration with regional partners, to produce a disability equality scheme by the end of December 2006.

GOOD PRACTICE

TITLE: 1A Multi-Agency Diversity Training & Community Liaison

PROBLEM: Telford & Wrekin Division is a core member of a local Partnership that has been engaged in many community based initiatives in recent years. Of specific note is the Theatre based Training Programme 'Diversity Action' which delivered a play called 'Hidden Voices'

SOLUTION: The play was scripted using actual events and experiences obtained from community people who attended a series of workshops in local Community Centres. The *Paradoxos* Company were contracted independently to carry out the research and script the play, which was delivered by professional actors.

Coinciding with this event the Partnership commissioned a report into how Communities could be more clearly represented. This led to the establishment of the Telford Race, Equality and Diversity Partnership [TREDP]. It has elected community members and senior representatives from public sector agencies, including the Police. It has successfully received funds from the Commission for Race Equality [CRE] to provide funding for a Project Manager, Admin Support and two Community Advisors. Within the Local Strategic Partnership [LSP] there has been an agreement to provide finance for a three-year period to ensure the resilience and growth of this community provision. The Partnership has demonstrated its value through its rapid response to the July 7th terrorist bombings. Within 24hours the Telford Community Safety sub-group was formed to manage the reassurance and needs of the communities. Positive outcomes from this can be identified through Crime and Fire risk assessments being carried out on key vulnerable premises. A bidding process for community funds was entered into and this enabled communities to access funding to provide additional security and property maintenance directly related to the recommendations of these reports.

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OUTCOME(S): Over the last 3 years 3000 people from the community, agencies, and partners have attended the training event. Including nearly 400 Police Officers and staff. The event received 95% positive feedback and has been subject to a full 4 stage Kirkpatrick evaluation by an external evaluator. This evaluation is believed to be the first of this magnitude and nature.

The partnerships were finalists in the Association of Public Service Excellence Awards (APSE) in 2005 and received their award in Glasgow under the 'Embracing Diversity' section.

FORCE CONTACT: **Chief Inspector Andy Parkes, Telford & Wrekin Division**

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1B Neighbourhood Policing and Problem Solving

Grade	Direction of Travel
Good	Stable

National Grade Distribution

Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
4	18	20	1

National Position

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

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

Contextual Factors

A local policing programme has been established under the guidance and direction of the ACC (territorial operations (TO)), managed by an accredited programme manager and a dedicated inspector on a full-time basis. Partners are actively included within the planning process with divisions; this is complemented by events where stakeholders meet to plan future activities. Joint partnership training was undertaken earlier in the year and is the start of a programme of further partnership involvement in programme delivery.

A review of the force area has been completed to identify the boundaries of the local policing teams (LPTs). This review identified a need for 145 teams based on local authority wards or groups of wards. Within these teams, local police officers are required to identify the various communities and neighbourhoods within their LPT area. Work is being progressed to develop profiles to enable targeted engagement and communication with communities within each area.

In a number of wards, partners and communities together (PACT) meetings have been initiated; these facilitate community, partner and police interaction.

Strengths

- The force has seen a reduction of 4.6% in the perceived levels of disorder, which is markedly better than the most similar force (MSF) average. The perception of anti-social behaviour (ASB) is now at 10.8% for West Mercia, below the MSF average of 12.3%.
- Fear of burglary, as measured by the British Crime Survey, has decreased by 0.9 percentage points and now stands at 8.4%, compared with an MSF average of 9.3%.
- Fear of violent crime has decreased by 2.4 percentage points and takes the force below the MSF group average. The fear of crime in West Mercia now stands at 12.6%, below the MSF average of 13.3%.
- WMC is implementing neighbourhood policing, using a programme management structure. The work streams are co-ordinated at force level by a dedicated full-time programme manager, supported by a change manager. Each BCU has a local policing champion at chief inspector rank, and a dedicated inspector undertaking a local project management role for implementation. To ensure that a consistent message is being promoted and disseminated, divisional representatives are personally briefed, on a weekly basis, by a member of the programme team on implementation progress
- Key partners, including the Police Authority (PA), are included in the implementation of neighbourhood policing at corporate and BCU level. This is complemented by events where all stakeholders meet to plan and inform future work streams. Joint partnership training was undertaken during April and May 2006.
- Some 145 LPT areas have been identified, aligned to local authority wards, to form the basic building blocks for neighbourhood policing. In a number of wards, PACT meetings have been initiated. These facilitate community, partner and police interaction and outputs from these meetings inform National Intelligence Model (NIM) based intelligence reports and local action plans.
- Work is being progressed on profiles to enable targeted engagement and communication with communities in each neighbourhood area, to enhance and build on the current PACT arrangements. The project is designed to provide guidance on various methods of effective community engagement tailored, to the specific needs of a particular community. An assessment of the most effective approach to engagement within each LPT is being undertaken, using MOSAIC (an information processing database) data, British Crime Survey information and incident records.
- In partnership with the local criminal justice board (LCJB) and CDRPs, the force annually undertakes a large-scale survey of local residents to ascertain their perceptions of local policing and crime and issues that cause communities concern. The force and PA use the findings to determine the priorities for the local policing plan (LPP).
- The ASB strategy is fully integrated into the local (neighbourhood) policing plan for the pathfinder site. Post profiles for local police officers and supervisors are central to the delivery of the strategy, clearly outlining their roles and responsibilities.

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- In order to develop collaborative partnerships, the force has introduced a 'one-stop shop' where police and county, district and town council staff are all housed in one location. This ensures that local issues are dealt with on a local basis by the appropriate service provider.
- The force intelligence unit has been restructured so that each local authority area has a designated field intelligence officer who gathers, analyses and develops community intelligence. Community safety officers from the local authorities attend the prolific and priority offender (PPO) meetings so that all relevant information can be shared.
- There is evidence of innovative use of opportunities to extend the use of community accreditation schemes with partners, such as a parish warden scheme that has involved a local milk deliverer.

Work in Progress

- The force is in the process of piloting the key individual network on the pathfinder division; following evaluation, this will go live on the remaining divisions later in the year. This database is part of the ongoing work undertaken by the force to develop a local policing database.
- In the absence of a national performance framework, WMC has set initial performance milestones that measure implementation progress, reflecting the relative immaturity of local policing. Developing output measures are being integrated into the force's well developed performance management regime.

Areas for Improvement

- The force needs to continue its review of NIM processes to ensure that the NIM model employed is capable of supporting neighbourhood policing. Additionally, the force needs to ensure that a corporate approach is adopted for the collection and management of community intelligence. WMC has been a consultee to the national NIM team working to integrate community intelligence, and this learning will feed into the WMC community intelligence project.
- The force is in the process of evaluating demand management strengths and weaknesses around local policing and is looking to produce a corporate local policing officer and PCSO deployment policy that will be distributed to all five divisions and call-management centre (CMC) and communication managers. This will address the problem arising from the current non-standard, ad hoc approach to abstraction.

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GOOD PRACTICE

TITLE: Migrant Worker Outreach

PROBLEM: Herefordshire has for many years been an area of Britain where migrant workers have come to work. Some now live here permanently. Over the last several years the county has seen a dramatic increase in the number of foreign nationals (particularly former Eastern block Countries), and in 2006 the figure is expected to be in excess of 20,000 over the year.

SOLUTION: These migrant workers impact upon

- Health
- Education (ESOL courses in FE)
- Housing
- Crime and disorder
- The economy of the county with the money they spend and their dependence upon public services
- Languages, especially in schools (Three main languages identified Polish, Russian, and Portuguese).

Over the last two years the Division has seen an increase in contact with the migrant population. This has been both as victims of crime and as offenders. There have also been occasions where migrant workers have died in fatal road traffic collisions.

To this end it was decided to produce a source of information to try and address some of the issues surrounding these workers. Originally it was thought that a booklet would be the best option, and that it would be translated into appropriate languages.

On reflection this was considered to be quite an expensive venture because as soon as information became obsolete the booklet would have to be re-published. The option of a web site based information source was then investigated and it was decided that this would be the best format. Information can be updated easily and quickly, and with minimal up-keep costs it would be more financially viable.

A committee of representatives from organisations within Herefordshire was formed, including :-

- Herefordshire County Council (Road Safety, Diversity, Housing)
- Hereford and Worcester Fire Service
- Citizen Advice Bureau
- Herefordshire Womens' Aid
- Herefordshire Primary Care Trust
- Herefordshire Local Education Authority

Following discussions it was decided that the following would be the main areas of information to be included on the website:-

1. All about Herefordshire
2. UK Culture (politics, religion, discrimination, places of worship, etc)
3. The Law (Driving, weapons, racial harassment, rights and responsibilities, drugs, etc)

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4. Finance
5. Leisure
6. Health (drugs, sexual health, emergency treatment, doctors, etc)
7. Housing (poor living conditions, eviction, renting, buying, etc)
8. Travel and transport (road safety, trains, buses, driving, etc)
9. Personal Safety (domestic violence, using the roads, "KEEP IT SAFE< KEEP IT HIDDEN", etc)
10. Working in the UK
11. Children (childcare, schools, "children in danger")
12. Employers

OUTCOME(S): West Mercia Police will provide input in sections 2, 3, 6, 8, 9, 11, 12. This website will enable people to access information both in the UK and before they travel to the UK. Local migrant workers have been identified and will play an active role in the development of the content of the site, as well as assisting with translation.

A launch date of March 2006 has been decided.

FORCE CONTACT: PC 10 Simon Turner

Hereford Division Community Safety Department

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1C Customer Service and Accessibility

Grade	Direction of Travel
Good	Stable

National Grade Distribution

Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
0	19	22	2

Contextual Factors

WMC's programme of change to improve customer service is managed within the force's 4000+ programme. The website was relaunched in December 2005 with improved accessibility and contact information. The force continues to work with partners to develop further multi-agency contact centres, modelled on the Evesham pilot site.

Customer feedback is primarily collected from the policing performance assessment framework (PPAF) user satisfaction surveys and the annual crime and safety partnership survey, the latter being jointly funded by the force and partner agencies such as CDRPs.

WMC has developed an innovative cultural change programme for call-management staff. A booklet is being produced (for all staff and customers), to communicate its new cultural style, customer care principles and service standards for different types of contact.

A PA-led complaints and surveys working group brings a proactive approach to citizen focus. The group comprises members of the Police Authority human resources (HR) panel, the director of strategy and organisation, and the head of the professional standards department (PSD).

Strengths

- The force's process of change to improve customer service is managed within the 4000+ programme under the title of 'Improving the User Experience'. The overall programme is driven by an objective to ensure that the public has information on how to access services. In response to this a website was relaunched in December 2005 with improved information on accessibility and contact. Station opening times are published via this website and work continues with partners to develop more multi-agency contact centres, modelled on the flagship Evesham contact centre.
- Two work stream programme managers (qualified to practitioner level, following an external five-day training programme) manage this area of change and, together with a programme board, oversee strategic progress. Projects within the user experience work stream are overseen by trained project managers from across the force within a well-respected and embedded project management system.

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- Focus groups with victims of crime have shaped the force's delivery of the Victims Code; in support of this, aide-memoire cards have been given to all officers so that they are aware of the force's requirement to contact the victim within the first week of a crime being reported. This exceeds the Victims Code requirement of contact within a month.
- WMC's quality of service commitment (QoS) plan focuses on improving customer experience. The force ensures that cultural change is delivered by means of a comprehensive training programme for all staff. The training is bespoke and interactive and has been developed with an external provider commissioned by the force. Staff are encouraged to understand the psychology of customer service and to develop their customer skills to meet individual customer needs.
- The two principal methods of collecting customer feedback are the PPAF user satisfaction survey and the annual crime and safety partnership survey. The survey results are used in a number of ways – for example, to inform the planning process and to direct force communications. They are also used during the profiling of LPT areas, which then informs which community engagement and consultation methods are most appropriate for a particular area. Annual results are statistically valid down to BCU level. This ensures that BCUs are accountable for their performance and that results are actionable either by the BCUs or by the appropriate department, thus driving performance improvements. A process is also in place whereby returned surveys that identify a particular crime or police officer and contain negative or positive feedback are passed to the relevant division. Relevant feedback is provided to the staff or officers concerned, and any appropriate development needs are identified: these can be for individuals, teams or the organisation as a whole. This information is fed into the PDR process.
- WMC has built upon its existing organisational values to develop customer care principles. These state the force's expectations of how staff should interact with both internal and external customers, and have been developed in a number of ways using feedback obtained from force citizen focus events, local pathfinder teams, work with BCU staff, and PPAF customer survey findings.
- The performance group is the force's flagship performance meeting, where comprehensive analysis of the results and key drivers for improvements are identified. The force has conducted a thematic examination of the results of the 2005/06 customer satisfaction survey and has pinpointed actions that will drive further performance improvement. A follow-up thematic examination is planned for August 2006.
- When looking at victims' satisfaction with the whole experience during quarters one to three of 2005–06, BME victims have slightly higher satisfaction rates (81.2% completely, very or fairly satisfied) than white victims (78%). A pilot project was carried out during 2005 on North Worcestershire division, with the aim of increasing the response rate of BME victims of racist incidents. Surveys were made available in the principal BME languages spoken in the area, while leaflets were also produced and handed out to victims by hate crime liaison officers. The leaflets – also translated into the principal BME languages – explained the purpose of the survey and why it was important to return completed surveys. Results showed a significant increase in the numbers of surveys returned, although, due to low numbers of actual

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incidents, the volume of total survey returns for this victim group is still low. This initiative is continuing to run on North Worcestershire division and would have been rolled out across the force but for the national direction to move to telephone survey methodology from April 2007.

- The force has established a PA-led complaints and surveys working group, specifically intended to bring a more proactive approach to citizen focus. The group was formed in January 2005 and comprises members of the PA HR panel, the head of strategy (reporting on satisfaction surveys) and the head of the PSD (reporting trends in complaints). The work of this group has been further enhanced by the appointment of the PSD performance researcher in September 2005, with more sophisticated analysis of complaints now being undertaken.
- The Victims Code of Practice project has delivered a force model based on customer research, incorporating an investigation plan, a contact plan, needs assessment, consideration of vulnerability/intimidation/special measures, victim personal statements and practical help and advice. The force is providing a service that exceeds the requirements of the codes. Training, via road shows and e-learning, has included emphasis on the need for timely and accurate updates, both to victims and on the Crime Recording Information Management Enquiry System (CRIMES), and the effects of officer behaviour (positive and negative) on victims. The force's crime system is being modified to provide prompts for officers to contact victims after 5 and 21 days. Additionally, witness care unit directories for local support services have been placed on BCU intranet sites to improve referrals and the quality of support.
- One very commendable initiative was to convene victim of crime focus groups; following these, videos of victims' accounts are produced to further reinforce to officers what is required of them and the effects of their behaviour. Each BCU now has a designated victim care champion who ensures that staff watch the video and that debate and learning ensues. In addition, the video is used in the interviewing module of the Initial Police Learning and Development Programme (IPLDP) so that the importance of the 'softer' side of victim care (such as officers showing empathy and conveying that they are taking the matter seriously) is communicated to all student officers. A procedures document has been produced and is undergoing final consultation.

Areas for Improvement

- The force is delivering against many of the standards within the national QoS, but needs to monitor planned developments and set milestones to reach full compliance within the specified timescales.
- The force is in the process of implementing a planned programme to communicate to the public how services can be accessed, currently achieved by means of the force internet site. The result of the 2004/05 West Mercia Crime and Safety Partnership Survey indicated that local newsletters/leaflets were the public's preferred option. Following this, funding was secured to produce a force newspaper in May/June 2006 – and runs outside the assessment period. The force is now well under way to communicate effectively how the public can access its services.

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1D Professional Standards

Grade	Direction of Travel
Good	Not Graded

National Grade Distribution

Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
2	16	25	0

National Position

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

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

Evidence was gathered, consolidated and reported upon in individual force baseline assessment reports which can be found on the HMIC website:

http://inspectors.homeoffice.gov.uk/hmic/inspect_reports1/baseline-assessments.html

2 Reducing Crime (Domain 1)

2A Volume Crime Reduction

Grade	Direction of Travel
Excellent	Improved

National Grade Distribution

Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
1	18	20	4

Contextual Factors

Active leadership with regard to volume crime investigation is provided by the ACC (TO), who ensures high performance by holding BCU commanders to account both at monthly performance group meetings and divisional performance reviews.

