

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary



HMIC Inspection Report

West Midlands Police Major Crime

July 2008



West Midlands Police – HMIC Inspection Report

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Introduction to HMIC Inspections

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

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

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

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

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

HMIC Business Plan for 2008/09

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

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

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

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

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

Programmed Frameworks

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

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

Major Crime

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

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

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

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

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

Future Programmed Inspections

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

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

The Grading Process

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

Meeting the standard

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

Exceeding the standard

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

Failing to meet the standard

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

Developing Practice

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

Force Overview and Context

Geographical description of force area

West Midlands Police (WMP) is the second largest police force in the country (in terms of police officer establishment) after the Metropolitan Police Service. It covers an area of 348 square miles and serves a population of almost 2.6 million people (1,049,186 households). The force area sits at the very heart of the country and covers the three major cities of Birmingham, Coventry and Wolverhampton as well as the busy and thriving districts of Sandwell, Walsall, Solihull and Dudley. The majority of the area is densely populated but there are some rural areas around Solihull. The region's economy, once heavily dependent on traditional manufacturing, is now diverse, with a wide range of industries and business services. Many of its heavy industries date back to the Industrial Revolution. However, areas of economic prosperity contrast with areas of local economic decline. In recent years, the area has seen the development of commercial and shopping areas, complemented by a wide range of leisure amenities such as the National Exhibition Centre, National Indoor Arena, theatres, art galleries, many large conference facilities and thriving social facilities. West Midlands hosts two Premiership football teams as well as four Football League clubs. The region is well served by rail and road links and an international airport; up to 28,000 vehicles per day use the area's major roads, and the motorway network is one of the busiest in Europe.

Demographic profile of force area

The population of the West Midlands is very diverse. At approximately 18%, the percentage of the population from black and minority ethnic groups is significantly above the national average, and 10% of the population was born outside the UK. Average earnings and house prices for the region are lower than the national averages; unemployment in the area ranges from 9.3% in Sandwell to 4.4% in Solihull.

Strategic priorities

The force vision is to 'Reduce crime and disorder and make our communities feel safer'. The strategic plan states the following priorities.

- To protect our communities from serious harm
- To protect our communities from serious acquisitive crime
- To protect our communities from the threat of terrorism
- To tackle vulnerability
- To manage offenders effectively
- To improve trust and confidence
- To create additional capacity and capability for operational delivery

Force developments since 2007

The force is building on the strengths reported in the 2006 baseline assessment, with established processes in place to address risks that may affect force performance and organisational reputation. It has an impressive performance regime, which drives quantitative performance against targets and captures qualitative analysis through survey activity. The force is widely perceived to be a 'Beacon' force in respect of performance management and in the last 12 months has been visited on numerous occasions by other forces and outside bodies.

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Last year the force was graded Fair overall for protecting vulnerable people but as a consequence the force is in the process of implementing dedicated operational command unit (OCU)-based public protection units that include child abuse, domestic abuse, sex offender management, vulnerable adults and missing persons.

Structural description of the force area

The force is divided into 21 OCUs with call handling, public protection and criminal justice capability, each headed by a chief superintendent who is responsible for the overall policing and management of the area.

The 21 OCUs are divided into 297 neighbourhoods, each policed by a dedicated neighbourhood team consisting of police officers, police community support officers and special constables.

Neighbourhood policing was introduced to provide people who live or work in a neighbourhood with:

- access – to local policing services through a named point of contact;
- influence – over policing priorities in their neighbourhood;
- interventions – joint action with partners and the public; and
- answers – sustainable solutions and feedback on what is being done.

In return, the neighbourhood police teams identify local issues that make people feel unsafe in their neighbourhoods and seek opportunities to work with the local communities and local partner agencies to identify and implement practical long-term solutions that are specific to the neighbourhoods.

The force has a highly devolved policing style where neighbourhood policing is supported by a range of force-wide specialist teams, including crime support, operations and force communication and intelligence services (FCIS).

Crime support includes the major investigation unit (MIU), specialist support unit, forensic services unit (FSU), public protection support unit (PPSU), tactical support and interventions unit.

The MIU investigates murders and other critical incidents, using specialist skills to lead or support complex investigations. The MIU achieves this by providing a quality service to OCUs and their communities through the investigation and review of homicides and major incidents or serious crime with the intention of bringing offenders to justice and reducing the fear of crime.

The specialist support unit is divided into three teams – proactive crime, economic crime and force surveillance – and leads the force by tackling serious organised criminal networks and gangs that present a significant threat to communities and the force's reputation. Much of their work focuses on tackling drugs networks, bringing the offenders to justice and then stripping them of the profits of crime.

The FSU aims to provide a centre of excellence in forensic science to support investigations from OCUs across the force. The unit comprises several teams focusing on specific aspects, from fingerprints to footwear, and in the future will include forensic scene investigators and the National Ballistic Intelligence Service (NaBIS). The FSU processes recovered evidence from start to finish to help secure successful convictions.

The PPSU aims to make vulnerable people safer sooner. The unit supports OCU public protection units by providing leadership and consultancy and promoting best practice in relation to managing and investigating offenders, protection of children and adults, and co-

ordinating missing persons and hate crime issues. The PPSU also has responsibility for a variety of other topics including so-called 'honour-based' violence, rape and serious sexual offences, forced marriage and serious case reviews across all disciplines.

The tactical support and interventions unit provides support and advice around offender management and crime reduction. It is made up of five teams and focuses on managing offenders, drugs interventions, crime reduction and educational liaison, to reduce the risk of offenders affecting communities around the West Midlands.

The operations section includes air operations, airport police, contingency planning, the dog section, events, firearms, an incident information centre, a gold command suite, operations road policing, the operations support unit and the safer travel team.

FCIS comprises five main business areas – diversity, information management, operational communications and force intelligence bureau – and has the aim of reducing harmful risk and victimisation by building relationships and connecting people, and managing police information and intelligence to assess threats and opportunities.

Key initiatives to improve performance during 2007/08

In addition to day-to-day performance management activity at OCU level, the force initiated a series of corporate-led force-wide operations to improve performance across a range of indicators. These were branded as Operation Serene and the objectives were to:

- minimise the anticipated seasonal rises in total recorded crime;
- reduce the number of incidents of anti-social behaviour in order to make our communities feel safer; and
- build on the organisational learning achieved by WMP and partners.

Key corporate initiatives

Performance management board (PMB)

The meeting provides strategic direction for the performance improvement programme, ratifies performance improvement activities and monitors their progress. The PMB takes place not later than the ninth working day in each month. It is chaired by the deputy chief constable and attended by the assistant chief constables (ACCs). An update of force performance and current improvement work is presented and the meeting identifies any potential OCUs for performance support.

Agreed supported action plan process

The performance review department leads initial scoping work to identify operational command units (OCUs) for support through improvement work, concentrating on opportunities to reduce total recorded crime across the force.

Balanced scorecard

The balanced scorecard is an intranet-delivered tool that enables the monitoring of a range of measures across WMP's BCUs and has been enhanced to include the performance indicators for 2008/09 and dials for the following departments: performance review, criminal justice, crime support, finance, intelligence, operations, personnel, press and public relations, professional standards, and employee development and training.

Major Crime

GRADE	Exceeds the standard
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Contextual factors

WMP has a deserved reputation for high performance and innovation. A recent example is the realignment of the majority of intelligence assets under the command of the ACC (intelligence) and the majority of enforcement assets under the command of the ACC (crime). This should further enhance operational integrity by reinforcing the 'firewall' between the intelligence development and executive action phases of operations. The force is confronted by a high level of threat from major crime, with many offences having a significant international dimension; it has conducted a number of complex investigations into these offences and has successfully brought many of the offenders to justice. The force has made a significant investment in its capacity and capability to deal with the threats posed by major crime. Building on a strong track record of effective collaboration on cross-border issues, WMP is working well with the Staffordshire, Warwickshire and West Mercia forces to further enhance regional collaboration opportunities. The force will host the regional intelligence unit (RIU), the regional asset recovery team (RART) and one of three National Ballistic Intelligence Service (NaBIS) hubs. The force also has strong arrangements in place with the Serious Organised Crime Agency (SOCA) to combat the threat posed by major crime. The force response to these threats is well led and supported by experienced, competent and highly motivated staff.

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

	2006	2007	Change	MSF** group mean
Life-threatening and gun crime per 1,000 population	0.854	0.826	-3.28%	0.754
Number of abductions per 10,000 population	0.000	0.000	0.00%	0.003
% of abduction crimes detected/convicted	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable
Number of attempted murders per 10,000 population	0.197	0.193	-2.03%	0.179
% of attempted murder crimes detected/convicted	70.59%	52.00%	-18.59pp*	72.25%
Number of blackmail offences per 10,000 population	0.459	0.471	+2.61%	0.194

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% of blackmail offences detected/convicted	23.53%	19.67%	-3.86pp*	36.57%
Number of kidnappings per 10,000 population	0.625	0.567	-9.28%	0.391
% of kidnapping crimes detected/convicted	44.44%	40.14%	-4.3pp*	47.31%
Number of manslaughters per 10,000 population	0.042	0.012	-71.43%	0.021
% of manslaughter crimes detected/convicted	100.00%	133.33%	+33.33pp*	Not applicable
Number of murders per 10,000 population	0.166	0.116	-30.12%	0.162
% of murders detected/convicted	83.72%	113.33%	+29.61pp*	88.97%
Number of rapes per 10,000 population	3.558	3.149	-11.50%	2.439
% of rapes detected/convicted	25.60%	26.23%	+0.63pp*	28.20%

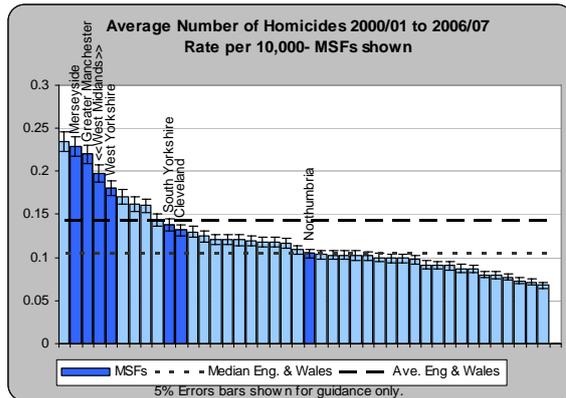
*pp' is percentage points.

**Most similar forces (MSFs) for WMP are: Cleveland, Greater Manchester, Merseyside, Northumbria, South Yorkshire and West Yorkshire.

From the statutory performance indicator (SPI) data contained in the table above, it can be seen that the crime types of life-threatening and gun crime, attempted murder, blackmail, kidnapping and rape pose a threat to WMP. The rate of offences in each of these cases is above the MSF average and one of the highest rates in the category in England and Wales. However, it should be noted that both kidnapping and rape offences fell significantly in 2007.

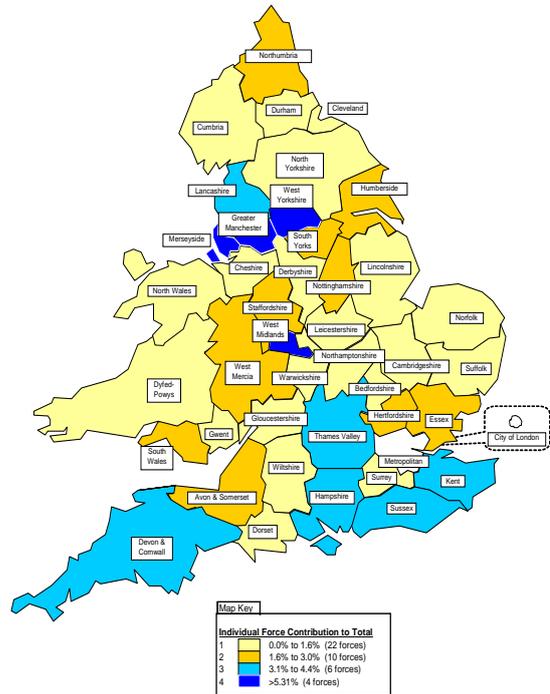
The SPI data also indicates that major crime investigation in WMP is less effective than in the rest of the MSF group. WMP is performing at a level below that of the MSF average for all crime types considered under major crime with the exception of sanction detections for murder, which rose significantly in 2007 and are above the MSF average.

The National Protective Services Analysis Tool (NPSAT), released on 25 September 2007, revealed that WMP faces an exceptional level of demand in respect of the policing response to homicide offences.



In the long term, the force is above the national average but, after a decrease in 2007, is now below the MSF average.

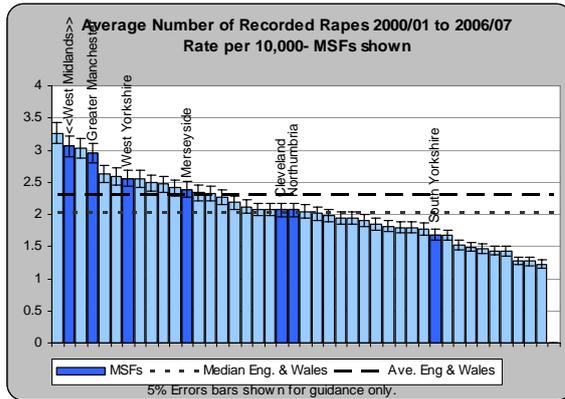
Homicides (2001/02 to 2006/07), Contribution to Total, Excl. MPS



WMP is bordered by two other forces that also indicate raised demand for this crime type.