National Crime Recording Standard (NCRS) champions are in place on each BCU. They ensure compliance with key areas of performance. All BCUs adhere to the force policy on the investigation of crime: it reflects both the NCRS and the Home Office Counting Rules (HOCR), together with the minimum standards of investigation, and systems are in place to ensure compliance.

Strengths

- The force has seen further reductions across all of the key volume crime areas during 2005/06, and as a consequence total crime per 1,000 population has been reduced by 10% to 72.41 offences per 1,000 population in 2005/06. This places WMC well below its MSF group average of 81.49 offences per 1,000 population.
- The force achieved particular success in reducing domestic burglary, with offences falling by 22%, from 9.8 offences per 1,000 households in 2004/05 to 7.6 offences per 1,000 households in 2005/06. WMC is thus well below the MSF average of 8.5 offences per 1,000 households.
- Robberies have fallen by 15%, from 0.45 offences per 1,000 population in 2004/05 to 0.38 offences per 1,000 population in 2005/06, compared with the MSF average of 0.5 offences per 1,000 population.
- Violent crime has fallen by 14% from 16.8 offences per 1000 population in 2004/05 to 14.6 offences per 1,000 population in 2005/06; the MSF average is 16.1 offences per 1,000 population.
- The DCC has overall responsibility for performance and robustly holds BCU commanders to account through the monthly performance group meetings. Performance is also monitored through PDRs and quarterly divisional performance

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reviews conducted by the ACC (TO). BCUs have action plans to address the key crime types, and NCRS champions have been introduced on each BCU as part of the Chief Constable's strategy to meet performance targets. The key performance indicators (KPIs) are overall crime, burglary, vehicle crime and violent crime, covering both volume reduction and sanction detections. NCRS champions hold regular training events to ensure that officers understand the need for NCRS compliance.

- The force crime audit programme is comprehensive. Regular checks are undertaken to ensure compliance with the HOCR and NCRS. Follow-up action plans are developed and monitored and, where issues are identified, robust remedial action is taken.
- Individual BCU targets are negotiated between and set by chief officers and the PA on an annual basis. This process takes account of current performance in comparison with other BCUs in the force and with most similar BCU (MSBCU) families. They also take account of local safer and stronger communities partnership targets, including the local contribution to the national public service agreement crime reduction target. Individual BCU targets are therefore differential, but cumulatively will, if achieved, meet the required force target. They are based on a number of criteria, including previous performance, analysis of local issues and peer performance. The targets are SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, timely), are monitored monthly and are stretching, with each BCU being required to continually improve and to maintain, achieve or progress towards top quartile performance (as measured by iQuanta).
- The force has experienced year-on-year reductions in the levels of violent crime and continues to show impressive performance in relation to volume crime reduction. Force-wide initiatives at key times of the year have been chief officer led. A good example was Operation Christmas Presence, which focused on violent crime and ASB, particularly in the vicinity of licensed premises. The use of high visibility patrols, engagement with licensees, a media strategy and other tactics proved highly successful.
- Tactical assessments are commissioned through the tasking process in accordance with NIM principles. There is a daily operational briefing and tasking process and a weekly or bi-weekly tasking and co-ordination group (TCG) meeting. BCUs use PIER charts to identify the prevention, intelligence, enforcement and reassurance opportunities and tasks within all packages and problems. This ensures that individual staff and supervisors are clear about responsibilities and allows tracking of activities through the tasking process. Tasking funds are allocated to individual problems, and these packages are then assessed and reviewed at subsequent tasking review meetings.
- Volume crime is addressed in strategic and tactical assessments at both force and BCU level. Resources are deployed to identified crime and ASB hotspot locations and other resources from partners, including funding, are deployed. A recent example was the tackling of ASB on one BCU. This received CDRP funding for high profile operations to reduce the number of youths abusing and intimidating local residents. CDRP partners regularly attend BCU TCG meetings. In addition, there are themed joint tasking meetings, which include criminal damage, ASB and business crime/incident reduction meetings. An active PPO meeting takes place – at a tactical level – with relevant partners on a monthly basis.
- BCU staff who would normally be engaged in community safety work also support CDRP activity in audit analysis and strategy development and implementation. There is

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evidence of the joint funding of analyst posts – such as dedicated ASB analysts – on BCUs, which provides the necessary analytical capability to bring NIM processes to bear on crime and disorder issues. There is also evidence of partners being given open access to the business performance analyst on BCUs, and regular financial support by BCUs contributing to the partnership funding pot.

- BCUs have implemented local action plans to tackle specific crime types such as vehicle crime, using the Home Office toolkits. The burglary and vehicle crime units adopt Home Office 'safer homes' and 'vehicle crime' principles. The tasking and co-ordination process allows for evaluation of target packages and initiatives and good practice is shared both with partners and internally, eg on drug house closures.
- National Centre for Policing Excellence (NCPE) doctrines are under the lead of the ACC (TO), project-managed by the head of the criminal investigation department (CID) with a small NCPE team. As an example, the professionalising the investigative process (PIP) project is being implemented on an incremental basis through a project team to ensure it is delivered to the corporate standard. Investigative interviewing and PIP accreditation are an integral part of the ICIDP and IPLDP. An assessment has taken place at force level of the current position on investigative skills at all levels. HQ CID has undertaken a skills gap analysis and training has been implemented in order to fill those gaps. A similar process has been undertaken by each BCU.

3 Investigating Crime (Domain 2)

3A Managing Critical Incidents and Major Crime

Grade	Direction of Travel
Fair	Stable

National Grade Distribution

Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
5	17	17	4

Contextual Factors

Active leadership and support for the management of critical incidents and major crime is provided by the ACC (special operations (SO)), who ensures that major investigations are suitably supported and resourced. The force already has two dedicated major investigation units (MIUs) with full Home Office Large Major Enquiry System 2 (HOLMES 2) facilities, and an additional 25 staff will be recruited during the coming year to form a third MIU.

Within the force strategic assessment a force-wide demographic profile has been produced in order to identify community locations. There is ongoing gathering of community intelligence in support of the neighbourhood policing initiative and additional resources have been secured to provide enhanced prison liaison officer capability to support crime and counter-terrorism intelligence gathering. The creation of a dedicated MIU scientific and forensic liaison officer has ensured that intelligence in relation to murder trends is captured and shared with systems such as Serious Crime Analysis Section (SCAS) and Centralised Analytical Team Collating Homicide Expertise and Management (CATCHEM).

The force's IAGs continue to play an important role in the investigation and management of critical incidents and major crime. Three IAG members recently received training in assisting in major enquiries and IAG members have also received critical incident training to enable them to effectively advise at critical incidents.

Strengths

- Active leadership and support is provided by the ACC (SO), who ensures that major investigations are suitably supported and resourced. The ACC (SO) supported the review and business case development for a further centralised MIU.
- Utilising a HOLMES 2 costing package, the HQ crime department maintains an active overview of current and projected expenditure in relation to major incidents and investigations.

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- The force strategic assessment covers a wide range of threats and includes geographical analysis along with victim, offender and community profiles. IAGs are consulted in relation to crime operations, community impact and policy review.
- The force has dedicated analytical resources available to meet demands for this area of activity, including proactively developing intelligence and identifying patterns and trends around major crime. The major incident unit has its own dedicated intelligence staff and analytical capability. The FIB has a number of analysts who are designated by 'desks', eg looking at emergent threats that mirror the force control strategy. The tasking process reviews this input to see if action needs to be included within the weekly tactical assessment.
- WMC has adopted the national definition of critical incidents and incorporated this in its management of such incidents. There are adequate arrangements for the command of critical incidents, with chief inspectors or above available on duty for 19 hours a day and senior investigating officers (SIOs) on call 24/7. This role is responsible for the identification and early management of critical incidents; on-call arrangements are in place at all other times. These officers are supported by call-out arrangements for SIOs and firearms tactical advisers.
- There is regular sharing of data and intelligence through the regional intelligence group, which is chaired by the force's director of intelligence. Intelligence is gathered in conjunction with West Midlands Police to collate information on the use of firearms by criminals. The community safety department has identified and established information-sharing protocols with other agencies, such as the prison service and the courts service. A recent initiative placed a liaison officer with the British Security Industry Association on a trial basis; this is seen as national good practice, and resulted in a reduction in 'cash in transit' robberies across the region.
- A firearms threat and risk assessment is undertaken annually and reviews the current risk/threat within WMC and the force's capability to respond to such threats and risks.
- The force operates a firearms training school, which is fully compliant with national standards; Silver and Gold firearms commanders provide 24-hour cover. The numbers and competency levels are in accordance with the NCPE codes of practice. All newly promoted sergeants and inspectors are trained in the Bronze role.
- The force uses a generic debriefing template at the conclusion of all critical incidents and operations, with learning fed back into policies and protocols and disseminated at seminars.
- Three IAGs have been established for the force area and offer a broad spectrum of experience available within their respective groups. Policies at this level and in these areas of business are subject to external consultation and impact assessment. IAG members have received critical incident training and input from SIOs relating to major crime, HOLMES 2, and mass disaster, and there is evidence that they have been consulted on operational matters in addition to CIA and policy development.
- WMC is proactive in its use of CIAs. Once a CIA has been prepared it remains under regular review, and involves members of the IAG when appropriate. CIAs are held on a computerised system to enable 24/7 access.

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- SIOs have responsibility to ensure the transfer of intelligence from HOLMES 2 to the force intelligence system. This is complemented by a dedicated MIU scientific and forensic liaison officer who ensures that intelligence is provided to national systems, eg CATCHEM and SCAS. Officers are able to access the West Midlands Police intelligence systems.
- There are sufficient SIOs trained in the management of kidnap and extortion to meet known and predicted demand. The force undertook a training exercise in 2005 and lessons learned were incorporated into a revised force policy. The training of SIOs is supplemented by the provision of drop-down menus for control room staff, outlining initial actions to be taken on report of such an incident.
- The force crime squad conducts a systematic review and debrief of all staff at the conclusion of all operations. Major crime investigation senior officers consult with team leaders and individuals involved in order to ensure that best practice is captured and that lessons learnt are addressed and shared.

Areas for Improvement

- There is no evidence that the force has sought to identify the full range of intelligence and other data from partner agencies in order to understand more fully the nature and extent of the homicide or critical incident threats facing WMC. While the most recent force strategic assessment has identified the potential for future homicides associated with domestic violence (DV), it is not clear what priority filling this intelligence gap has been given over other demands, or how it is to be progressed. The force needs to take steps to understand fully the homicide threat and develop an effective homicide prevention strategy.
- The force has a dedicated MIU capability but the current establishment (in the assessment year of 2005/06) is insufficient to resource fully the force's major investigation demand. As a consequence the unit has to be regularly supplemented by officers precepted from BCUs. Additionally, no evidence could be provided for the rationale used to determine the resource levels for the MIU.
- There is no formalised call-out rota or procedure for MIU constables. This will significantly reduce the operational resilience of the organisation to respond to crimes in action or critical incidents that occur outside normal office hours or at weekends.
- The force policy for murder review is compliant with the murder investigation manual and major incident room standardised administrative procedures (MIRSAP) guidelines, but the force does not have a dedicated major crime review capability. Instead, when capacity allows, a force SIO or retired detective officer performs this function. Dedicated, independent and appropriately trained staff are required to quality-assure investigations of this nature and complexity.
- The force has determined the major incident room (MIR) accommodation requirement across the force area. However, at least two of these facilities are now occupied by BCU staff. The early hours of a major incident/investigation are critical and delay in the provision of HOLMES 2 and other investigative support could have serious consequences. The force should provide BCUs with clear direction on the use and

availability of MIR accommodation to ensure that it can be available without delay should it be needed urgently.

- Proactive operations are subject to operational security review but arrangements need to be strengthened to ensure proper security and risk management. Funding has been identified for two full-time security and risk management posts but these are yet to be filled.

3B Tackling Serious and Organised Criminality

Grade	Direction of Travel
Good	Stable

National Grade Distribution

Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
7	21	13	2

Contextual Factors

The force strategic assessment is reviewed on a six-monthly basis and includes a range of key themes that fit with the regional control strategy and national policing plan. WMC has adopted the national crime squad definition of organised crime groups (OCGs) and the FIB is proactive in identifying OCGs, which are brought to the force TCG meetings for the allocation of level 2 resources. Organised crime is an integral part of the force control strategy and there is close consideration of the requirements of the regional control strategy in identifying operational priorities.

The force has in place an effective review system and ensures that operations are informed by previous organisational learning and best practice. All force policies are reviewed annually to ensure they are relevant and have captured previous learning.

The force has invested at a strategic level in the regional asset recovery team (RART) in support of regional collaborative arrangements, but also at force level by investing in additional financial investigators and in establishing a money-laundering team. These investments reflect the awareness that chief officers have of the relationship between organised crime, counter-terrorism and broader protective services. Additionally, WMC currently operates teams to deliver witness support, source handling, covert policing (including a dedicated central Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA) unit), hi-tech crime and technical support, each targeted at level 2 criminality.

Strengths

- The ACC (SO) leads on the force tactical tasking and co-ordination group (TTCG) and has chaired a number of Gold groups relating to serious crimes, as well as chairing the regional tasking group and the regional counter-terrorist tasking group. The force's director of intelligence chairs the regional intelligence group. The level of collaboration, not only within the region but also with five other neighbouring forces, is good. There have been numerous cross-border and multi-force operations in recent months. There are a number of examples where WMC has participated in joint operations with partner agencies, together with other activities with Trading Standards officers and HM Revenue and Customs. The force actively contributes to the development of the regional risk assessment and prioritisation matrix.

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- The force strategic assessment is reviewed on a six-monthly basis and includes a range of themes that fit with the regional control strategy and national community safety plan. WMC has in place an appropriate review system and ensures that operations are informed by previous organisational learning and best practice. All force policies are reviewed annually to ensure they are relevant and have captured previous learning.
- WMC has adopted the Serious Organised Crime Agency (SOCA) definition for OCGs and the FIB is proactive in identifying them and bringing appropriate detail to the force TTCG for allocation of level 2 resources. Tackling organised crime is an integral part of the force control strategy and there is close scrutiny of the requirements of the regional control strategy in identifying operational priorities.
- WMC has a dedicated surveillance team, with officers trained and accredited in all aspects of surveillance, and can deploy test purchase and undercover officers through close working arrangements with other forces. Extra resilience is provided by the task force, which includes firearms capability, and Special Branch officers.
- Target packages are considered and prioritised against the force and regional control strategy, as well as a diversity screening assessment and costed budget plan, before submission to the force tasking process. Operations are aligned to the force control strategy priorities and actively contribute to the regional risk assessment and prioritisation matrix.
- The force contributes to regional assets, including RART, Regional Intelligence Unit (RIU) and Regional Task Force (RTF) teams, which are dedicated teams that can be deployed dynamically. The force crime squad liaises and exchanges intelligence with other agencies and has acted as the executive arm in real-time dynamic deployments, as well as participating in longer-term pre-planned operations. The force has participated in joint operations with other agencies and an officer is currently seconded to the British Security Industry Association to work on behalf of the region in regard to 'cash in transit' offences.
- WMC has a dedicated team of financial investigators within the economic crime unit operating at level 2, but with capacity to deal with confiscation of criminal assets at level 1. Incentivisation has enabled a money-laundering unit to be introduced, together with increased investigatory capacity and resources provided to train police dogs to detect cash. There are good links with the RART, which has a number of cases under investigation. In addition, WMC won a 'commended force' award at the Home Office Tackling Drugs Supply awards in 2005 under the category of 'Best Practice in Asset Recovery'.

Areas for Improvement

- The strategic assessment covers terrorism and domestic extremism but the force has recognised that there is a need to enhance its Special Branch capacity.
- The force previously used a risk matrix to prioritise offenders, crime series and OCGs through the level 2 TTCG process. But this process has stopped in recent months, apparently due to staff sickness, which raises doubts on resilience in this key area of work. There was no evidence of a force policy on the use of risk assessment at either

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level 1 or 2, no information in the system used to assess harm and no details of what training should be given to apply the risk assessments.

- The current arrangements for RIPA authorisation should be reviewed. Currently the director of intelligence undertakes the role of authorising officer, with little resilience to cover abstractions. Additionally, this limits the post-holder's capacity to progress the strategic development of the force intelligence function.
- There is a policy in respect of the management of Osman issues (and source handlers are trained in its use) but the force does not have an audit and inspection regime to monitor compliance with the policy.
- The force should consider the recommendation made by the Office of the Surveillance Commissioner that the dedicated source handling function be centralised. Staff are currently deployed on each division although policy is centrally owned.

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3C Volume Crime Investigation

Grade	Direction of Travel
Good	Stable

National Grade Distribution

Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
3	20	16	4

Contextual Factors

Active leadership with regard to volume crime investigation is provided by the ACC (TO), who ensures high performance by holding BCU commanders to account at monthly performance group meetings and by the introduction of NCRS champions on each BCU.

The PIP project is being implemented on an incremental basis through a project team consisting of command team members to ensure it is delivered to a corporate standard. An assessment has taken place of the force current position with regard to investigative skills at all levels. HQ CID has undertaken a skills gap analysis and training has been implemented in order to fill those gaps, and a similar process has been undertaken by each BCU.

Ten financial investigators make up the WMC financial investigation unit and its members have undertaken a programme of awareness on the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 (POCA) by delivering presentations at key training events on POCA powers, notably confiscation, cash seizure and money-laundering offences.

Strengths

- The force has continued to secure further increases in all but one of the volume crime detection indicators during 2005/06. The overall sanction detection rate has risen from 27.2% in 2004/05 to 38.1% in 2005/06, a 17% increase, which places WMC well above the MSF average of 26.49%, and is exemplary.
- The sanction detection rate for violent crime has risen from 47.6% in 2004/05 to 56.9% in 2005/06, which is a 19% increase and puts WMC well above the MSF average of 49.3%.
- The sanction detection rate for domestic burglary has risen from 23.6% in 2004/05 to 28.6% in 2005/06, which is a 21% increase and puts WMC well above the MSF average of 20.8%.
- Strategic leadership with regard to volume crime investigation is provided by the DCC, who drives performance by holding BCU commanders to account at monthly performance group meetings and by the introduction of NCRS champions on each BCU. Targets in respect of sanction detections are set by chief officers and the PA,

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and take account of both performance in relation to other BCUs and performance against BCU families.

- All BCUs adhere to force policy on the investigation of crime that reflects both the NCRS and the HOCR, together with the minimum standards of investigation. The force was rated Green overall for compliance with the HOCR in the annual NCRS Compliance Audit.
- The force and BCU tactical assessments for volume crime incorporate crime analysis, identifying trends in the short, medium and long term to generate enforcement and prevention activities. Tactical assessments are commissioned through the tasking process in accordance with NIM guidance. PIER charts are used to identify the prevention, intervention, enforcement and reassurance opportunities and tasks within all packages and problems.
- West Mercia's crime strategy is comprehensive and allows BCUs to develop their own approach to tackling local problems within the overall corporate framework. There is a crime management manual and close scrutiny through the organisational development unit (ODU) of the crime recording standards. These are governed by manuals and supported by regular meetings between the head of the ODU and the head of CID where crime recording and investigation standards are discussed. Reinforcement is provided by quarterly meetings between all the force senior detectives, chaired by the head of CID, where such matters are discussed. There is a clear corporate approach to crime screening, governed by the ODU and local crime managers; a corporate policy applies to scene attendance, although local commanders have the discretion to amend this in line with their control strategy.
- The force makes good use of automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) in all roads policing tactical responses to level 1 and 2 crime problem profiles. The further development of mobile ANPR in roads policing vehicles ensures that the force maximises pre-planned and dynamic tasking opportunities. In order to ensure that all intelligence is linked to potential criminality, Police National Computer (PNC) marker prompts have been placed on intelligence forms, target package nomination, PPO forms and summons forms.
- West Mercia has undertaken a comprehensive programme of awareness training in relation to POCA, delivering presentations at key training events such as probationer and CID courses, force crime briefing days and BCU level 1 briefings. These include POCA powers on confiscation orders, cash seizure and money-laundering offences. Following delivery of the training, cash seizure kits were introduced on each division in order to support officers and provide guidance on policy and procedure. WMC has ten financial investigators within the force intelligence unit and the force made eight cash seizures under POCA in relation to acquisitive crime and drug supply offences.
- The force has introduced a dedicated money-laundering unit which followed a co-ordinated approach between police and the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), and uses a case file pro forma covering POCA acquisitive crime cases.

Areas for Improvement

- The force is still in the process of introducing minimum standards of investigation for all aspects of volume crime investigation; officers would benefit from greater use of investigation plans.

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- The scientific work improvement methodology (SWIM) package was used to examine force forensic performance in 2005, in partnership with the Lanner Group and the Police Standards Unit. The work then concluded that, although the force was above average in some areas, overall the performance of WMC was below average when benchmarked against other forces. The force has undertaken work to improve crime scene attendance for burglary dwelling and theft of motor vehicles, both of which are now slightly above the MSF average. There remains, however, work to be undertaken to improve the number of fingerprint identifications and DNA hits obtained from the material collected from both these types of crime scene. Performance in both these areas is 14% below the MSF average.
- WMC was graded Fair overall in the 2005/06 detections audit conducted on behalf of the Home Office. Of the eight component assessments, only one was rated as Good (in respect of disposal by summons), while cautions and TIC disposals attracted a Poor grade. The force needs to improve compliance with the HOOCR; otherwise its SPI assessment (currently Excellent) will be in jeopardy next year.
- The force issues fixed penalty notices for disorder and although take-up has improved, there is room for further use in appropriate cases.
- It is the force's intention further to develop ANPR intelligence through a back office facility that will link with crime data, collision data and local intelligence. This will be available in ANPR vehicles. To ensure timely update of the back office facility and intelligence system, a local area network is being installed to make real time data available on all WMC systems.
- A recent force assessment indicated that the force had some gaps in relation to officers' investigative skills and the use of investigation plans. This is being addressed at both a corporate and BCU level to ensure that PIP standards can be achieved, and the force needs to maintain momentum.

3D Improving Forensic Performance

Grade	Direction of Travel
Good	Stable

National Grade Distribution

Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
3	16	21	3

Contextual Factors

The scientific support manager reports directly to the ACC (SO). The ACC (SO) chairs the forensic services strategy group and undertakes six-monthly departmental inspections to ensure that business priorities are being met and that departmental performance is being effectively managed. This group owns the force science and technology and forensic services strategies, which are closely aligned to the Home Office police science and technology strategy group.

All level 1 crime is managed and prioritised on a divisional basis through TCG meetings, which are attended by the divisional senior forensic investigator. At force level the head of forensic services attends TCG meetings. This ensures that level 1 and 2 crimes are resourced appropriately and leads to dynamic resourcing of crime priorities. Processes are constantly reviewed and the remit of the forensic strategy group includes the requirement to ensure that recommendations from the SWIM programme are implemented.

Strengths

- The forensic services strategy group owns the force science and technology and forensic services strategies, which are closely aligned to the Home Office police science and technology strategy group. Central to the strategy is the ethos of performance management; included within these documents is the SWIM package and the target-setting regime that is in place within WMC. A four-stage individual performance improvement process has been identified and is embedded within the department. The stages covered are self-actualisation by staff, support by the line supervisor, central support to the supervisor, and PDR sanction.
- All burglary dwelling and vehicle crime scenes are monitored for crime scene investigator attendance, and the analysis forms part of the forensic performance group agenda, where the impact of visits is measured. The force attends 60.3% of theft of motor vehicle crime scenes and 94.28% of burglary crime scenes, both significantly above the MSF average. Call takers have received training to ensure that best evidence is preserved through advice on initial scene preservation.

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- The force's level 1 crime is managed and prioritised on a divisional basis through TCG meetings, attended by the senior forensic investigator from that division. At a force level, the head of forensic services attends the TCG meetings. This ensures that level 1 and 2 crimes are resourced appropriately by forensic services and assists in the effective prioritisation of effort.
- Forensic investigators are located on divisions but are centrally managed. The outputs from forensic investigations are measured robustly with forensic identification feedback forms. BCU performance in actioning identifications is monitored by means of a tracking system.
- The ACC (SO) chairs a forensic services strategy group and undertakes six-monthly departmental inspections to ensure that business priorities are being met and that performance within the department is being progressed. To complement this, the departmental performance group aligns with the force performance group and undertakes monthly reviews where the head of forensic services holds the unit heads to account for current performance, in addition to business priorities such as sickness, PDR completion and budget management. This process leads to 'spotlight sessions' where a specific forensic unit is examined in greater detail. Key business stakeholders are invited to these performance groups and in a further development, external visitors will be invited to attend future meetings.
- The force has devolved external forensic examination budgets to BCUs. This gives the divisional crime manager overall control of the investigation and the cost and benefits that arise from directing the lines of enquiry at the front end of the process. The budgets are examined during the forensic strategy group meetings to ensure that there is proper accountability. Budget information training has been provided to divisional crime managers, detective inspectors, support service managers and finance officers.
- The introduction of abbreviated fingerprint statements, and the associated reduction in paperwork, has led to significant efficiency savings and release of expert time to concentrate on the core activity of achieving identifications.
- The West Mercia forensic service has produced two aide-memoires entitled 'Forensic Evidence Value Guide' and 'Procedures for Scene Preservation and Tasking'. The latter has been developed primarily for call-management staff as well as operational police officers, both of whom are key to the tasking process. This aide-memoire offers useful advice and guidance both to the victim and internal customers as to what can be expected from forensic services, and also includes attendance policies by crime type. The value guide acts as a reminder to staff of what items/surfaces are suitable for forensic examination. This assists those responsible for making decisions on crime scene attendance to secure optimal deployment.

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3E Criminal Justice Processes

Grade	Direction of Travel
Fair	Improved

National Grade Distribution

Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
0	15	27	1

Contextual Factors

The Chief Constable is a member of the LCJB and takes responsibility for force issues that emanate from this group. Additionally, the Chief Constable drives criminal justice processes within the board on behalf of the force. Following a realignment of portfolios, the ownership of criminal justice has passed to the ACC (TO). Responsibility for the enhancement of processes has been delegated to the head of criminal justice.

A criminal justice plan has been developed to bind criminal justice agencies within the West Mercia area to develop and improve processes. The plan is managed by the LCJB and contains clear performance objectives; as part of the process WMC has adopted targets.

Strengths

- The Chief Constable leads on criminal justice processes falling within the remit of the LCJB. The ACC (TO) chairs the performance delivery group (a multi-agency monitoring body), which continuously monitors and reviews the performance of all the criminal justice agencies in West Mercia, scrutinising both PSA and local targets.
- The force has a strategic plan, informed by the local criminal justice delivery plan, that sets the priorities of different criminal justice agencies. To ensure that the criminal justice processes are monitored at strategic level, the force has established a criminal justice strategic group (chaired by the Chief Constable) involving members of BCU command teams.
- A tripartite meeting attended by the three criminal justice practitioners (the police, the CPS and the courts service) at local operational level ensures that tactical issues relating to file quality and working processes are dealt with expeditiously.
- The criminal justice delivery plan has been developed to enjoin all criminal justice agencies within the West Mercia area to improve criminal justice processes. The plan is managed by the LCJB and contains SMART objectives, including file quality and number of offences brought to justice. For the year ending March 2006, WMC was required to bring 24,945 offences to justice and achieved a total of 28,833 offences, an improvement of 16% on 2004/05.

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- Despite experiencing ongoing problems with the late receipt of court results from the courts, the force process ensures that, when received, most are entered onto the PNC within 72 hours. The current performance for entering court results onto the PNC within ten days of the final court date is 75%.
- The head of the criminal justice support department (CJSD) has a specific target to improve file quality and timeliness, enhance criminal justice processes within West Mercia and improve working relationships with other criminal justice agencies. File timeliness and quality are monitored rigorously within CJSD tasking, while six-weekly tripartite meetings highlight problems and develop solutions. At the time of inspection, figures for file quality show that 71% of files are satisfactory to proceed, with 43% being 'perfect files'. Both of these figures exceed the targets set by the LCJB. To reflect this improvement and further drive improvement, the targets for 2006/07 will be increased to 75% for files satisfactory to proceed and 45% for perfect file submissions.
- The CJSD sergeants monitor the follow-up dates in relation to pre-charge advice so that relevant parties can address any issues raised. The officer in case's immediate supervisor oversees the investigation and checks that the advice given is compliant. To support this, custody sergeants make a final check prior to the offender answering bail. Additionally, the force has introduced an innovative system of local police station 'bail surgeries'. This reduces the burden on designated custody suites and is more accommodating to the needs of detainees.
- The CJSD commitment to the effective trial management programme is delivered by prosecution co-ordinators and team leaders, who undertake the responsibilities of a case progression officer. A CJSD sergeant oversees these roles. A standardised task list, which details the requirements for a complete file, has been developed and is used on each division. This task list enables the CJSD sergeant to oversee the progression of the case file and instigate any required action if and when necessary. A sound communication process exists between CJSD prosecution co-ordinators and team leaders and their counterparts at the CPS, who cover both the magistrates and crown courts.
- A strategy is in place to ensure that all custody suites have sufficient capacity to meet the needs of detainees and to assist in the effective investigation of crime. All custody suites within the force provide officers with the capability to obtain DNA samples from detainees. All utilise the profile matching system PROMAT, and Livescan for fingerprints has been in place within one division for a substantial period of time. The roll-out of this system to all primary custody suites is under way. One initiative being progressed is increasing cell capacity at Shrewsbury through the innovative use of cell pods, which has doubled the capacity from 8 to 16 cells and has increased interview room capacity.
- A chief inspector has a clear mandate to develop and enforce custody policies, ensure that custody units comply with regulatory guidelines, and promote a quality service to all detainees in the force's custody suites.
- A 10% reduction in the number of Fail to Appear (FTA) warrants, stipulated as an LCJB target, has been achieved by WMC. To complement this reduction a robust warrant management system, supported by NIM-compliant information management systems, is in place.

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- The CJSD is fully engaged in the implementation of the Victims' Code. Witness care units are in place across the force and evaluation shows that they are providing a good quality service to their users. Problems identified in obtaining victim personal statements have been addressed through Victims' Code training, which incorporated road shows and a force-wide e-learning package.
- The locally developed case tracker group is tasked with tracking and monitoring the handling and processing of persistent young offenders. It seeks to ensure that these cases receive a premium service and are finalised within the target time of 71 days.
- WMC's economic crime unit (ECU) has undertaken a programme to raise awareness of POCA, delivering presentations at key training events such as probationer and CID courses, force crime briefing days and BCU-level briefings. These include POCA powers on confiscation, cash seizure and money-laundering offences. Cash seizure kits have been supplied to each BCU to support officers and provide guidance on procedure. The force has had eight cash seizures under POCA so far this year related to acquisitive crime and drug supply offences, against a target of ten for the year.

Work in Progress

- A prosecution team performance management meeting is being instituted from April 2006. This group's objective is to further improve performance in criminal justice processes, using the outputs from Community Profiling and Problem Solving System (COMPASS) data.

Areas for Improvement

- The force is in the process of upgrading its custody facilities and opened a new custody centre in Shrewsbury in February 2006 which is cited as exemplary by the Home Office. Nonetheless some detention blocks – notably Hereford – are below standard. In the period before a permanent solution is found, some remedial action should be considered.
- The percentage of arrests/summons reported and entered on the PNC within one day has not met national targets throughout the year under inspection. The force has been working to rectify this position and has made progress over the year towards achieving the agreed target. However, performance as at April 2006 in this area was 81.1%, which is still below the national target of 90%.