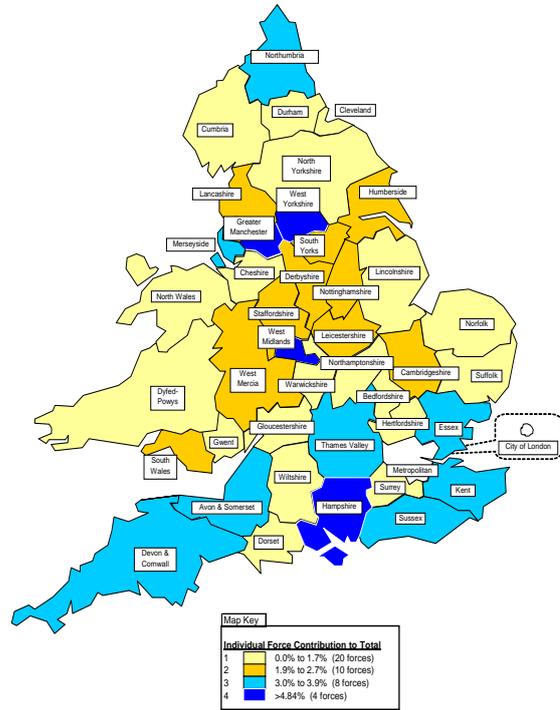
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The NPSAT, released on 25 September 2007, revealed that WMP faces an exceptional level of demand in respect of the policing response to rape offences.



In the long term, the force is above the national average and, despite a decrease in 2007, is above the MSF average.

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

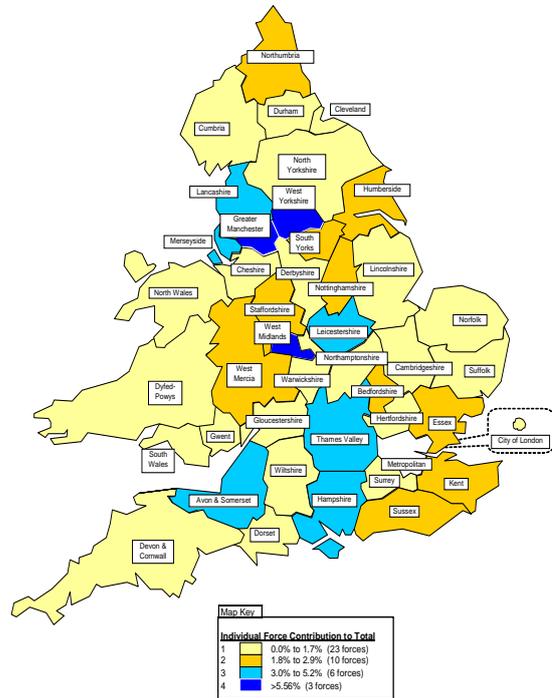
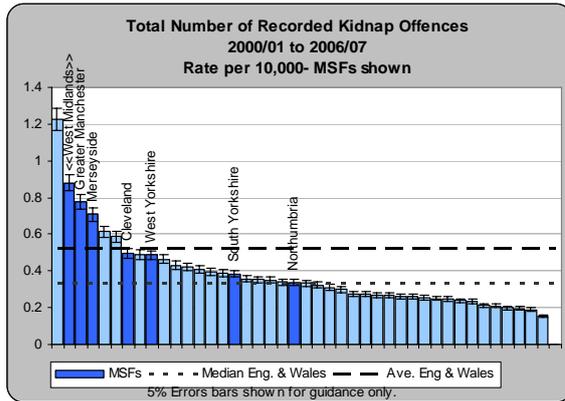


WMP is bordered by two other forces that also indicate raised demand for this crime type.

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The NPSAT, released on 25 September 2007, revealed that WMP faces an exceptional level of demand in respect of the policing response to kidnapping offences.

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



In the long term, the force is above the national average and, despite a decrease in 2007, is above the MSF average.

WMP is bordered by two other forces that also indicate raised demand for this crime type.

While organised crime group (OCG) mapping is in its infancy as a technique nationally, WMP has sought to make progress by ensuring that analysis of major crime types are thoroughly mapped. It is currently estimated that 12 OCGs operating at level 3 impact on the force area across nine major crime types, and that 37 OCGs operating at level 2 impact on the force area across 13 major crime types.

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

The force has identified counter-terrorism, the criminal use of firearms and public protection as its major crime priorities within the force control strategy. The force strategic intelligence requirement has a clear focus on the continuous search for information on these priorities, 'near-miss' homicides and rape.

Within the documentation, the issues have been broadly identified and addressed.

The force has invested substantial resources in the interventions needed to maximise harm reduction, to minimise risks to the public and to inhibit major crime. In particular, WMP's work with partners to tackle the threats posed by guns and gangs is noteworthy.

WMP's role in leading the regional response to the threat posed by kidnap is recognised.

This inspection assessment reveals that the force demonstrates a high level of sophistication in its approach to managing major crime. In making this judgement,

collaborative agreements with SOCA and ongoing discussions with neighbouring forces about further enhancing regional collaboration are recognised.

Intelligence

The force has strong dedicated analytical resources to meet the identified demands from major crime, supplying dynamic intelligence products that drive the energies of the force. The force has fully committed to major crime investigation with the requisite staff, accommodation, equipment and funding.

Strengths

- A detective superintendent and four detective chief inspectors (DCIs) lead the MIU, which comprises 302 staff. Each DCI leads two teams, each consisting of a detective inspector (DI), three detective sergeants (DSs), 20 to 25 detective constables (DCs), an analyst and police staff. The MIU has 67 police staff undertaking a range of roles including Home Office Large Major Enquiry System (HOLMES) index supervisors, indexers, typists and intelligence roles. The MIU deals with category A and B homicide investigations, category C homicides that are complex, and serious violence offences involving people suspected of involvement with guns and gangs. It also deals with other investigations tasked by the level 2 TTCG.
- The majority of category C homicide investigations are dealt with by OCU-based senior investigating officers (SIOs), although they are not accredited to professionalising the investigative process (PIP) level 3. The head of the MIU appoints an SIO to assist and mentor the OCU-based SIO to ensure that the investigation is conducted in accordance with the requirements of the *Murder Investigation Manual*.
- The force has sufficient dedicated analysts to meet homicide demand. The MIU has five dedicated analysts to support homicide investigations; the analysts produced a homicide problem profile in March 2007 that is updated regularly.
- MIU analysts feel that they are valued members of the investigation teams and are confident that they have received appropriate training for their role. Staff retention of MIU analysts is good.
- Accommodation and equipment are considered to be appropriate.
- The force is focusing the MIU on providing support to OCUs, with each team being aligned to a cluster of OCUs.
- There are sufficient tier 5 interview advisers based in the MIU to comfortably meet demand.
- The robust call-out procedure starts at duty detective superintendent level; this post-holder makes decisions about who else needs to be called out. MIU teams have a well-developed call-out rota.
- The MIU provides appropriate weekend working cover, with one team covering the whole force.
- The force currently has 400 family liaison officers (FLOs) and six family liaison coordinators (FLCs), based both on OCUs and in crime support. The force FLC sits on the Family Liaison National Executive Board and ensures that good practice is

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disseminated across the force. All FLOs are subject to mandatory referral to occupational health on a six-monthly basis when deployed.