4 Promoting Safety (Domain 3)

4A Reducing Anti-Social Behaviour

Grade	Direction of Travel
Good	Stable

National Grade Distribution

Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
0	8	35	0

Contextual Factors

Across the force different tools and powers are utilised to tackle ASB. These include Acceptable Behaviour Contracts (ABCs), drug house closures, dispersal orders, seizure of equipment and Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs). Prior to the implementation of either an ABC or an ASBO, a warning letter is sent to the individual(s) concerned to inform them of the actions that may be taken to address the issues at hand.

Key performance indicators exist for ASB. A collector system for monitoring ASB interventions from warning letters through to ASBOs has been introduced within each BCU and all ASB is monitored by filtering through the command and control system for incidents of this nature.

In order to provide a full approach to ASB, all divisions are proactively engaging with partner agencies to tackle it. Cross-agency ASB groups meet regularly to enable hotspot activity and individuals to be targeted. There are also criminal damage and ASB joint police and CDRP tasking meetings, and an active PPO meeting takes place at a tactical level with relevant partners on a monthly basis. There has also been local training of PCSOs and other agencies in order to tackle ASB, including training on abandoned vehicles, litter and accessing environmental services.

Strengths

- In order to provide a comprehensive approach to ASB, all divisions are proactively engaging with partner agencies to tackle ASB. Cross-agency ASB groups – comprising housing authorities, social landlords, children’s services, youth offending teams, education officers, environmental services, and Connexions – meet regularly to focus hotspot activity and individuals. There are also criminal damage and ASB joint police and CDRP tasking meetings, and an active PPO meeting takes place at a tactical level with relevant partners on a monthly basis. In addition, there is local involvement in community-based problem solving to tackle issues and develop local ownership.
- In the pathfinder division, PACT meetings are well established and priorities arising from these are tasked with partners through specially established PACT panels (multi-agency

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tasking panels). Single points of contact have been established with partners to promote this approach.

- ASB tactical advice is available from divisional ASB co-ordinators, the CPS ASB champion and the force's legal department. All divisions have at least one ASB co-ordinator (one has several) who works closely with representatives from partner agencies.
- Local training takes place on divisions for PCSOs and relevant agency staff, to tackle targeted problems such as abandoned vehicles and litter, and advice to officers on how to access environmental services. The 'Together Academy' has visited divisions to assist officers and PCSOs in tackling ASB, and a divisional conference was attended by over 80 delegates from many different partnerships; they worked through scenarios to assist their understanding of the benefits of partnership working.
- Across West Mercia a range of tools and powers are employed to tackle ASB. These include ABCs, drug house closures, dispersal orders, seizure of equipment, and ASBOs. In conjunction with multi-agency bodies, the measures employed are evaluated to ensure that they are appropriate to the needs of the community and the offender as well as to key stakeholders such as parents and teachers.
- Within West Mercia, guidance has been developed that details a ten-step approach to the management of ASB. Prior to the implementation of ABCs and/or ASBOs, a warning letter is sent to the individual(s) concerned to inform them of the actions that may be taken to address the issues at hand. The warning letter and ABC have shown positive results across the force. For example, one division issued over 150 warning letters but eventually only 11 ASBOs were needed. Where necessary, dispersal orders have been implemented under the oversight of beat managers and, more significantly, PCSOs.
- PIER charts are used to identify the prevention, intelligence, enforcement and reassurance opportunities and tasks within all packages and problems. Resources are deployed to identified crime and ASB hotspot locations, and other resources from partners, including funding, are deployed. Some divisions jointly fund analyst posts, providing the necessary NIM-based analytical work to tackle crime and disorder issues. ASB co-ordinators address issues affecting local communities, and a 'collector' system for monitoring ASB interventions, from warning letters through to ASBOs, have been introduced within each BCU. Following the introduction of National Standards for Incident Reporting (NSIR), WMC is in the early stages of assessing the best way to analyse and interpret data.
- In considering the use of the media to publicise ASB operations at a tactical level, the force is conscious of increasing the fear of crime through negative publicity. As the number of PACT meetings increases, members of the community will be apprised of progress. In the British Crime Survey 2005, the public's perception of ASB was significantly below the MSF average. In terms of criminal damage per 1,000 residents, West Mercia had achieved a 6% reduction in 2005/06 compared with the previous year.

Work in Progress

- Intelligence is gathered from local communities through local police officers and this will become more formal as the neighbourhood policing programme is embedded force-wide. Intelligence from community representatives is gathered through local police

officers; the key individual network database is currently being piloted on the neighbourhood policing pilot division and will capture intelligence directly from community representatives. Once evaluated it will be rolled out to the other divisions during summer 2006.

Area for Improvement

- Reduction in ASB is specified in LPPs, and ASB is included at level 1 tasking on divisions, taking account of community intelligence gathered through the NIM. However, ASB is not yet an integral part of level 1 NIM strategic assessments and control strategies.

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4B Protecting Vulnerable People

Grade	Direction of Travel
Poor	Declined

National Grade Distribution

Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
8	32	3	0

National Position

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

The four areas are discrete but share a common theme – they deal with vulnerable victims where there is a high risk that an incident can quickly become critical, and where a poor police response is both life-threatening and poses severe reputational risks for the force. For this reason, the grade is an overall grade capped at the level of the weakest area of performance. Aggregating four components to a Fair grade – which is defined as being an acceptable level of service – when HMIC (and in many cases forces themselves) recognises that at least one area merits a Poor would be unsafe. West Mercia’s response to public protection (sex offender management) generated concern, along with the absence of reliable information on the caseload of child protection and domestic violence officers. Some inconsistencies in supervision and corporacy demand attention, together with problems in the abstraction of specialist officers to general crime duties.

Child Abuse

Force Context

Policy and procedures have been revised to reflect the recommendations of Lord Laming’s inquiry and are being further amended to include the new NCPE guidance on child abuse investigation. A recent assessment of dedicated staff to support child abuse investigations resulted in an increase of 17 posts. Child abuse investigators work alongside officers who investigate incidents of DV.

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Strengths

- The ACC (TO) is the lead chief officer for child abuse investigation, governing the work of dedicated family protection units (FPUs) on each BCU. Each unit works alongside CID teams and overall responsibility for the department and its performance sits with BCU crime managers. Each FPU is line-managed by at least one detective sergeant and dedicated detective constables have received the appropriate training commensurate with their role.
- The FPU accommodation at Hereford is purpose built and includes child interview facilities and a forensic medical examination unit.
- Multi-agency working arrangements between the five BCU FPU teams and the four local authority providers are well established and deliver an efficient service to child victims. Local area child protection procedures are signed up to and implemented by all agencies.
- The force's central data unit has responsibility for all relevant disclosures of information regarding individuals working with children. Vetting bureau staff create intelligence logs on the force's integrated crime recording system in relation to all disclosures/non-disclosures to the Criminal Records Bureau.

Areas for Improvement

- The force has established a clear accountability framework and policy for the investigation of child abuse, but the highly devolved nature of the organisation has led to an inconsistent approach across BCUs on issues such as staffing levels, supervisory ratios and management of workloads. No information was available to establish accurately the workloads of officers within these units to ensure that they are manageable. BCU commanders would be assisted in their determination of resource levels by clearer guidance and more robust monitoring by the force on acceptable workload levels for officers working in this high-risk area.
- Some BCUs are reported to be abstracting FPU officers for other duties such as burglary initiatives, or leaving vacancies unfilled. Given the high-risk nature of these roles, the force should revise these approaches as a matter of urgency and issue clear guidance to BCU commanders on abstraction and vacancy policy.

Domestic Violence

Force Context

WMC's policy and procedures for dealing with incidents of DV, incorporate good practice and the Centrex check list; recording processes for DV incidents are NCRS-compliant and allow for intrusive auditing. The SPECCS+ risk assessment process promotes the delivery and management of individual care plans for survivors, and also seeks to introduce prevention strategies. Information on incidents of DV – especially where children are exposed to violence – are shared, as appropriate, with partner agencies.

At a strategic level, the force is represented at each of the four local authority aligned DV forums and contributes financially to supporting the effective delivery of the forum

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business plans. At BCU level, local information sharing forums and CPS groups are in place.

Strengths

- The ACC (TO) is the chief officer lead for all elements of the 'protecting vulnerable people' criteria.
- DV officers review all DV incidents. Violent crime packages are developed in relation to DV incidents and are tasked through the tasking process. Victims and witnesses are introduced into the witness care programme.
- The force has employed an external funding manager, who has been successful in obtaining funding from Lloyds TSB and the Charities Aid Foundation to increase voluntary sector capability in Shropshire, in collaboration with the CDRP to achieve targets in relation to DV.

Areas for Improvement

- There is no clear rationale for the staffing levels of specialist officers working in DV teams. The DV officer on one BCU is currently on long-term sick leave and the vulnerable adult officer is covering the workload and care plans. Force figures show 549 referrals to this particular DV unit from January 2006 to the point of inspection in April. The current staffing for this DV unit is one detective constable, making the workload unsustainably high. In the absence of national guidelines on the workload of DV officers, the force needs to examine the role and responsibilities of such post-holders to determine an acceptable caseload per officer. Importantly, the force will need to develop methods of monitoring these workloads corporately.
- There is no performance framework for DV prevention or investigation to help identify good or poor performance or practice. Such a framework would also assist in identifying gaps in service provision and provide a structure for greater ownership and accountability.

Public Protection

Force Context

Each of the five BCUs has staff responsible for violent or sex offender management. Project planning has commenced to set a standard across the BCUs that will mean all offender management staff are part of public protection as a whole, with close links to probation and family services. The Violent and Sex Offenders Register (ViSOR) database is embedded into working processes within protection units. The force is represented at regional and national ViSOR user groups and has completed back record conversion; it is 100% compliant in ensuring that all nominals on other force systems are identified if they have a ViSOR record.

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Strengths

- The force carries out risk assessments using the Thornton 2000 risk assessment matrix, which assesses risk of re-conviction of offenders. Management of violent and sex offenders is supported by use of the national ViSOR system, where intelligence, risk assessments and risk management plans are documented and audited.
- ViSOR has been integrated into working processes within public protection units. The force has completed back-record conversion, and is 100% compliant in ensuring that all nominals on force systems are identified if they have a ViSOR record.

Areas for Improvement

- There is no rationale for staffing levels that takes proper account of workload and resilience. Figures provided by the force show that officers are managing high levels of registered sex offenders (RSOs) and potentially dangerous offenders (PDOs) per officer per year. It is difficult to determine reliably the actual workload of the public protection unit officers, but on one division a detective constable carries a caseload of 120 RSOs and 30 PDOs. While there is currently no agreed national benchmark, the ACPO portfolio lead suggests that an officer should not be required to manage more than 50 RSOs per year, and that the number supervised should not include more than 20% very high or high risk sex offenders. The force needs to review urgently the role and responsibilities of such post-holders to determine a manageable caseload, and construct methods of monitoring these workloads corporately.
- WMC has no overall policy covering public protection and needs to develop one as a priority. Nor is there an effective performance framework, and fieldwork interviews suggest that Police Authority members are not well informed of public protection responsibilities, risks, workload or outcomes.
- The force recognises that a more corporate approach to sex offender management, investigation and training is required. Information provided by the force shows that officers from BCUs are trained to different standards, which has serious implications for service delivery. Given the current heavy workload and high risk nature of the role, the force needs to review these issues in order to make sure that all officers are trained to the same standard, so that it can manage effectively the risks posed by RSOs. It should also ensure that risk assessment encompasses the likelihood of harm and not just re-conviction.
- The force needs to consider mandatory counselling for all public protection officers, to ensure that their welfare needs are properly addressed in what is acknowledged to be a very stressful role.

Missing Persons

Force Context

The missing persons policy sets down clear guidelines for the investigation of missing persons and has recently been revised to be fully compliant with NCPE guidance. The missing persons intranet site gives officers further advice and guidance, including officer

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toolkits. An IT software management system, the Community Policing and Case Tracking system (COMPACT), ensures compliance with policy. Risk assessment runs to the core of the system, on a nationally agreed model, and is also fully compliant with the NCPE guidance of 2005.

Strengths

- The force has a clear accountability framework for performance and service delivery in relation to missing persons. The head of specialist operations for HQ CID is the lead for missing persons investigations. BCU crime managers are made aware of high risk cases immediately and are responsible for conducting a review of the investigation after 48 hours.
- The missing persons policy, procedure and protocols set down clear guidelines for the investigation of missing persons and have recently been revised to be fully compliant with NCPE guidance. The recently developed missing persons intranet site gives officers further advice and guidance, including officer toolkits.
- The force uses the COMPACT database to ensure compliance with policy. Dip sampling of COMPACT records to assess the quality of investigation is currently in operation, undertaken by an inspector who is the deputy chair of the national COMPACT user group, and thus able to correct and highlight possible areas for improvement. A programme of audit is in place to ensure consistency and compliance with policy and procedure and to identify any training needs.
- Memoranda of understanding frame working protocols and systems with local social services departments covering police issues, the National Missing Persons Helpline and the Police National Missing Persons Bureau. This work has been rolled out to incorporate private care providers and mental health trusts.
- Intelligence generated in the course of a missing persons enquiry is fed into the force intelligence recording and query system by means of a report.

Work in progress

- The force is currently developing protocols with private sector co agencies and the mental health trust.

Areas for improvement

- The ownership of missing person enquiries needs to be reinforced by means of an updated force policy, in order to ensure that there is clear accountability for the supervision and investigation of missing persons at an inspector level.
- While the force policy is available to the public via the force intranet site, this is not supplemented by a procedure document.

5 Providing Assistance (Domain 4)

5A Contact Management

Grade	Direction of Travel
Good	Stable

National Grade Distribution

Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
1	18	20	4

Contextual Factors

Contact management arrangements are currently a hybrid, whereby the south of the force area is served by a centrally based call management centre (at force HQ), while the two northern divisions have dedicated control rooms. The longer term plan is to bring these under the aegis of the central facility.

Strengths

Customer

- The two current principal methods of collecting customer feedback are the PPAF user satisfaction survey and the annual crime and safety partnership survey. The force exceeds the Home Office's minimum mandatory requirements with regard to the PPAF survey, in that annual results are statistically valid down to BCU level. This ensures that BCUs are accountable for their performance and that results are actionable by the BCUs, thus driving performance improvements. A process is also in place whereby returned surveys are passed to the relevant chief inspector (operations) or call centre manager where a particular process, incident, crime or member of staff is identified and where there is negative or positive feedback. From this feedback the relevant manager will take the appropriate action, including contacting customers, establishing the ownership of issues and consulting on action plans. Feedback is then provided to relevant staff or officers on lessons learnt - individually, as teams or as an organisation. This system feeds into PDR unsatisfactory performance issues and other management systems as appropriate.
- WMC has a planned programme to communicate to the public how it can access services. The internet site presently communicates emergency and non-emergency telephone and text numbers, minicom and service specific numbers (Crimestoppers, DV support, etc.). All details of local police stations, including telephone numbers, locations and opening times, are communicated, as are email and postal contacts.
- The force website has been redesigned and now includes the details of a 'Contact Us' e-mail address for use in non-emergency situations. A process is in place for staff in the contact centre to manage these calls for assistance. Front-counter services are widely available and opening times are given on the website.

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- The operations support department (OSD) empowers complaints to be dealt with at the local level and local resolution is used effectively in order to deal with issues in a timely manner. A PA-led complaints and surveys working group aims to bring a more proactive approach to citizen focus. The group was formed in January 2005 and comprises members of the PA HR panel, the head of strategy (reporting on satisfaction surveys) and the head of the PSD (reporting trends in complaints). The work of this group has been further enhanced by the appointment of the PSD performance researcher in September 2005, allowing more sophisticated analysis of complaints to be undertaken. The department has also engaged the support of two IAG members on a consultative basis when dealing with relevant complaint cases.

Culture

- A comprehensive meeting structure is in place that allows reporting up and down the organisation in this business area. Various working groups, based on systems and processes, work with the communication strategy group, chaired by the ACC (SO), and the call management senior user group.
- Contact management staff participated in two surveys during 2005: one run by UNISON around stress in the workplace, and a second, commissioned on satisfaction in the workplace, carried out by a tutor at Gloucester University. The results have been encouraging and a follow-up of both surveys will be conducted in 2006.
- The force is delivering cultural change through a comprehensive training programme for all contact centre staff. This training has been developed with an internationally renowned consultant, Mary Gober, who concentrates on the psychology and delivery of a customer-focused service designed to meet individual needs.
- The communications centre in the south of the force falls under the command of the operations support and is supported by HR managers and professionals. The department has its own senior personnel administrator and training and development manager. Personnel management is supplied from the centre but is about to be dedicated to the call centre based within that environment. Within operations support two performance analysts/duty planners provide monthly performance figures on force and divisional performance, in line with the KPIs. They also provide performance information against the departmental balanced performance framework that is examined at monthly tasking meetings.

Strategy

- The contact management strategy is contained in the force's three-year plan and delivery is achieved through managed response guidelines that reflect call grade definitions, consistent with the National Call Handling Standards. The force is on track to deliver on all aspects of these standards.
- Business continuity plans are in place for critical systems, which are tested on a regular basis and at least twice a year at each site. In the event of total failure at any one site, or at the force level, a business continuity plan is in place. This is in the process of being reviewed at the call management centre based at HQ, due to the recent introduction of new systems, notably automated call distribution (ACD).

Human Resources

- Exit interviews are carried out with all departing staff and the information is fed back to the HR professional team for analysis. The attrition rate is low and most staff leave on retirement or to take up other posts within West Mercia, rather than dissatisfaction with the working environment.

Skills, Training and Education

- Training support is determined as far as possible on the needs of individuals, based on PDR objectives and priorities. All new staff have a tutor allocated to them and mentors assist whenever required. Systems and other generic training are delivered from the centre according to demand. For the past two years, the operations support has funded team-building days run from a centre in Shropshire; these have been well supported and appreciated by staff.

Technology

- The force's command and control system has a gazetteer facility that enables staff from intelligence units to place warnings on any address, to warn staff of special measures to be taken or potential risks to staff attending. Staff have easy access to relevant supporting systems such as the PNC, CRIMES, the national FAQ database and other systems through the force intranet.

Management Information

- Call-handling performance is one of the 20 KPIs reported monthly at performance group meetings. Locally, call-handling performance is monitored through a balanced performance framework, and managers are held to account through a monthly TCG meeting. A number of measures exist to quality-assure performance within the CMC, including 'live listening' techniques, and regular dip sampling of the quality of incident logs, their contents and closure classifications. Other measures regularly reviewed that relate to all aspects of customer contact include telephone answering, written responses and personal visitors.

Work in Progress

- Agreement has now been reached to build the northern call management centre and centralised management of the function will be achieved when the new facility is available (currently projected for July 2007). In the meantime, a superintendent in the operations support is working with divisions and the call centre operation's managers to provide collaboration and co-operation during the phased change programme. The current facilities operate as a 'virtual' centre and calls are handled or transferred as necessary. Process issues continue to evolve as the force moves towards a centrally managed service operating from two designated sites. Formalising this cross-departmental work will ensure that business issues are identified and resolved.
- In order to improve customer service, the force is working with the supplier of its command and control system to utilise a previously unused names database that will facilitate an automated search for previous contact with the individuals. This will be further extended to include interfaces with its CRIMES system and provide an holistic view of customer contact.

Areas for Improvement

- The force recognises the need to develop dynamic satisfaction surveys that assess the quality of service delivered by contact centre staff, and is in the process of recruiting staff to undertake this function.
- Individual performance is measured through the PDR process, and management information is available and utilised daily to make adjustments to improve dynamic performance at team level. However, there could be a greater balance struck between the use of qualitative and quantitative objectives and enhanced linkage to recognition and development within the individual targets.

5B Providing Specialist Operational Support

Grade	Direction of Travel
Good	Stable

National Grade Distribution

Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
0	23	19	1

Contextual Factors

Firearms

The DCC chairs the firearms policy group, which meets twice a year and debates significant firearms issues around deployment, training and current operations. WMC has developed a comprehensive action plan to meet the NCPE code of practice which has been agreed with the national implementation team. Comprehensive computer-based systems record the training, maintenance, reaccreditation and deployment of all firearms officers. Firearms officers have access to several 'less lethal' options, including H&K impact round launchers (baton guns) and TASER electronic control devices.

Public Order

Public order is assessed by both local and central analytical activity and problem and target profiles are developed. Intelligence is gathered from local communities, community representatives and external agencies. CIAs are also completed. There are dedicated staff who seek closed and open source intelligence around public order issues and this information is passed to surrounding forces at frequent intervals.

Civil Contingencies

The local resilience forum (LRF) communications strategy is underpinned by information-sharing protocols to enable communication before, during and after an event. Business continuity management plans exist at divisional and departmental levels and address issues that could affect emergency response capability. The LRF ensures consultation with partners and effective collaboration on plan development. An initial response capability is in place across the range of disciplines, including command and control, investigation, communications and casualty management. The command cadre is available 24/7 and provides access to trained senior managers who are able to lead, direct and control critical incidents.

Strengths

- Evidence that the strategic assessment and control strategy is shaping strategic planning at force level is shown by in the improvement and increased funding of level 2 services in 2005/06, following the agreement on the new control strategy. NIM processes have a strong influence upon operational service delivery and

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support departments have adopted the NIM in order to shape the direction of their business. National NIM templates have been adopted by WMC and are used to produce the strategic assessments at regional and force level.

- The force strategic assessment is reviewed on a six-monthly basis and includes a range of relevant themes, notably terrorism, domestic extremism, criminal use of firearms, popular protests and public disorder that fit with the regional control strategy and national community safety plan. The assessment acts to drive and prioritise activity at level 2 through the TTCG process. WMC has in place an appropriate review system and ensures that operations are informed by previous organisational learning and best practice. All force policies are reviewed annually to ensure they are relevant and have captured previous learning.
- The action plan for the introduction of the NCPE Codes of Practice for the Use of Firearms and Less Lethal Weapons has been signed off by chief officers and the project concluded. There is an ongoing programme of internal inspection and performance review to ensure continued compliance. NCPE findings outlined several areas of good practice and confirmation that the force action plan was addressing all the key asset areas required to deliver compliance outlined within the statutory code of practice.
- The DCC is the lead officer in the force for firearms and holds the national ACPO lead in relation to the police use of firearms and less lethal tactical options. National firearms training takes place at HQ and the force is at the forefront not only of training but also of tactical development.
- There is evidence that the annual risk and threat assessment is used to review the adequacy of resource levels within the firearms arena. For example, the October 2004 assessment identified potential issues concerning the number of Gold and Silver commanders, and as a result numbers were increased to ensure that sufficient capability was in place to meet operational needs.
- The force's firearms provision includes a minimum of five ARVs, available on a 24/7 basis, deployed at divisional level, while a multi-disciplinary tactical firearms team provides armed surveillance capability. Firearms officers, attending firearms incidents have access to several less lethal options, including baton guns, TASER and a minimum of two police dogs in a 'non-compliant' role.
- Regular firearms policy group meetings have representation from all the relevant firearms disciplines, as well as divisional representatives, who contribute to shaping policy and decisions. The force firearms intranet site publishes contact information concerning current firearms queries and policy, and also provides a two-way question and answer system that allows all interested parties to benefit from debate and exchanges of good practice.
- The force works closely with others in the West Midlands region to provide mutual aid in a range of firearms specialisms, as well as participating in regional training exercises.
- Reducing disorder and ASB is one of the force's Four Better Outcomes and, as such, is detailed as a strategic priority in the force strategic assessment. FIB

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analysts assess public order vulnerabilities at strategic level; this forms part of the six-monthly strategic assessment process. BCU intelligence analysts help prepare similar strategic assessments at level 1.

- The FIB has a dedicated 'emerging threats' desk to identify potential public order threats at both force and divisional level. This includes the monitoring of organisations involved in domestic extremism, animal rights and popular protests. There have been a number of incidents where the use of intelligence has enabled the force to proactively prevent public disorder such as that associated with illegal raves.
- The force has a mobilisation plan, which is reviewed and tested annually. This plan will deliver short-term aid (two police support units) in thirty minutes and six police support units at two hours notice, either in-force or across force boundaries. Call-out lists and cadres exist for specialisms - for example tactical advisers, Bronze commanders and evidence gatherers. Regional protocols are in place to ensure resilience in the face of extraordinary demand on the force.
- WMC's LRF, chaired by the Chief Constable, incorporates category 1 and 2 responding partners. The structure includes working groups that incorporate all the relevant business areas; it facilitates category 1 responders' publication of a risk register that is easily accessible to partner agencies.
- The LRF has a formalised information-sharing protocol to support the exchange of information, including sensitive information, at a working group and daily contact level. The broad principle is that WMC and partners will share all information unless there are reasons for its non-disclosure; the Government Office for the West Midlands has acknowledged the systems employed for information exchange as best practice.
- Trained and experienced senior managers – able to lead, direct and control critical incidents from an early stage – are available 24/7. In addition, call-out systems are in place to provide ready access to a range of specialist services that include casualty bureau, incident command, body recovery and HOLMES 2.
- Business continuity plans at both BCU and departmental levels address key issues on emergency response capability, utilising work that originated from Millennium planning. The force's business continuity plans are being revised, following direction from the LRF via the general working groups. Liaison with the regional resilience forum supports this process. Examples of ongoing business continuity planning work are a potential influenza pandemic and the potential for the withdrawal of labour by police staff.
- A sub-forum of the LRF general working group – the communication working group – is chaired by WMC's head of media and includes media representation from category 1 and 2 responders. A communications strategy has been produced, underpinned by an information-sharing protocol, to improve communication and warning before, during and after an event.
- The LRF structure promotes regular consultation with partners and subsequent collaboration in the development of plans. The responsibility for plans is shared

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between BCUs and operations support, with the latter leading on generic plans and BCUs on site-specific arrangements. Within the force OSD, a chief inspector and a small team have responsibility for Civil Contingencies Act compliance and emergency planning. All plans are created as a direct result of risk assessment processes and maintained in conjunction with civil partners.

- WMC has an initial response capability across the range of disciplines, including command and control, investigation, communications and casualty management. The command cadre is available on a 24/7 basis and provides access to experienced, trained senior managers who are able to lead, direct and control critical incidents from an early stage. The force holds Gold facility and HR plans to ensure the effective command and control of major incidents.
- The force regularly collaborates with the three other regional forces and has in place mutual aid protocols covering public order, crime investigation, Special Branch activity, casualty bureau, body recovery and joint training initiatives. The region was the base for the casualty bureau that was established in response to Operation Bracknell. WMC has also regularly provided mutual aid on a national basis, a recent example being Operation Sorbus for the G8 summit. WMC supplied 5% of its total force strength to this operation, and when called upon was in a position to provide further resources. West Mercia undoubtedly 'punches above its weight' in respect of its mutual aid contribution.

Work in Progress

- The force has identified that resilience would be enhanced if there were more Gold commanders. Two individuals have now been identified and a programme of training and accreditation has been planned. It is hoped that this additional command resilience will be available within the next six months.

Areas for Improvement

- Although business continuity plans exist at both force and divisional level, these plans are currently being re-worked around the need to supply critical services at times of severe disruption and to guarantee external support services.
- A review of the existing plans across the LRF partnership is currently under way. This is aimed at achieving not only an understanding of current capability with identified risks, but also clarity on plans to create a standard model for use by all partner agencies.

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5C Strategic Roads Policing

Grade	Direction of Travel
Good	Stable

National Grade Distribution

Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
0	7	33	3

Contextual Factors

A new roads policing strategy is in development. This aims to provide increased levels of integration, will incorporate the existing road safety and ANPR strategies, and will take into account the ACPO national strategic assessment. Departmental activity is intelligence-driven, with bids for all resources being considered through and monitored by NIM-compliant tasking processes. Since January 2006, ANPR has been operating through fixed sites and CCTV cameras located across the force area, in addition to the existing team of eight mobile roadside units and intercept teams. ANPR is managed by the force operations department to provide a dedicated service to divisions and other specialist operational teams.

The force is one of four which provides resources to the Central Motorway Police Group, covering the major road network in the West Midlands, with a focus on denying criminals the use of the roads.

Strengths

- The area of strategic roads policing is led by the ACC (SO). As a further demonstration of the organisational commitment to roads policing, a superintendent has recently been appointed to focus solely on this area of business. The superintendent is the force lead for casualty reduction, in conjunction with divisional commanders, who are responsible for casualty reduction on a local basis. Operations support strategy is determined by national and force strategy, and is monitored by a balanced performance framework scorecard method.
- Roads policing is devolved to divisions, which bid for specialist roads policing resources to Operations Support through the force level 2 tasking and co-ordination process. Departmental activity is intelligence driven, with bids for resources gauged against NIM-compliant tasking processes. Performance is measured against the published performance plan and force control strategy. The department has in place a dedicated collision intelligence officer to identify hotspots and provide actions plans to assist in the tasking process. Both the BCUs and Operations Support are collectively accountable for the KPIs and 2010 casualty reduction targets.
- The use of ANPR has led to the arrest of 500 criminals in the last 12 months. As at January 2006, ANPR is operating through fixed sites and CCTV cameras located

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across the force area, in addition to the existing team of eight mobile roadside units and the intercept teams. The ANPR system is managed by Operations Support to provide a dedicated service to divisions and other specialist operation teams.

- All uniformed operations staff have PDR objectives that are aligned to the four identified key road traffic casualty causation factors and tackling criminality, with the results forming part of the monthly performance review. PDR objectives are also set in respect of denying criminals the use of the roads. One example is arrest performance, and there is evidence of significant arrest activity.
- The multi-agency safety camera partnership in West Mercia has been operational since April 2003 and follows ACPO guidelines on speed enforcement. Camera sites are targeted at problematic routes and locations; a review of the partnership in 2004 showed its effectiveness in significantly reducing killed or seriously injured collisions (61% reduction in collisions involving casualties of all categories).
- WMC undertakes regular reviews of the equipment used within the roads policing arena to ensure that all possible technological opportunities to improve service delivery are exploited. WMC is committed to piloting any new technology that will enhance its roads policing service – for example, portable evidential breath-testing devices.
- WMC continues to show a commitment to regional collaboration through active participation within the central motorway police group.
- The ACPO Road Death Investigation Manual is being fully implemented across the force. The SIO role is predominantly performed by trained BCU staff, with specialist roads policing staff providing a consultancy service and attending fatal collisions involving multiple deaths. The department has in place a dedicated collision intelligence officer, to identify areas of concern and provide actions plans to assist in the tasking process.
- The ACPO Pursuit Policy is complied with fully and further pursuit skills training opportunities are being actively explored.

Work in Progress

- A more integrated roads policing strategy is being developed. This will incorporate existing road safety and ANPR strategies and take account of the National Strategic Assessment.

Area for Improvement

- The force may wish to explore why the satisfaction levels of members of the public involved in a road traffic collision is only 79.70%, below the MSF average of 84.50%. This places the force seventh out of eight within its MSF group.

6 Resource Use (Domain B)

6A Human Resource Management

Grade	Direction of Travel
Good	Stable

National Grade Distribution

Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
2	18	23	0

National Position

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

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

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

Contextual Factors

WMC's People Strategy 2005–08 is reviewed annually and sets out the force's vision, principles, aims and success measures. Regular reports on progress towards achievement of the HR plan and the strategy are provided to the PA. This affords PA members the opportunity to challenge approaches and deployment of resources, and to agree the reprioritisation of activities if necessary. HR management is devolved to BCUs, supported by a central HQ-based personnel services department.

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The head of personnel services reports directly to the monthly performance group chaired by the DCC and attended by all BCU commanders and heads of departments. Data is published on the personnel intranet site and reported monthly to the PA. HR systems have also provided BCUs and departments with a bespoke suite of reports to enhance performance management at BCU level.