- Operation Axel is an intelligence-gathering operation to enhance understanding of the drivers behind illegal firearms activity. This should enable the force to continue to strengthen its approach to homicide and critical incident suppression. The operation is reviewed every six months and a results analysis was completed in February 2007. The force has also completed a firearms threat and risk assessment to inform the development of its firearms capacity.
- Operation Epic encompasses the development of a robust framework for the effective identification and risk assessment of criminal gang members.
- The risk assessment results in gang members being assessed as posing:
 - low risk – resulting in management by an OCU;
 - medium risk – resulting in consideration of a MAPPP meeting, mediation and referral to Birmingham Reducing Gang Violence (BRGV); or
 - high risk – resulting in a bid for level 2 resources to target the individual.

The process can be applied to anyone suspected of being a gang member and allows the force to tailor responses to the threat that individuals pose.

Work in progress

- The force has sufficient capacity and resilience to staff key HOLMES management roles, in compliance with major incident room standardised administrative procedures (MIRSAP); however, resilience in respect of indexers is not as strong. New staff have recently been recruited to fill vacancies created by the migration of staff to the counter-terrorism unit (CTU).
- The force is developing a talent management strategy for crime support and has identified five key corporate leadership roles for which succession planning will be initiated.
- SIOs on the MIU will be PIP level 3 accredited; they have attended national training but the majority have not yet completed their portfolio. OCU-based SIOs will complete the three-week national SIO course and Hydra training, an immersive learning process using simulation systems to recreate major crime investigations and other critical incidents in a vivid and realistic way. They will develop a more streamlined portfolio to reflect their more limited role. The force does not believe that OCU-based SIOs would have sufficient exposure to homicide investigations to maintain PIP level 3 accreditation.
- The force has not produced a problem profile for rape; however, the FSA contains an intelligence requirement for a problem profile in this area, which is due for completion by March 2008.
- Other knowledge products that will provide a more informed picture of major crime threats confronting the force include: a problem profile on child abuse; a risk analysis on domestic abuse; and a socio-demographic analysis of newcomer communities. These products will be completed between February and July 2008.
- The MIU has recently created a strategic analyst post, and the other four analysts

now rotate between each of the MIU teams. Senior managers may need to review the arrangements to ensure that they meet organisational needs in terms of continuity and workload management.

- Five of the eight teams are based in modern office accommodation, which staff describe as excellent; the accommodation used by two of the other three teams is deemed adequate. The force recognises that the accommodation used by the final team is not fit for purpose and has plans to relocate the team to more suitable accommodation.

Area(s) for improvement

- With the exception of stranger rapes, rape investigations are dealt with by the relevant OCU. There is insufficient corporate quality assurance of the standard of these investigations.

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

Strengths

- WMP actively engages with a range of partners to understand and reduce the risk posed by guns and gangs. BRGV is a Birmingham community safety partnership (CSP) core priority group.
- BRGV 1 is a police-led initiative with an enforcement focus that has made significant progress, including the creation of a pan-Birmingham multi-agency public protection panel (MAPPP). The MAPPP manages high- and medium-risk gang members to reduce the risk of harm to individuals and communities. This panel approach is in the process of being adopted in Wolverhampton.
- BRGV 1 also leads Operation Malva, a partnership approach to managing high-risk gang members using civil injunctions and Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs). To date, 26 orders have been obtained, with a further 24 at differing stages in the process. Following a legal challenge regarding the appropriateness of the use of civil injunctions for this purpose, all the injunctions are currently stayed.
- The force is working with the Government Office for the West Midlands (GOWM) and Black Country and regional round tables to raise awareness and to create a forum to deal with gun crime and gang-related violence.
- Operations Axel and Epic are key operations that should ensure that the force has a comprehensive understanding of the threats presented by life-threatening gun crime.
- The detailed homicide problem profile provides the force with a sound understanding of the threat posed by homicide and identifies opportunities to further reduce offences.
- OCU-based senior managers attend multi-agency public protection arrangements (MAPPA) meetings, multi-agency risk assessment conferences (MARACs) and local safeguarding children boards (LSCBs), where partners share information to manage the threat posed by child abuse offenders, domestic violence offenders, sex offenders and other dangerous offenders.
- The FSA has been informed by data submitted by the seven CSPs in the West Midlands area, the fire and rescue service and a hospital accident and emergency department.
- CIAs covering all major crime incidents are completed by OCU community safety bureaux (CSBs), in conjunction with neighbourhood policing teams (NPTs) and key individual networks (KINs); staff are aware of the importance of monitoring community tension and reporting changes accordingly.
- CIAs are completed at an OCU level whenever there is an incident that could result in an adverse impact on local communities. They are also conducted at force level by the community intelligence team for incidents that cross OCU boundaries.

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- The force collaborates with the regional CTU and SOCA to share intelligence and information and to ensure that they are cohesively identifying, assessing and managing the risks posed by OCGs operating at level 3.
- The force has four staff embedded in the SOCA technical collections department (TCD), providing the force with high-quality intelligence about OCGs operating at levels 2 and 3.
- The force has an effective relationship with SOCA in respect of managing the threats posed by kidnap offences.
- Hot briefings and tasking are managed on a day-to-day basis by the duty detective superintendent. Decisions are reviewed by ACC (intelligence) to ensure that they address the risks and threats faced by the force.

Work in progress

- BRGV has set up two new groups: BRGV 2 will focus on community engagement and resilience, while BRGV 3 acts as an independent advisory group (IAG) for the partnership itself.
- The force recognises that opportunities exist to further enhance its approach to sharing information and is in the process of reviewing and streamlining all its information-sharing agreements.

Area(s) for improvement

- None identified.

The FSA has analysed the trends in relation to major crime sufficiently. Consequently, the force control strategy is similarly thorough. Problem profiles for homicide and kidnap are extensive; however, there are inadequate links to OCU-level plans. There is a wealth of evidence that the force understands the threat posed by other life-threatening issues.