Strengths

- The People Strategy 2005–08 is published on the WMC internet and intranet sites, making the document fully accessible to both the public and staff. This strategy is reviewed annually and sets out the force's vision, principles and aims, together with examples of how it measures success. The annual costed HR plan that derives from this is produced in collaboration between personnel services and training and development senior managers, using the Association of Police Authorities (APA) framework. Regular reports on progress towards achievement of the plan and the strategy are provided to the PA by the two heads of department. These heads attend PA meetings to provide detail on achievement and inhibitors encountered. This interface affords the PA members the opportunity to challenge approaches and deployment of resources, and to agree reprioritisation of activities as necessary. Monitoring of progress against the strategy is routinely conducted at personnel services senior management tasking meetings and the force performance group meetings. Senior managers from personnel and training and development meet on a quarterly basis to review progress towards the strategy and plan and to prioritise work streams.
- HR management is devolved to divisions. Policy and procedures created by personnel services offer a framework and guidance to enable line managers to deal locally with issues affecting their staff, eg requests for special leave, flexible working, managing sickness absence and grievances. Personnel managers and officers, together with the personnel helpline, provide support on interpretation of policy to ensure corporate and consistent decision making.
- The head of personnel services is held to account at the monthly performance group, chaired by the DCC and attended by all divisional commanders and heads of departments. At this meeting data is provided by the HR Oracle system on sickness, PDR completion/objectives set, and strength broken down by gender and BME. Headquarters personnel senior managers meet monthly with divisional and departmental personnel managers to share good practice, review policy and address both tactical and strategic issues. Divisional and departmental personnel managers participate in local command team meetings, reporting on results from priorities and being tasked with actions. Data is published on the personnel intranet site and reported monthly to the PA. HR systems have also provided divisions and departments with a bespoke suite of reports to enable the better management of performance at BCU level.
- The force has in place a five-year health and safety (H&S) strategy, led by the DCC and force H&S manager, which includes annual targets to monitor the assimilation of H&S into day-to-day work.

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- Accidents/assaults and 'near misses' are recorded using a force-wide paper-based system (due to be changed to an electronic recording system in April 2006). All reports are reviewed by the H&S manager and any lessons learnt are discussed at local safety committees and the force H&S committee, with force policies amended where appropriate. The force has not been served with any improvement prohibition notices during 2005/06.
- The force has recently been reaccredited as an IIP following a highly positive assessment in 2005. Work is now progressing on building into core business the key recommendations for improvement made by the assessors.
- The force has a structure for reward and recognition for both officers and staff based on PDR and attendance. The policies for competency-related threshold payments, bonus payments and special priority payments are clearly defined and published on the intranet. The special priority payments policy is subject to annual review, enabling the payments to be directed to areas of work that have the greatest impact on force performance. Police staff may be granted an honorarium or accelerated increments for exceptional PDR. Both police staff awards are monitored by personnel to ensure consistency of application and enable RES monitoring.
- Officers and staff who under perform may be action planned to improve performance. Staff who narrowly fail at promotion boards are also offered the opportunity for an action plan for further development before being reconsidered. The efficiency regulations have been used to address poor performance.
- Workforce planning analysis is undertaken over a three-year period, and a monthly 'budgeted posts' panel, chaired by the DCC allows finance to be reallocated to deliver operational resources at the appropriate level in a timely fashion.
- The HR database has force interfaces to most other operationally critical force systems, including the National Management Information System (NMIS), CRIMES, the Centurion professional standards database, the training database and Airwave (national communications system). Self-service elements have been added to the intranet so that all staff can see and update their HR data.
- A wide range of work-life balance policies and procedures are in place that meet or exceed statutory requirements. In addition, there are a range of options with regard to working hours, including compressed hours, term-time-only contracts, voluntary reduced hours, part time and jobshare, as well as flexi-time within core business hours. There is evidence of the use of other more flexible arrangements such as home working in a small number of roles and personal circumstances.
- Role profiles using the Integrated Competency Framework have been established for all roles and a process is in place for the development of new profiles. Role profiles are also used for the selection of all police officers and police staff, via competency-based interviewing.

Areas for Improvement

- The force has made significant efforts to reduce sickness absence and there is increasing evidence of proactive and robust management of sickness absence and early occupational health interventions. However, for 2005/06 the average number of

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working hours lost due to sickness for police officers was 82.93, which was still above the national average despite a reduction of 6.8%. The same picture applies to police staff sickness, where the number of hours lost was still above the national standard average despite a reduction of 9.6%.

- The completion rate for PDRs has significantly improved but currently the force is unable to monitor the number of PDRs completed within 60 days of the due date. New PDR software that will facilitate this analysis is to be implemented.
- The force cannot yet monitor compliance with the European Working Time Directive; previous capital bids for a new standalone system have been unsuccessful.
- West Mercia does not commission regular staff surveys to monitor staff perceptions, morale and motivation.

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6B Training, Development and Organisational Learning

Grade	Direction of Travel
Good	Improved

National Grade Distribution

Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
3	11	27	2

National Position

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

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

Contextual Factors

This section summarises the results of improvement activities that have been undertaken since the last inspection. It facilitates an understanding of the context within which such activities have taken place, together with an understanding of the results. The force was graded Good during the 2005 baseline process, with a number of recommendations made for improvement.

The implementation of a protocol for quality assurance and management of divisional trainers at a strategic level is ongoing.

Appointment of a performance manager in training and development has led to the provision of quality performance data for use by chief officers, joint chairs of training panels, and the training and development management team.

Terms of reference for and the composition of joint chairs of training panels have been revised; the group now meets quarterly, and is developing into a more strategic, client-led body. There is strong leadership from the DCC, who chairs the meetings.

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Community involvement in training is in place for IPLDP and phase 3 ('Understanding Communities') diversity training, in accordance with the APA document *Involving communities in police learning and development: a guide*.

The training design officer is coaching all trainers in the use of *Models for learning: revised*. He has held workshops on the subject for departmental and divisional trainers.

Strengths

- There is clear leadership and ownership of training by chief officers and the PA; a comprehensive improvement plan is in place and training and development is an integral part of the strategic management of the force.
- The training strategy is recognised as noteworthy practice, evidencing a strong commitment to working closely with customers and stakeholders to meet their requirements.
- Processes are in place to recruit, train, develop and retain people, including supporting secondments, acting duties and continuing professional development. There are excellent facilities for trainers to deliver training, with IT support.
- The force is actively engaged in working with a range of groups – national, regional and local including external agencies – on training issues. National recognition has been received for the application of blended learning.
- Learning and development processes that support the business needs of the organisation are well established, and have been subject to external quality assurance scrutiny on a regular basis. There is clear definition of roles and responsibilities. *Models for learning* and the national PDR are well established and underpin the department's processes.
- Progress against targets is measured and monitored via the department's balanced performance framework. In addition, the joint chairs of training panels monitor the delivery of the costed training plan. Data demonstrates that improvements in processes and systems have enhanced departmental performance.

Work in Progress

- Prior to 2006 the force had submitted costed training plans for divisional training delivery. The force has taken steps to ensure that it resumes capturing data for all areas of training, eg dog training and divisional training, by filling two key vacancies. Stronger links have been forged with divisional and departmental training roles as a result.
- The force is responding more effectively to changes in customer requirements by addressing this as a business item at training panels. The waiting lists for training are now subjected to regular performance reviews so that the responsiveness will be sustained.

Areas for Improvement

- The force needs to improve the use of evaluation data and increase external benchmarking.
- The force should develop better processes for the feedback of performance data, evaluations and costing data to improve efficiency and effectiveness.
- The force needs to gather and analyse evaluation data in respect of customer needs and requirements more consistently at a lower level, and to undertake a survey of customers in relation to customer satisfaction.
- A formal staff survey should be introduced to identify more detailed and specific feedback as well as further areas for improvement supported by evidence.
- The work started to enable training and development activities to be assessed against national diversity standards should be completed and embedded. Closer contact with end users via force survey data would enable the utilisation of community feedback.
- An internal champion for improving internal environmental practices has been identified; the force should ensure that this results in appropriate targets being set and monitored.

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6C Race and Diversity

Grade	Direction of Travel
Good	Stable

National Grade Distribution

Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
0	14	27	2

Contextual Factors

Positive action in recruiting a diverse workforce has been undertaken within WMC. Activities on offer include awareness seminars, support on the completion of application forms and preparation for assessment centres, individual and group work experience weeks, and building outreach networks with minority communities. Staff from minority backgrounds are being encouraged to attend the Personal Leadership Programme and this will continue with the new Centrex Positive Action Leadership Programme. An innovative approach in recruiting has been adopted by holding one post vacant, aimed at attracting officers from minority groups on secondment from BCUs to experience all aspects of special operations.

Work-life balance is supported through a variety of policies and procedures, for example flexible working hours and career breaks. Personnel services monitors diversity of the workforce, job applications, applications for promotion boards/interviews, and grievance/discipline results. (Applications for training are monitored through training and development). There is a dedicated personnel manager primary to ensure compliance with the DDA, in respect of which comprehensive guidance has been produced and the awareness of the need to make reasonable adjustments has been cascaded through road-shows. The disability equality scheme and action plan are currently in development.

Strengths

- The ACC (SO) is the force diversity champion and chairs the tactical diversity group; she also has a national lead role in respect of work with traveller and gypsy communities and is an active member of the ACPO sub-group on women and policing. The Chief Constable chairs the strategic diversity group while the DCC leads on diversity training and performance. The DCC also represents the force at the annual regional Gay Pride event.
- Each BCU and HQ department has a diversity champion, who is supported by the professionally trained diversity team. Their role is to support and progress diversity issues and specifically to embed the principles of the RES. Every staff member has PDR objectives linked to the diversity priority of promoting equality.
- WMC has implemented a three-year diversity strategy, supported through strategic and tactical diversity groups. The focus of the strategy is mainstreaming all six strands of diversity.

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- Diversity impact assessments are part of the template for operational orders and thus diversity issues are considered as part of all pre-planned operations. All personnel policies are impact assessed.
- A lawfully compliant RES has been published and progress is monitored through the RES action plan. The dedicated equality scheme and compliance manager leads in this monitoring role and also ensures that appropriate impact assessments are made for all policies and procedures. For the 2006 revision of the RES there has been considerable consultation with diversity champions, IAG members, the PA and internal support networks. The RES was peer reviewed by Warwickshire.
- WMC has established ethnic and employment monitoring performance groups, chaired by ACPO officers, to monitor trends and the impact of RES-related activity – the employment report is published twice a year. All actions under the RES are monitored by use of the customised balanced performance framework.
- Personnel officers monitor the diversity of the workforce through recruitment, applications for promotion and training opportunities, and grievance/discipline results. Levels of complaints against, and investigations into, BME staff are monitored by chief officers for any disproportionality. All data in relation to staff and complaints from those with BME backgrounds are reviewed on a regular basis by the PA complaints and survey working group and fed back to the chief officer team. A superintendent in the PSD has reviewed the professional standards reporting policy and introduced the 'Safe Call' remote reporting hotline for victims of harassment and bullying in the workplace.
- The force has employed a dedicated personnel manager with responsibility for ensuring compliance with the DDA. Comprehensive guidance has been produced on DDA legislation, and awareness of the need to make reasonable adjustments has been cascaded through road-shows and a case conference procedure. An example of DDA-appropriate action is adjustments to training arrangements to accommodate a probationary officer with dyslexia, and the force has retained an officer who was declared permanently disabled but able to perform non-operational duties.
- The force has made good progress in the development of internal support networks for minority groups and supports four networks: BME officers have MERGe and there are well established support groups for LGBT officers, plus the disabilities network and the women's network. All groups have chief officer support, and the Chief Constable and a member of the PA attend the biannual combined meeting. A protocol covering staff attendance at network meetings has been published recently, together with guidance for line managers.
- Network/support groups are involved in consultation around the formulation and assessment of new policies; the Independent Police Complaints Commissioner for the region recently attended a MERGe meeting to learn more about its work.
- WMC supports work-life balance through a variety of policies and procedures, including flexible working hours, career breaks, parental leave and a special leave policy; provisions for bereavement leave are communicated to staff through the force

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intranet and via staff associations, support networks, the personnel and welfare functions, and at intervals through general orders.

- The People Strategy 2005–08 sets out targets and intentions for achieving a diverse workforce. The force has implemented a range of strategies designed to work towards a representative workforce, including Dismantling Barriers, the Breaking Through action plan and the Gender Agenda, which outlines specific actions to improve the representation and experience of women across the workforce.
- Positive action to achieve a diverse workforce includes awareness seminars, training events to offer support in the completion of application forms and preparation for assessment centres, individual and group work experience weeks, and the establishment of outreach networks with minority communities. Following a Positive Action recruitment campaign in 2005, 5% of all officer applications came from BME groups. In 2005/06, 40% of officer recruits were female and the female strength is just above the national average at 23%.
- The force has well developed external and internal community consultation structures, which are soundly embedded and co-ordinated by the Diversity Team. These groups are given access to a wide range of information about service delivery, including data to enable them to assess equality of service delivery. WMC has one of the most active IAG structures of any force in the country.
- Performance and objectives in relation to diversity are scrutinised by the monthly performance group, chaired by the DCC and attended by all ACPO officers, BCU commanders and heads of department; senior managers are held to account in all areas of service delivery in relation to diversity. Areas of improvement these are addressed at these meetings, and at the quarterly performance review meeting held with the divisional and departmental senior management teams.
- Diversity has been embedded throughout the force's training provision and incorporated into a costed training plan. Training on the RRAA is a golden thread through all lesson plans, and IAG and community members are involved in the design, delivery and evaluation of IPLDP.
- Specialist training is provided according to specific roles and functions, and policy writers are trained in CIA to gauge the effects of new policy. RRAA-compliant training is given to all new members of the force as part of their induction.
- Operations support (which comprises roads policing, firearms and the dogs section) has actively encouraged applications from officers from under-represented groups. The department has adopted an innovative approach that involves holding one post vacant, which allows the force to run a rolling programme of attachments to specialist departments. (Approximately one-third of the placements were female.) The take-up of the scheme has been such that the force has had to reduce the duration of the attachment to one month. Women-only awareness sessions have been held to introduce women to the issues relating to firearms work, with very positive results.
- Firearms trainers have worked closely with members of the community, while hate crime investigators are trained through the HQ crime department, and diversity is

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included in ICIDP courses. Diversity trainers are supported and encouraged to attend events such as the police diversity trainers network and have access to an independent counsellor.

Work in Progress

- Employment monitoring (under the force RES) has indicated that a disproportionate number of BME staff are leaving the force. Although the absolute numbers are very low, work is being prioritised to understand the reasons why BME staff are leaving and to counter any inequality or unfairness that may be identified in procedures or practices.

Areas for Improvement

- Despite the positive action campaign there has been a 2.8% decrease during 2005/06 in the number of police recruits who are from BME groups; this is 1.1% below the economically active local population figure. The force needs to evaluate the impact of its campaign and awareness efforts and gauge whether lessons could be learnt from elsewhere.
- Only 53% of WMC buildings comply with the requirements for access for disabled people and the force needs to progress its plans for enhanced accessibility.
- The four support networks acknowledge the positive backing they receive from chief officers, but point to a degree of fatigue that comes from the amount of work entailed in the consultation around new policies, and the fact that a lot of responsibility falls on the shoulders of a small number of activists within those networks. The force is encouraged to consider whether further practical and financial support might alleviate this pressure.

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GOOD PRACTICE

TITLE: Multi-Agency Diversity Training & Community Liaison

PROBLEM: Telford & Wrekin Division is a core member of a local Partnership that has been engaged in many community based initiatives in recent years. Of specific note is the Theatre based Training Programme 'Diversity Action' which delivered a play called 'Hidden Voices'

SOLUTION: The play was scripted using actual events and experiences obtained from community people who attended a series of workshops in local Community Centres. The Paradoxos Company were contracted independently to carry out the research and script the play, which was delivered by professional actors.

Coinciding with this event the Partnership commissioned a report into how Communities could be more clearly represented. This led to the establishment of the Telford Race, Equality and Diversity Partnership [TREDP]. It has elected community members and senior representatives from public sector agencies, including the Police. It has successfully received funds from the Commission for Race Equality [CRE] to provide funding for a Project Manager, Admin Support and two Community Advisors. Within the Local Strategic Partnership [LSP] there has been an agreement to provide finance for a three-year period to ensure the resilience and growth of this community provision. The Partnership has demonstrated its value through its rapid response to the July 7th terrorist bombings. Within 24hours the Telford Community Safety sub-group was formed to manage the reassurance and needs of the communities. Positive outcomes from this can be identified through Crime and Fire risk assessments being carried out on key vulnerable premises. A bidding process for community funds was entered into and this enabled communities to access funding to provide additional security and property maintenance directly related to the recommendations of these reports.

OUTCOME(S): Over the last 3 years 3000 people from the community, agencies, and partners have attended the training event. Including nearly 400 Police Officers and staff. The event received 95% positive feedback and has been subject to a full 4 stage Kirkpatrick evaluation by an external evaluator. This evaluation is believed to be the first of this magnitude and nature.

The partnerships were finalists in the Association of Public Service Excellence Awards (APSE) in 2005 and received their award in Glasgow under the 'Embracing Diversity' section.

FORCE CONTACT: Chief Inspector Andy Parkes, Telford & Wrekin Division

6D Managing Financial and Physical Resources

Grade	Direction of Travel
Good	Stable

National Grade Distribution

Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
1	11	24	7

Contextual Factors

This is an HMIC assessment of domain 6D. It is based on the self-assessment return and our own findings as well as a consideration of the Police Use of Resources Evaluation (PURE) by the Audit Commission’s appointed auditor for the force/authority. Set out at the end of this report are the appointed auditor’s summarised scores for each theme covered by PURE. Separate, more detailed reports on PURE have also been issued by the appointed auditor for the authority/force.

West Mercia was an early adopter of devolved budgets in order to align financial responsibility with operational decision making. The managing assets and resources strategy group has provided continuous momentum and direction in this area for over ten years. Operational commanders are well aware of the financial value of the resources at their disposal, are provided with monthly information by their support services manager, and are accountable for their performance at the monthly performance group.

The Police Authority’s strategic panel receives comprehensive information on performance against targets and gains a clear insight into the medium-term strategy. At the commencement of the financial planning cycle the Chief Constable identifies the key strategic issues, for example neighbourhood policing, which would be the priority and the theme of budget planning for 2006/07.

The resource allocation model is owned by the chief officers, who regularly review the allocation of officers, staff and resources to BCUs and departments. The primary resource is the number of officers and staff allocated to the various service areas, and this is reviewed periodically by chief officers to ensure maximum effectiveness. The Oracle HR system is used to record, track and provide data on all staffing issues and the Manpower Availability Resource System (MARS) duty system identifies police officer availability and deployment, which is controlled by duties managers on BCUs.

Strengths

- The force and PA have effective budget planning and monitoring processes, and have a sound level of general reserves (now standing at a figure equating to 3% of net revenue expenditure). In addition, strategic financial management of resources has released some £12 million, which is earmarked as a ‘protecting the future’

reserve to assist in the medium term funding of enhanced protective services and local policing.

- Business processes aligned to budget-making and monitoring of devolved budgets are robust; HR and finance information is linked under the auspices of a managing assets and resources strategy group.
- The force has developed effective processes to monitor performance against targets; the findings inform the medium-term financial strategy. From this, key strategic issues are identified that form the basis for budget planning.
- A resource allocation model is owned by chief officers, who regularly review the allocation of officers, staff and resources to BCUs and departments. This process is supported by a budgeted post panel that considers and evaluates requests for self-financing and resource allocation.
- The financial management information system provides real-time information for budget-holders, with the finance department having primary responsibility for updating the budgetary posts fields of the HR system. This latter role is a useful one from which other forces might benefit.
- The force has consistently met the national efficiency targets and its process is a model of good practice.
- The Institute of Public Finance national benchmarking exercise shows that West Mercia achieves relatively low costs in respect of financial operations.
- Very effective arrangements are in place for procurement and management of the vehicle fleet. The force has a good track record of collaboration with other areas of the public sector; formal collaborative arrangements on resource issues with the county-based fire and ambulance services may be extended to cover collaboration around the fleet service, based on the model developed in Gloucestershire.
- Value for money is obtained through procurement, and compliance processes are sound and subject to regular review. On procurement, there is extensive experience of joining and leading regional collaborations, and all the national contracts are actively engaged.
- The estates function is well managed and supports operational effectiveness, including the force's areas of growth. National benchmarking data is used in decision making, and overall the estates function has been described as a 'beacon' by external consultants.

Areas for Improvement

- Risk-management processes are not yet embedded within the force and need to be formalised. In addition, risk registers are required in local areas and on BCUs.
- There is further scope to reduce some back-office functions through the development of online transaction processing.

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- Although the force addressed some energy functions within its estates strategy, there remains a need to develop a strategy for energy management.

Audit Commission Police Use of Resources Evaluation	
Force and Authority: West Mercia	
Element	Assessment
Financial management	3
Financial standing	3
Internal control	2
Value for money	4
Key to grades	
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Below minimum requirements – inadequate performance2. Only a minimum requirement – adequate performance3. Constantly above minimum requirements – performing well4. Well above minimum requirements – performing strongly	
The judgements are made by auditors under the Code of Audit Practice and in accordance with guidance issued by the Audit Commission.	

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6E Information Management

Grade	Direction of Travel
Good	Stable

National Grade Distribution

Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
1	9	31	2

National Position

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

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

Strengths

- Strategic responsibility for information management is held by the Information Knowledge Management Strategy Group (IKMSG), chaired by the director of finance, and is an integral part of the force NIM process.
- The force's IT systems and services have been reviewed and categorised in terms of criticality to the force. Service level agreements are used to document the requirement for disaster recovery measures for each individual application. Each service level agreement is developed, negotiated and agreed with the owner of the system.

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- The force is in the process of assessing the corporate risk management programme, which will involve the risk management strategy group co-chaired by the DCC and director of finance. Every department will be required to establish its own risk register and to identify a plan to close any high risks that have been agreed.
- The force has seen a major improvement in the investment programme over the last four years and has established a sound network and thin infrastructure. This is enhanced by the inclusion in the core capital programme of an ongoing replacement programme for desktops, servers and network enhancements. The force's CRIMES system provides a fully integrated crime recording, intelligence, custody and case preparation system that offers single-point data entry and a single nominal record for these business areas.
- The IKMSG operates within the NIM framework to provide a key role in the tasking and co-ordination process. Within the wider NIM framework, all aspects of the force are subject to performance assessment through the force performance group and biannual chief officer review. An example of this is the inclusion, since November 2005, of PNC data compliance as a standing part of the monthly performance group measurement.
- The force's information and communications technology strategy sets out a development plan for key technology initiatives for the next three years. Over the past four years, investment has established sound data networks and IT infrastructure. The IT programme is further enhanced by inclusion in the core capital programme of rolling replacement programmes for desktops, servers and network enhancements.
- CRIMES provides a fully integrated crime recording, intelligence, custody and case preparation system, and a single search facility for officers over the six IMPACT nominal index (INI)/Cross-Regional Information Sharing Project (CRISP) data sets. Accredited staff can access CRIMES and a data warehouse through all desktops across the force.
- WMC was a pilot force for data transfer to the Criminal Records Bureau. The data extract and transfer from WMC to the Criminal Records Bureau is undertaken daily and meets the requirements under INI.
- Following the Information Technology Infrastructure Library (ITIL) guidelines, ISTD is executing a continuous programme of service improvement. Incorporated within this programme are periodic assessments of compliance levels which consequently leads to a prioritisation and implementation of improvement initiatives to benefit the Organisation. Previous initiatives have led to service improvements in the business areas of Service Desk, Incident Management, Service Level Management and Availability Management.

Work in Progress

- An Information Security Officer is in place within West Mercia and a growth revenue bid has been approved to introduce the new position of Force Security Manager during 2006/07. The primary responsibility of this position will be to deliver, at a

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strategic level, the requirements detailed within the ACPO Community Security Policy. A recent self-assessment for national inspection by PITO has been completed in relation to Information Security and incorporated an up to date position statement in relation to West Mercia's proposals for longer-term compliance with the Community Security Policy.

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6F National Intelligence Model

Grade	Direction of Travel
Good	Stable

National Grade Distribution

Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
0	19	22	2

Contextual Factors

The ACC SO is the lead for continual NIM development and implementation. The NIM is influencing service delivery, and other force departments have adopted the NIM to shape their direction. The force has recognised the NIM's impact as a business model for performance management and has instituted a force-level performance meeting. The national template has been adopted by WMC and is used to produce strategic assessments at regional and force level. This process is effective and managed by ACPO, the principal analyst and the intelligence manager. The principal analyst is active in reviewing analytical tools to meet the force's needs. As a result of his contribution to the ACPO national analyst working group, WMC is in a strong position in relation to this area of activity.

In partnership with regional forces and other law enforcement agencies, WMC are progressing a regional debriefing course for intelligence operatives. A policy on managing records is also in place, in anticipation of the release of Centrex's guidance on the management of police information (MoPI) at the beginning of April.

Targets are identified and agreed, as are hotspots, series, high risk issues and emerging threats. Each area is given a plan owner and a set of objectives, which are recorded as part of the TCG agenda. These are reviewed at subsequent TCG meetings and learning is disseminated between the group and force.

Strengths

- NIM processes have a strong influence upon operational service delivery, and support departments have adopted the NIM in order to shape the direction of their business. National NIM templates have been adopted by WMC and are used to produce the strategic assessments at regional and force level.
- There is a clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities relating to NIM delivery at both force and BCU level. The strategic TCG is operating effectively to ensure that tactical assessments are influencing the tactical TCG.
- The NIM is influencing service delivery at all levels of the organisation. Effective systems are in place for managing the security of intelligence material. Good use

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has been made of intelligence technology to enhance intelligence opportunities and improve front-line delivery against targets.

- Evidence of the strategic assessment and control strategy shaping strategic planning at force level can be seen in the improvement and increased funding of level 2 services this year following the agreement of the new control strategy.
- Staff in core intelligence roles are trained in accordance with national core competencies by means of recognised and accredited courses. Intelligence managers attend the national intelligence managers course. Following a recent review of covert policing functions at force level, a reorganisation of reporting lines has taken place to ensure effective management in this highly specialised area of business.
- The force intelligence capability meets the requirements set out in the minimum standards. Other force departments have adopted the NIM in order to identify their control strategies and shape the direction of their departments.
- WMC has a designated covert human intelligence source (CHIS) controller operating at level 2, and each BCU also has a CHIS controller. Staff compliance with RIPA, data protection legislation and internal auditing is ensured through a management process on each BCU and at force level.

Work in Progress

- The policy and decision-making process for application for level 2 resources is currently under review with a view to making it less bureaucratic. It is currently based on extended target/problem profile which is not required in all cases.

Area for Improvement

- The force recognises that a database consolidating NIM good practice would aid information sharing.

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7 Leadership and Direction

7A Leadership

Grade	Direction of Travel
Good	Not Graded

National Grade Distribution

Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
0	4	35	4

Contextual Factors

The Chief Constable has set out a very clear vision for the organisation in the strategy launched in 2004 – ‘4,000+, An Even Better Place’. More recently, chief officers have secured Police Authority agreement for resources to enhance protective services and increase the force’s resilience.

An important backdrop to this assessment is the work undertaken to make a business case for West Mercia to be accepted as a strategic force in the context of the then Home Secretary’s announcement of September 2005. This absorbed a significant degree of chief officer time and energy – the force’s overall strong performance during this period of distraction is a very creditable reflection of the quality of leadership and performance focus throughout the force.

Strengths

- The Chief Constable has been in post for three years, joining on promotion from Thames Valley Police, which gives him particular insights into the policing of a three-county force. The then Home Secretary’s announcement that he intended to merge forces of less than 4,000 officers came as an unexpected shock to the Chief Constable and the PA. The Chief Constable has worked tirelessly and with great passion and personal commitment to make the case for WMC to be recognised as a strategic force. He succeeded, along with the PA chair, in winning many key stakeholders to support this case. The fact that compulsory mergers are not on the agenda for the foreseeable future gives the force an opportunity to pursue its enhancement of its level 2 capacity and capability, but it will need also to continue collaborative work with regional (or other) partners to offer the best protection for West Mercia’s communities.
- West Mercia underwent a change in its chief officer team during 2005, with ACC Arundale stepping up to DCC and being replaced by acting ACC Wright. Top team changes always present some risk, but the changes were managed smoothly and with minimal disruptive impact, helped by the fact that they were internal promotions. It is now a settled and experienced team, which collectively has 50-plus years of expertise in West Mercia and possesses an enviable balance of experience and

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expertise. Two out of the five BCU commanders also changed during 2005/06 but BCU performance continued on an impressive trajectory.

- The DCC leads the national portfolio work on police use of firearms, while the ACC (SO) is a member of the ACPO Cabinet and has a lead national role on aspects of diversity. The Chief Constable assumed the chair of the ACPO professional standards portfolio part way through 2005, and is also portfolio-holder for visibility and the wider police family.
- WMC achieved liP reaccreditation in May 2005. The liP report highlighted the visible leadership demonstrated by chief officers as a key strength.
- New PA members have a structured induction programme that includes a series of familiarisation sessions with chief officers and key departments within the force.
- The director of strategy and organisation successfully completed the Strategic Command Course in 2005, joining the director of finance as an SCC graduate and also completed the Institute of Directors Diploma. The force's encouragement of senior development is further illustrated by its active engagement with the National Senior Career Advisory service (NSCAS).
- The '4000+ An Even Better Place' strategy has been retained as the central vision for the force for 2006–2009. The force has a well established approach to programme management, with a programme office that supports the professional management of change for the force. Twelve individuals have successfully completed the managing successful programmes training and achieved practitioner level accreditation.
- Force priorities are developed from a range of mechanisms, including environmental scanning and the findings of the crime and safety survey. The PA also consults with key stakeholders and partner organisations about proposed priorities. Public satisfaction with the force is continually monitored and actions are taken to address any decreases in satisfaction levels or worrying trends. In terms of their overall experience, 80% of users were satisfied by the service provided by West Mercia. This figure is above the MSF average of 78.7%.
- The force has a well established environmental scanning process. Within the ODU, strategic planning staff have specific responsibility for environmental scanning issues. Information and best practice is then regularly collated, summarised and brought to the attention of relevant managers, either directly or through the various strategy groups that cover all areas of the business.
- The performance group process is one of West Mercia's great strengths, and the force receives visitors from forces across the country to learn from its success, especially in relation to volume crime. Meetings are chaired by the DCC and attended by all chief officers and heads of department. They combine a rigorous and relentless examination of performance with support for problem solving and effective sharing of good practice. The concept was brought to the force by the Chief Constable but has now been customised to suit West Mercia's needs, and is a key driver in the force's success in reducing crime and improving detections.

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- Performance is monitored in three dimensions: continuous improvement, performance against target, and position in MSF/MSBCU. All relevant performance reports include information against these three dimensions. Performance targets are evident in all staff PDR objectives.
- Chief officer visibility is assisted by the 'Starburst' activity that follows the monthly performance group meetings, which are usually held in community venues throughout the force area. The 'Starburst' activity enables chief officers to visit operational staff and probe performance issues, supplementing the structured programmes of visits to BCUs and departments on portfolio-related issues. In addition, to Starburst, the Chief Constable has a structured programme of visits to divisions, during which he undertakes patrol duty.
- The force has a constructive relationship with University College Worcester whereby the force offers access to project work to students from the college who are working on Bachelors or Masters degrees and Doctorates. The force also offers two prizes a year for the best student project. The force is involved with a wide range of community initiatives with local and regional partner organisations. For example, the force has actively engaged in the development of three innovative 'youth shelters' in the force area, in collaboration with the Government Office for the West Midlands and the Royal Institute of British Architects.
- The force has recognised the need to invest in developing managerial skills at inspector level, with a divisional initiative based in North Worcestershire.
- There is clear evidence to support the chief officers' commitment to the progression of middle managers from BME and other minority groups. Chief officers support a range of staff networks and allow time off to attend meetings, conferences, etc.
- Force internet and intranet sites have been redesigned to improve their accessibility. The intranet site now hosts a 'Message of the Day' facility, which informs officers and staff on important issues. The Chief Constable was unstinting and highly effective in keeping staff informed on amalgamation issues.
- The force's commitment to the police reform agenda is illustrated by chief-officer-led projects on key work streams such as local policing and the user experience. The director of strategy and organisation is the senior responsible officer for the entire 4000+ programme and prioritisation of police reform projects. Of particular note is the innovative customer service training for staff in the call management centre, using an internationally renowned consultant, Mary Gober. The neighbourhood policing pathfinder site uses advanced marketing information techniques to analyse local information, and plans are in hand to use the MOSAIC system.