Strengths

- The force has completed a comprehensive problem profile on both homicide and kidnap and extortion. Although the FSA does not include an assessment of these offences, the force does have a clear understanding of the threat posed by homicide and kidnap. The strategic assessment includes an assessment of precursor offences, such as domestic violence and child abuse.
- Domestic violence features in a number of OCU control strategies and has an action plan based on the prevention, intelligence, enforcement and reassurance model identifying how the OCU and its partners will tackle it. Progress is managed by level 1 TTCCG.
- WMP and its partners have been successful in reducing recorded levels of homicide since 2004. There were 61 homicide offences recorded in 2004/05, 45 offences in 2005/06, and 36 offences in 2006/07. The force recorded 25 offences between April and December 2007. There has been a reduction in the number of homicide offences involving the use of a firearm, from six offences in 2004/05 to just one between April and December 2007.
- The force recognises the continuing threat posed by the criminal use of firearms. It recorded 49 attempted murder offences during 2007, of which 32 involved the criminal use of firearms.
- The homicide problem profile was completed in March 2007 by a team of dedicated MIU analysts who analysed 154 homicide offences committed between April 2004 and January 2006. Key findings include the following:
 - Some 90% of offences were detected.
 - The most prevalent weapon used was a knife.
 - Firearms were used in 15 offences or 10% of all homicides, and five offences were undetected. Half of the offenders in this type of homicide had previously been involved in other sub-lethal offences where a firearm was used or had been charged with possession of a firearm.
 - Young males aged between 18 and 24 are most at risk of being the victim of homicide.
 - Incidents of homicide where the victim is of black ethnicity are disproportionate to the population of the force area. Black males between 18 and 29 years of age are the most identifiable vulnerable ethnic victim group.
 - The most prevalent offender type is a white male, especially between the age of 18 and 24 years.
 - Murders are more likely to occur in or around the city centre or in inner city areas.
 - The majority of offenders were known to their victims; 59% of such offences were committed by a family member.
 - Some 34% of homicides were committed by strangers, predominantly during the commission of another offence such as assault.

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- Domestic homicide accounted for 23% of homicides, the majority of which were committed by males on their female partners; 49% of domestic homicide victims had previously reported domestic violence incidents.
- The problem profile was updated in July 2007.
- The NIM development unit is based in the force communication and intelligence services (FCIS) and aims to lead the force from compliance to excellence in application of the NIM. Analysts have to submit two items of work a year to a higher analyst for assessment as part of their personal development review. This helps to ensure that intelligence products comply with national requirements.
- The FSA has been the subject of wide consultation and critical readership to ensure that all relevant threats are considered.

Work in progress

- The force has not produced a problem profile for rape; however, the FSA contains an intelligence requirement for a problem profile for this threat and is due for completion by March 2008.
- Other knowledge products that will provide a more informed picture of major crime threats confronting the force include: a problem profile on child abuse; a risk analysis on domestic abuse; and a socio-demographic analysis of newcomer communities. These products are due to be completed between February and July 2008.

Area(s) for improvement

- The control strategies for two OCUs (G1 and G2) reflect the level 2 control strategy; all the other OCU control strategies do not. The force should ensure that the control strategies of those OCUs affected by threats contained in the level 2 control strategy contain details of what the OCU is contributing towards the management of the threat, as the FSA has identified these as a high risk to the force.

Trend analysis and problem profiles are routinely shared with partners and OCUs. There is a full trigger plan for hot briefing whenever a significant change in either the major crime threat or the nature of the analysis demands a fast-time response. Information-sharing protocols exist with key partners such as CSPs and the National Offender Management Service. The force can demonstrate that it is on track to reach full management of police information (MoPI) compliance by 2010.

Strengths

- The force information management board oversees the MoPI compliance action plan. This group provides costed options and makes recommendations to the intelligence advisory group. The MoPI peer review, completed in October 2007, was generally very positive.
- WMP actively engages with a range of partners to understand and reduce the threat posed by guns and gangs. BRGV is a Birmingham CSP core priority group.
- BRGV 1 is a police-led activity and enforcement group that has made significant progress, including the creation of a pan-Birmingham MAPPP. The MAPPP manages high- and medium-risk gang members to reduce the risk of harm to individuals and communities. This panel approach is in the process of being adopted in Wolverhampton.
- BRGV 1 also leads Operation Malva, a partnership approach to managing high-risk gang members using civil injunctions and ASBOs. To date, 26 orders have been obtained, with a further 24 at differing stages in the process. Following a legal challenge regarding the appropriateness of the use of civil injunctions for this purpose, all the injunctions are currently stayed.
- WMP also supports the West Midlands Mediation and Transformation Service project, which aims “to facilitate a cessation of gang-related shootings and to provide a pathway for those who wish to exit the gun and gang culture to do so”. This initiative has recently been independently evaluated and the report summary notes: “It is highly likely that it is now making a significant long-term contribution to the reduction of gun crime and the improvement of the lives of those currently engaged in it, though it is recognised that this is difficult to prove and isolate.”
- The force is working with the GOWM and with Black Country and regional round tables to raise awareness and to create a forum to deal with gun crime and gang-related violence.
- OCU-based senior managers attend MAPPA meetings and MARACs, where partners share information to manage the threat posed by domestic violence offenders, sex offenders and other dangerous offenders.
- NIM knowledge products are held on the force intranet site and can be accessed by OCUs and CSP analysts, who use them to inform problem profiles they create for CSPs.
- The FSA has been informed by data submitted by the seven CSPs in the West Midlands area, the fire and rescue service and a hospital accident and emergency department.

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- Hot briefings and tasking are managed on a day-to-day basis by the duty detective superintendent. Decisions are reviewed by the ACC (intelligence) to ensure that they address the risks and threats faced by the force.
- The custodian of the national CATCHEM database is based in the major crime review team. The post-holder acts as a valuable conduit with the National Policing Improvement Agency (NPIA), providing the force with current information from the agency.
- During 2007, the force made 127 submissions to the serious case analysis section. Some 96 (or 76%) were submitted within the 14-day target, which is slightly better than the national average of 72%.
- The force is represented on a range of national working groups – including the ACPO Homicide Working Group, ACPO Criminal Use of Firearms Board, ACPO Forensic Science Committee, ACPO Rape Working Group, National Practitioners Group for Kidnap and Extortion and the Family Liaison National Executive Board. The ACC (crime) also chairs the national DNA Operations Group and is the national ACPO lead for elections fraud. The force therefore has ready access to developing practice, which is disseminated through internal management meetings and departmental intranet sites.

Work in progress

- The force is in the process of reviewing and streamlining all its information-sharing agreements; this work will be completed during 2008.
- The areas for development identified in the MoPI peer review have been incorporated in the force action plan.
- BRGV has set up two new groups: BRGV 2 will focus on community engagement and resilience, while BRGV 3 is an IAG for the partnership itself.

Area(s) for improvement

- None identified.

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

Strengths

- The force recognises the importance of identifying and profiling its communities. The community cohesion and diversity unit has responsibility for identifying and initiating contact with newcomer communities.
- The force can evidence a strong commitment to working with partners such as local authorities, education departments, LSCBs and the Border and Immigration Agency (BIA) to identify and engage with emerging/newcomer communities.
- The force has identified that education authorities are a productive source of information in identifying emerging/newcomer communities. It has an agreement with these authorities that allows schools to provide regular updates on the profiles of communities in their catchment areas.
- The BIA provides details of asylum seekers and refugees on a weekly basis and this information is disseminated to OCUs, enabling NPTs to initiate contact at an early stage.

Work in progress

- The force has identified several communities that are proving more challenging to engage with and is considering alternative methods to ensure that both their needs and the threats they pose are understood. This is particularly relevant for the Chinese and Vietnamese communities.
- The FSA includes intelligence requirements for:
 - social and demographic analysis to understand the impact of the cultural practices of newcomer communities;
 - a community stability impact relating to newcomer communities; and
 - new incidents resulting from the cultural practices of new communities.

Area(s) for improvement

- None identified.

The force strategic risk register is reviewed every six months by the risk management group. Each identified risk has a current and effective action plan. Operational risks are identified in the FSA and are managed by the appropriate corporate advisory group.

Strengths

- The risk management group manages the corporate risk register, which contains high-level organisational risks such as liability financing, reputation of the force, physical security of buildings and employment litigation. It does not contain any operational risks.
- The FSA contains a comprehensive assessment of the operational threats faced by the force. The control strategy includes the most significant threats identified in the FSA; activity to manage these threats is directed through the level 2 TTCG, which meets every two weeks.
- The FSA also details key organisational risks confronting the force, including those relating to:
 - people assets;
 - systems assets;
 - knowledge assets; and
 - source assets.

Each identified risk is managed by the relevant corporate advisory group.

- Crime support identified a number of risks to its business area and formulated a number of comprehensive business continuity plans. The plans are contained within a folder that is given to all new managers.

Work in progress

- The force recognises the need to include operational risks in the corporate risk register to ensure that all risks confronting the force are identified and managed in a corporate, consistent way. The risk management group work plan includes activities to engage with OCUs to identify the key operational risks confronting the force. The work should be completed during 2008.
- There is no identified business process to address the organisational risks highlighted in the FSA; however, this issue should be addressed when organisational risks are included in the force risk register. Until this happens, risks are managed by relevant corporate advisory groups.
- Crime support has an action plan to test a number of its contingency plans during 2007/08.
- The Gateway programme consists of a number of projects to enhance the way in which the force manages the security of information and other assets. The vision of the programme is “to enable the organisation to be at the forefront of human identification technology, ensuring the security and safety of its staff, premises, information and visitors”.

Smart cards

- The introduction of smart card technology provides staff with a warrant/staff identification card, giving physical and logical access to the force buildings and its information technology systems.

Physical access control

- Physical access to key premises is controlled by means of a system incorporating chip and pin technology and, where required, additional biometric control measures.

Logical access control

- Logical access control to 8,000 desktops is by means of chip and pin technology through smart cards, or biometric systems for a limited number of terminals in the more robust environments – eg custody suites, where smart cards may get damaged.

Single sign-on

- A single sign-on system allows users, when authenticated through the logical access system, to access applications without having to input further passwords.

Rostering and attendance

- A new rostering, time and attendance system for all staff will streamline bureaucratic, paper-driven processes and will also assist the force to comply with European working time directives.

Referential data

- A project to cleanse staff data is one element of work in relation to the 'golden view' of members of staff, which means that the details of each member of staff are held consistently across the organisation.

Oracle self-service

- This facility allows staff to view and update their personnel record online, which is crucial in maintaining accurate records and giving ownership of their data to individual members of staff.

Directory services

- The introduction of a virtual directory will ensure that, when information is updated on one force system, other systems are automatically updated; this contributes to the single 'golden view' described above.

Identity management/provisioning

- An integrated identity management infrastructure ensures that access to force assets is determined by role.

Visitor and contractor management system

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- An electronic visitor and contractor management system will direct access levels and the identification of visitors and contractors while they are present on WMP property. It will produce identity badges for visitors, clearly identifying them to staff. The system will show the vetted status of contractors, ensuring that they have the correct level of access to the premises.

Vetting management system

- An electronic vetting management system is being developed to manage the vetting process, maintaining records of the progress of an application and automating a number of enquiries such as financial checks and local intelligence checks.
- It will provide automatic reminders to the vetting team if timescales have been exceeded and it is anticipated that the system will enhance both the consistency and timeliness of the vetting process.
- The programme is comprehensive and is being effectively programme managed; it should result in leading-edge security of information and other assets.

Area(s) for improvement

- The crime support contingency plans could be improved by the inclusion of the risk of widespread staff non-availability (for example in the case of an influenza pandemic).

The force is fully collaborating with all other forces in its region to provide the same level of access to and interrogation of intelligence systems across the region. Most of the operational databases are searchable from the force linked intelligence system (FLINTS). The recommendations from the Bichard Inquiry have been fully implemented.

Strengths

- The force is currently working with the three other forces in the region to explore opportunities for furthering regional collaboration. The four Chief Constables have agreed the following principles, providing a framework within which to pursue collaborative opportunities:
 - The aim of collaboration is to achieve resilience and effectiveness through greater interoperability and appropriate common standards, which deliver better outcomes for the people of the region.
 - Arrangements should be pragmatic, avoiding the proliferation of extra structures and governance arrangements, and should be subject to continuous review and development.
 - Regional collaboration should not displace the routine processes of mutual support between forces.
 - Application of those principles will enable the region to exercise a growing influence on national policing issues.
- The regional protective services group (formerly known as the ACPO regional operations and crime meeting) is responsible for setting the regional strategy.
- The force has invested significantly in the development of FLINTS, which is an IT-based application that allows a user to search 18 corporate databases. In effect, one interrogation of FLINTS will result in all the information known about a person, vehicle or address being collated.
- Neighbouring forces have access to the West Midlands FLINTS system, enabling them to use intelligence held by WMP to provide a more informed view of the threats confronting them. The force does not have direct access to neighbouring forces' intelligence systems; however, the RIU can access them on behalf of the force.
- Each of the CSP analysts has access to FLINTS and data from partners, which is used to develop partnership-based knowledge products. As a partner, the force has access to this information.

Work in progress

- HOLMES and automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) databases are due to be linked with FLINTS during the next six months; the inclusion of HOLMES will enable the names, addresses, vehicles and associates indices to be searched. This should ensure that intelligence staff have easier access to intelligence held on HOLMES and can use it to inform future knowledge products. The inclusion of ANPR will enhance the ability of analysts to access intelligence held on the back office facility.
- Ownership of the ANPR database is due to transfer from force operations to the FCIS in July 2008. The force recognises the value of all intelligence databases being

owned and managed by the FCIS. It should also increase the use of ANPR as an intelligence tool rather than primarily as an enforcement tactic.