Areas for Improvement

- Regular strategy days are held offsite for chief officer group members. However, there is no evidence of an investment in team building among chief officer group members or with other senior managers. Given the recent changes to the chief officer group and BCU commanders, the force should consider extending its use of 360-degree appraisal and other similar techniques, as part of a structured programme of senior team building.

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- WMC continues to perform exceptionally well on volume crime, but across-the-board assessment shows a more mixed picture, and the Poor grade for protecting vulnerable people will be a concern for the Chief Constable and PA. At BCU level there is a suggestion of an emphasis on volume crime performance at the expense of other work that lends itself less to national 'league tables' but is equally important.
- PA scrutiny of performance is oriented towards quantitative data on volume crime and satisfaction. Although members have some exposure to qualitative assessments of Level 2 type work, they are relatively unsighted on the force's public protection capability. Up to three PA members attend the monthly Performance Group meeting, when Level 2 performance is examined, but in 2005/06 these meetings did not cover the full range of public protection-related activity such as sex offender management. This needs to be remedied if the PA is to exercise effective scrutiny across the wider policing mission.
- Effective and robust management of performance has made a significant contribution to sustained improvements in a number of areas of service delivery. However, during the baseline assessment staff raised some concerns over unhealthy pressures being placed on individual officers and staff to meet targets. The force needs to monitor whether such pressure is being applied and consider the possible detrimental effect on sustainability and organisational health.
- While the force has invested in the leadership development of inspectors on one division, investment is similarly needed across the force to support the role of first-line supervisors and sergeants, over and above courses for newly-promoted officers.
- The force has Quality People as one of its guiding principles but could do more to equip individuals at various levels with the leadership and management skills to fulfil the responsibilities of each rank and grade.
- Funding for staff and representative associations from minority groups is modest. Groups and networks are not allocated devolved budgets but make requests for funding for specific projects or initiatives. This can be time-intensive (eg, completion of business cases) and bureaucratic. The force needs to ensure that members of support networks are not overly burdened by policy review and development but are allowed time to develop activities that will benefit individuals and the organisation.
- The force has not undertaken a staff survey or cultural audit for some time, and could benefit from such feedback. Staff sickness levels, often used as a yardstick for morale, are falling but remain above the national average, especially for police officers (82.93 hours a year compared with 72.05 nationally).

7B Performance Management and Continuous Improvement

Grade	Direction of Travel
Excellent	Stable

National Grade Distribution

Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
0	12	26	5

Contextual Factors

The force flagship meeting is the monthly performance group meeting. This is chaired by the DCC and attended by the whole ACPO team. Departmental heads and divisional commanders are held to account for all aspects of their performance in a visible and transparent manner. PA members are invited and present at every meeting, with key strategic partners also attending. Performance is monitored against continuous improvement, targets and position in MSF/MSBCU. Chief officers each have their own programme for visiting areas of their business to visibly lead and examine performance in greater detail. When specific issues that hamper performance improvement are identified, working teams are appointed and issues progressed quickly

Strengths

- Strategic and annual priorities are informed from a variety of sources, including environmental scanning, the twice-yearly force strategic assessments, and information from community consultation and survey work, which helps the force to identify priorities for its communities.
- In partnership with the LCJB and a wide range of CDRPs, WMC undertakes an annual survey of local residents to ascertain perceptions of local policing and of crime and other issues that cause communities concern. The force and the PA use the findings of this survey to help determine priorities for inclusion in the annual policing plan and divisional plans.
- BCUs ensure that priorities are broadly in line with the strategic direction of relevant partnership bodies with a role in delivering community safety, including local strategic partnerships, community safety partnerships and CDRPs. BCUs produce their own yearly priorities based around the force-level ones but also reflecting in more detail the delivery of joint CDRP priorities specific to their local area.
- The NIM is fully embedded in force processes. The force control strategy is set following a comprehensive strategic assessment of both operational and organisational areas of business. Performance against the force control strategy is monitored every month at performance group meetings. The divisional control

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strategies link directly to the areas of performance that the BCU needs to address. For example, one division is currently challenged to meet a stretch target with regard to the detection of vehicle crime offences, so the control strategy clearly focuses resources and activity towards this crime type via tasking and co-ordination. Divisions' control strategies are reviewed at their monthly performance meetings, and key performance information is fed into the tasking meetings to enable identification of hotspot areas of concern and the allocation of appropriate resources.

- The director of finance is responsible for the annual financial planning cycle and integrating this with the planning cycle. During the 2006/07 planning process, broad investment areas were agreed early in the planning process. These were used as criteria for ensuring that revenue and capital bids were aligned with the chosen strategic direction of the force and the policing plan priorities.
- Within the NIM framework, the IKMSG completes a strategic assessment of the information business area to feed into the corporate strategic assessment.
- One of the developments undertaken this year is to better align the force planning process with the performance management process and the NIM processes, both at a strategic level (annual and biannual) and at the tactical tasking and co-ordination level. This activity aids the linkages of strategy groups to each other and service delivery and enables the financial and resource planning process to be driven more bottom up than previously.
- The flagship meeting for performance management is the Performance Group. This monthly meeting takes place in community venues throughout the force area, chaired by the DCC and attended by the whole ACPO team. Departmental heads and divisional commanders are held to account for all aspects of their performance in a visible and transparent manner. PA members are present as observers at every meeting and key strategic partners are also invited. In the afternoon, following the performance group meeting, chief officers undertake 'Starburst' activity, which enables them to further examine areas of performance in the host division or department.
- In addition to performance group 'Starburst,' chief officers also have their own programme for visiting areas of their business within their respective portfolios, to visibly lead and examine performance in greater detail. Each chief officer is responsible for chairing performance review meetings with heads of department/divisional commander and their command teams. Departmental performance reviews take place every six months and divisional performance reviews every quarter. At these meetings, departmental/divisional performance is examined in greater detail.
- The introduction of the performance group (and equivalent performance groups at divisional and department level) has developed a powerful, transparent and highly visible accountability and ownership structure. It is regarded by senior managers as having been the single most significant factor in improving performance at all levels in recent years.

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- Divisional command teams involve the media and communications manager in communication of performance profiles and provision of motivational updates on critical successes or milestones achieved.
- A system recognising significant contributions to force performance by individuals and teams from divisions or departments is now well embedded, and recipients of the awards are invited to receive them at performance group meetings. Divisionally, recognition of good work is formalised in the six-monthly divisional commendation evenings, where certificates are awarded by the Chief Constable.
- There is an established performance culture and an understanding by all staff of the role of PDRs, to underpin continuous improvement and tackle poor performance. The PDR process is well embedded in the force; all staff are set SMART objectives that underpin divisional/departmental and force performance.
- The initiative of '150 Successes' was introduced by the Chief Constable to record and celebrate good work not captured within performance indicators. All areas of business have a defined quota of contributions, which are captured through a database on the force intranet. The syntheses of this provide a rich and diverse summary of the hidden aspects of policing undertaken by staff. The information is promoted at performance group meetings and on the force intranet, as part of sharing good practice and knowledge transfer.
- The performance review process has proved an excellent tool for identifying and promulgating effective practice. As chief officers visit each division and department, effective practice is recognised and shared. The superintendent head of performance is present at each divisional review and can assist each division by describing what works in other divisions. In addition, tactical responses to address particular issues are discussed in open forum at performance group meetings, enabling divisional commanders to learn what works in other areas. A key feature of performance group meetings is a 15-minute presentation on an issue of effective practice.
- At force level, when specific issues that hamper performance improvement are identified, working teams are appointed and issues progressed quickly.
- A programme encompassing four tiers of audit and inspection has been developed. This ranges from basic audits of key performance areas through compliance with NCPE codes and guidance to larger-scale inspections responding to current HMIC requirements. A number of audits impacting on BCU performance and compliance with law, guidance and effective practice have been completed. Resultant reports have identified areas for improvement, which are monitored through divisional quarterly performance reviews with the relevant chief officer.
- WMC continues to develop its performance monitoring processes, pivoted on the NMIS IT system as the measuring tool, with daily, weekly and monthly reports delivered force-wide via the intranet. The NMIS not only delivers information via direct extracts to source systems, but is also the single source for performance information and is used to automate delivery of the data necessary to report on the 27 performance indicators within the joint policing plan. Information up to midnight is

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available from 08:00 the following day, ensuring that management information is timely and accurate.

- The monthly performance newsletter describes force and BCU performance against the three dimensions of target achievement, peer comparison (through iQuanta data) and continuous improvement, using year-on-year comparisons and year-to-date graphs.
- Report formats within the NMIS are customised for user needs. These range from a monthly one-screen scorecard of all performance for the PA, through a monthly newsletter for senior managers to show BCU performance against KPIs, to very local beat-based reports that drill down to individual crimes and incidents.
- All BCUs and major departments have one or more performance analysts with the skills and tools to drill into data and inform management processes. This process dovetails into the NIM process and ensures that performance drives activity. The main user interface for performance information is the force intranet, where NMIS and other information sets are presented from one site. This one portal links to data sets, iQuanta data, BCU performance sites and other departmental performance data.
- The PPAF user satisfaction survey results are a KPI for the force and as such are at the heart of all performance scrutiny. Results are monitored quarterly through the force performance newsletter. In addition, user satisfaction is featured at each divisional performance review, where BCU commanders are held to account for the results and effective practice is identified. User satisfaction is also featured at performance group meetings.
- The efficiency planning group oversees activity analysis and activity-based costing as well as the monitoring and development of the efficiency plan. WMC has participated in the national activity-based costing exercise since the outset and has always submitted its results on time. There is very close collaboration between activity analysis and activity-based costing, with summary reports provided to divisional commanders. Each division has access to activity analysis and activity-based costing data for local development, while the chief officers strategy group has received a presentation of activity-based costing data that has been developed into comparative unit costs per division.

Area for Improvement

- In a significant number of areas in the self-assessment return, West Mercia did not identify any areas for improvement; this is not consistent with its commitment to continuous improvement.

GOOD PRACTICE

TITLE: Implementation of the National Centre for Policing Excellence Programme

PROBLEM: Full and manageable implementation of the Codes and guidance issued by the National Centre for Policing Excellence.

SOLUTION: A management structure is in place to oversee implementation of the NCPE Programme. The DCC is the ACPO lead, and chairs the NCPE Implementation Plan Steering Group, comprising BCU commanders and heads of department; this meets quarterly and is formally minuted. The force Head of Crime has been appointed NCPE Programme Director, supported by a Programme Manager at chief inspector level.

Clearly defined roles and responsibilities have been established at every level. Critically, these provide a managed approach to baseline assessment, compliance assessment and processes for post-compliance inspection. Collectively these elements can be resource intensive and may necessitate future investment as the Programme evolves, particularly in the processes associated with post-compliance inspection.

Evidenced-based approach

Three members of police staff from the Organisational Development Unit (ODU) support the NCPE Programme Team in undertaking baseline assessment work. Their role is to provide an evidenced-based gap analysis of where project resources need to focus their efforts to ensure compliance.

Implementation framework

A programme framework for implementation has been established. On receipt of a doctrine, the force undertakes an evidence-based Capability Assessment in line with national guidance. In essence, this is a risk assessment of the capability of the force to implement the doctrine. On all occasions, the completed assessments have been submitted on time to the National NCPE Team within prescribed time-scales (usually four weeks).

Certain NCPE doctrines are accompanied by an Implementation Support Plan (ISP). This document outlines key areas of activity and defines criteria for achieving compliance, with an indication of future HMIC inspection requirements. A force Action Plan is then completed which compares current performance against the ISP at both force and BCU level. Gaps identified through this process become project activities, and a project plan is developed with clear deliverables and timescales.

In a number of business areas, considerable project work has already or is currently being undertaken within the force. Where this is the case, the NCPE programme has sought to include this within the implementation framework to deliver compliance.

The NCPE Implementation Programme for each doctrine is subject to careful monitoring through a combination of monthly Project Manager meetings with the Programme Director, who reviews progress against the devised GANTT and progress charts. This also provides a forum for identifying and reviewing issues, risks and changes which may impact across the whole NCPE Programme in line with guidance issued by the force NCPE Programme Team.

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OUTCOME(S): An NCPE site within the force intranet was established early on in the Programme, as the force recognised the importance of communicating awareness and understanding of the NCPE Programme to all staff. The site enables access to all NCPE documentation including minutes of meetings and up-to-date progress. Force Order entries, postmaster messages (global e-mail) and Divisional Project Team members raising awareness in their respective BCU's during briefings and meetings, all support this objective.

FORCE CONTACT: Acting Chief Inspector Mark Mullinger

Appendix 1: Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations

A

ABC	Acceptable Behaviour Contract
ACC	assistant chief constable
ACC (SO)	assistant chief constable (special operations)
ACC (TO)	assistant chief constable (territorial operations)
ACPO	Association of Chief Police Officers
ANPR	automatic number plate recognition
ASB	anti-social behaviour
ASBO	Anti-Social Behaviour Order

B

BCU	basic command unit
BME	black and minority ethnic
BVR	best value review

C

CDRP	crime and disorder reduction partnership
CHIS	covert human intelligence source
CIA	community impact assessment
CID	criminal investigation department
CJSD	criminal justice support department
CMC	call-management centre
COMPACT	Community Policing and Case Tracking
CPS	Crown Prosecution Service
CRIMES	Crime Recording Information Management Enquiry System
CRISP	Cross-Regional Information Sharing Project

D

DCC	deputy chief constable
DDA	Disability Discrimination Act
DV	domestic violence

E

ECU economic crime unit

F

FAQ frequently asked question

FIB force intelligence bureau

FPU family protection unit

H

H&S health and safety

HOCR Home Office Counting Rules

HOLMES Home Office Large Major Enquiry System

HR human resource(s)

I

IAG independent advisory group

ICIDP Initial Crime Investigators' Development Programme

liP Investors in People

INI IMPACT nominal index]

IPLDP Initial Police Learning and Development Programme

iQUANTA a web-based tool for policing performance information and analysis

K

KPI key performance indicator

L

LCJB local criminal justice board

LGBT lesbian, gay, bisexual and transsexual

LPP local policing plan

LPT local policing team

LRF local resilience forum

M

MAPPA multi-agency police protection arrangements

MERGe	minority ethnic resource group
MIR	major incident room
MIRSAP	major incident room standardised administrative procedures
MIU	major investigation unit
MoPI	management of police information
MSBCU	most similar BCU
MSF	most similar force(s)

N

NCPE	National Centre for Policing Excellence
NCRS	National Crime Recording Standard
NIM	National Intelligence Model
NMIS	National Management Information System
NSIR	National Standards for Incident Reporting

O

OCG	organised crime group
OSD	operations support department

P

PA	Police Authority
PACT	partners and communities together
PCSO	police community support officer
PDR	performance development review
PIER	prevention, intelligence, enforcement, reassurance
PIP	professionalising the investigative process
PNC	Police National Computer
POCA	Proceeds of Crime Act 2002
PPAF	policing performance assessment framework
PPO	prolific and priority offender
PSD	professional standards department

Q

QoSC	quality of service commitment
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R

RART	regional asset recovery team
RES	race equality scheme
RIPA	Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act
RRAA	Race Relations (Amendment) Act

S

SIO	senior investigating officer
SMART	specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, timely
SOCA	Serious Organised Crime Agency
SWIM	scientific work improvement methodology

T

TCG	tasking and co-ordination group
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V

ViSOR	Violent and Sex Offenders' Register
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W

WMC	West Mercia Constabulary
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