- WMP collaborated with South Wales Police in conducting an exercise to review the capacity and capability of the national casualty bureau arrangements to respond to simultaneous mass fatality incidents.
- WMP is developing a joint bid with Warwickshire Police to purchase software that will greatly enhance its capability to hold and analyse information on HOLMES, such as CCTV footage and telecommunications data.

Area(s) for improvement

- The force has yet to decide how to deal with intelligence entries on HOLMES, particularly on guns and gangs, relating to investigations completed before initiation of the link with FLINTS.

The force has a case review policy that is always applied, ensuring that current major crime cases are reviewed in accordance with ACPO guidance; the policy is efficient. (This refers to organisational learning.)

Strengths

- The force has a documented policy for reviewing major crime, with reviews conducted by a dedicated major crime review team. The team also manages the response to Operations Advance and Cube, which re-examine forensic evidence from unsolved, historical offences to exploit developments in forensic technology.
- The review team is appropriately resourced and staff are well-motivated and have a wide range of skills and experience.
- There is an evident review culture in respect of ongoing major crime investigations involving review by both MIU SIOs and the head of the MIU. Reviews are generally seen by SIOs as supportive and helpful.
- The head of the MIU reviews homicide investigations after seven days. The review team undertakes a review after 42 days rather than the 28 days recommended in the *Murder Investigation Manual*. The rationale for this departure from national guidance is that key information about forensic and telecommunications data is generally not available within 28 days, and this severely limits the value of the review.
- The review team also undertakes cold case reviews, which are prioritised using the assessment matrix developed by the Metropolitan Police Service. Early consultation takes place with the Forensic Science Service and the Crown Prosecution Service to identify the key issues for each investigation.
- The review team has recently widened its remit to include the review of high-risk missing persons, to ensure that investigations are completed effectively.

Work in progress

- None identified.

Area(s) for improvement

- Although one example was provided of how working practices changed as a result of a review, it was unclear how robust and consistent is the method of embedding learning from reviews.
- The review team does not review non-stop fatal road traffic collisions and there is no systematic, robust approach to reviewing such incidents. An internal review has highlighted the need to strengthen the force's practice in this area; it should also address the issue of how such investigations are reviewed.
- The force does not have a systematic, robust approach to the review of rape and other serious sexual offence investigations.

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

Strengths

- The force has recently reorganised its crime and intelligence areas of business. The majority of intelligence assets are now line managed by the ACC (intelligence), while the majority of intervention and enforcement assets are managed by the ACC (crime).
- WMP has developed a comprehensive, effective level 2 TTCG process, which is chaired by the ACC (intelligence). The approach to integrating both overt and covert assets is particularly noteworthy.
- The main meeting takes place every four weeks, with a review meeting after two weeks.
- The process is underpinned by a robust action management system. An inspector in the assessments unit is the nominated actions manager. The post-holder ensures that updates are provided by action owners and are included in the tactical assessment. After the meeting, the actions manager is responsible for updating the tactical assessment with actions directed at the meeting and for circulating it to attendees.
- The same process occurs in respect of the CAM meeting and the production of the confidential tactical assessment.
- The crime support operations manager holds a TTCG meeting after the level 2 TTCG, to review the progress of current major investigations, to allocate operations or activity directed by the level 2 TTCG, and to prioritise crime support activity.
- The NIM development unit is based in the FCIS and aims to lead the force from compliance to excellence in the application of the NIM. In addition, analysts have to submit two items of work a year to a higher analyst for assessment, as part of their personal development review. This helps to ensure that intelligence products comply with national requirements.
- Problem profiles, including those on homicide and kidnap and extortion, are comprehensive, making good use of key findings, inferences and recommendations. They include details of historical, current and future demand.

Work in progress

- None identified.

Area(s) for improvement

- There is an absence of a systematic business process to review recommendations in problem profiles and to record decisions about whether they are accepted or not.
- The level 2 TTCG action management process would be further enhanced by the inclusion of the rationale for decisions made at the meeting.

Due to appropriate and comprehensive training, the force's awareness of diverse community needs during major crime investigations is acute.

Strengths

- The force has developed KINs at both OCU and strategic level. OCU-based NPTs are responsible for managing their KINs and the corporate diversity and community cohesion department is responsible for creating a strategic KIN to support major investigations, where necessary, and critical incident responses. The strategic KIN comprises members of OCU-based KINs, who have knowledge or experience of the relevant issues and will advise the force on any diversity issues.
- Crime support has a comprehensive diversity action plan and ensures that staff receive appropriate training and awareness on any diversity issues relevant to a specific investigation. For example, so-called 'honour-based' violence and abuse are identified as increasing threats to West Midlands communities.
- All staff have received a two-day diversity training input.

Work in progress

- Crime support has developed a wide range of diversity seminars for staff, based on feedback from staff that identified differing levels of knowledge and understanding about diversity. The OCU commander and the human resources manager have delivered 11 half-day workshops for supervisors. Staff have attended three briefings covering cultural awareness and three briefings about diversity in the workplace. The remainder of the action plan is on target for completion by June 2008.

Area(s) for improvement

- The force does not have plans to extend the diversity seminars to OCU-based staff. If training proves to be successful, the force should consider sharing the programme more widely.

Prevention

The force does not have a force-level IAG. It prefers to use KINs, which are always used to maximise the contribution of partners in the management of major crime investigations.

Strengths

- WMP has not established a force-level IAG, as it does not believe that a standing group is dynamic or flexible enough to meet its needs. In respect of policy development, it recognises the benefit of engaging with people other than those it would engage with operationally. Therefore it has created an extensive range of KINs representing a wide range of communities.
- The force has KINs in each of its 21 OCUs and draws together relevant members to form a strategic KIN in response to particular need and demand. Examples of good practice include the proactive use of strategic KINs to inform policy development; they are used more reactively following major crime or other critical incidents. KIN details are recorded on a force database that includes records of contacts made with members. This has enabled the force to identify that some KIN members are contacted more frequently than they would wish.
- The force has a robust approach to identifying and managing critical incidents. Examples include Operations Gamble, Javari and Peplos. Its approach involves the setting up of a gold support group; the corporate diversity and community cohesion department is responsible for creating a strategic KIN to support major investigations, where necessary, and critical incident responses. The strategic KIN comprises members of OCU-based KINs who have knowledge or experience of the relevant issues. However, KIN members do not sit on gold support groups, where their interests are represented by the superintendent (IAG/community networks). Police authority members are routinely informed of critical incidents but do not attend gold support group meetings.
- The force encourages KINs to highlight issues that are causing harm in their communities, so that the police and partners, if appropriate, can take action to address the problem.
- The force completes CIAs following major crime and critical incidents to identify harm and potential tension in communities. CIAs are completed by the OCU-based CSBs, after consultation with NPTs and KINs.

Work in progress

- The force has completed a detailed results analysis on its community engagement, which includes inferences about the use of KINs on each of its 21 OCUs and highlights a wide variance in the development of KINs. A small number of OCUs did not respond to requests for information and therefore there is no assessment of the effectiveness of their KINs. The force intends to use this information to ensure a more corporate and consistent approach to the use of KINs.

Area(s) for improvement

- None identified.

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

Strengths

- Each OCU has a daily management meeting to review significant incidents that have occurred during the previous 24 hours and to ensure that they are being managed effectively. The review includes hate crime, signal crime and missing persons.
- The force has a robust and well-exercised call-out procedure, which ensures that the duty detective superintendent can identify how to minimise the impact of any escalation of a major crime incident. It also has protocols spelling out how OCUs will support each other where necessary. This enables the force to deploy significant numbers of officers quickly when required.
- The force has an impressive response to crimes in action; the on-call duty detective superintendent manages this. It has developed a cadre of SIOs who are experienced in leading investigations into crimes in action. A dedicated control room or ‘green room’ can be operational within one hour of notification of a kidnap offence and the force can mobilise up to three surveillance teams if required. It has also invested in training, provided by SOCA, for a wide range of staff who may be involved in a kidnap investigation.
- Call management staff have received training in their responsibility following a report of a crime in action. They have also been trained in managing the initial response to major crime incidents. This training is supported by aides-memoires that are readily accessible via drop-down menus on the command and control system and on laminated cards on all workstations.
- Crime support has identified a number of risks to its business area and has formulated comprehensive business continuity plans. The plans are contained within a folder that is given to all new managers.

Work in progress

- Crime support has developed an action plan to test a number of its contingency plans during 2007/08.

Area(s) for improvement

- The crime support contingency plans could be improved by the inclusion of the risk of widespread staff non-availability (for example in the case of an influenza pandemic).
- Some staff demonstrated a good level of knowledge of the action to take at the scene of a major crime, but concerns were expressed about the consistency of knowledge across the 21 OCUs and the level of training provided by each OCU. The force would benefit from clarifying minimum standards of training required for first responders, to promote a more consistent approach to the initial management of major crime scenes.

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

Strengths

- The FSA includes an assessment of:
 - counter-terrorism;
 - criminal use of firearms;
 - child abuse;
 - Class A drugs;
 - organised immigration crime;
 - so-called 'honour-based' violence;
 - vulnerable adult abuse;
 - domestic abuse;
 - cash-in-transit robberies; and
 - heavy goods vehicle crime.
- In addition, the force has produced comprehensive problem profiles for homicide and kidnap.
- The force has documented threat-to-life guidance, which is available on the intranet and is reasonably understood by a wide range of staff. The force regularly uses Osman warnings and reverse Osmans, and the guidance caters for the provision of warnings on a 24/7 basis.
- Operation Axel is an intelligence-gathering operation to develop the force's understanding of the drivers behind illegal firearms activity. This will enable the force to continue to strengthen its approach to homicide and critical incident suppression. The operation is reviewed every six months and a results analysis was completed in February 2007. The force has also completed a firearms threat and risk assessment to inform the development of its firearms capacity.
- Operation Epic encompasses the development of a robust framework for the effective identification and risk assessment of criminal gang members.
- The risk assessment results in gang members being assessed as posing:
 - low risk – managed at OCU level;
 - medium risk – resulting in consideration of a MAPPP meeting, mediation and referral to BRGV; or
 - high risk – generating a bid for level 2 resources to target the individual.
- The process can be applied to anyone suspected of being a gang member and allows the force to tailor responses to the threat that individuals pose.
- OCU-based senior managers attend MAPPA meetings, MARACs and LSCBs, where partners share information to manage the threat posed by child abuse offenders, domestic violence offenders, sex offenders and other dangerous offenders.
- The force has introduced a dedicated MAPPP meeting process to deal specifically with those violent offenders involved in guns and gangs. The separation of these

meetings enables attendance to be tailored and include specialist staff from the police and other agencies.

Work in progress

- The force has not produced a problem profile for rape; however, the FSA contains an intelligence requirement for a problem profile in this area, which is due for completion by March 2008.
- Other knowledge products that will provide a more informed picture of major crime threats confronting the force include: a problem profile on child abuse; a risk analysis on domestic abuse; and a socio-demographic analysis of newcomer communities. These products are due to be completed between February and July 2008.

Area(s) for improvement

- The force has not completed a problem profile on the threat posed by offenders managed by the MAPP process. The force would benefit from such a profile, to ensure that effective co-ordinated action is taken to manage the threat posed by these offenders.

The policy covering threats to life is fully accessible to staff and reasonably understood and implemented. Examples of cross-border and multi-agency operations are abundant.

Strengths

- The force has recently introduced a threat-to-life policy that is available on the intranet and is reasonably understood by a wide range of staff. The force regularly uses Osman warnings and reverse Osmans, and the guidance caters for the provision of such warnings on a 24/7 basis.
- The Osman process is managed on OCUs; force guidance requires that a warning must be authorised by either the OCU commander or the duty detective superintendent, and delivered by an officer of DS rank or above. The issuing of an Osman warning must be recorded on the intelligence management system, and a risk assessment completed by the duty inspector.
- WMP actively engages with a range of partners to understand and reduce the risk posed by guns and gangs. BRGV is a Birmingham CSP core priority group.
- BRGV 1 is a police-led activity and enforcement group that has made significant progress, including in the creation of a pan-Birmingham MAPPP. The MAPPP manages high- and medium-risk gang members to reduce the risk of harm to individuals and communities. This panel approach is in the process of being adopted in Wolverhampton.
- BRGV 1 also leads Operation Malva, a partnership approach to managing high-risk gang members using civil injunctions and ASBOs. To date, 26 orders have been obtained, with a further 24 at differing stages in the process. Following a legal challenge regarding the appropriateness of the use of civil injunctions for this purpose, all the injunctions are currently stayed.
- The force is working with the GOWM and with the Black Country and regional round tables to raise awareness and to create a forum to deal with gun crime and gang-related violence.
- The force maintains Operation Axel, an intelligence-gathering operation that aims to develop understanding of the drivers behind illegal firearms activity. This should enable the force to continue enhancing its approach to homicide and critical incident suppression. The operation is reviewed every six months and a results analysis was completed in February 2007. The force has also completed a firearms threat and risk assessment to inform the development its firearms capacity.
- The force uses ANPR operations supported by armed officers to disrupt individuals who are suspected of involvement with guns and gangs.
- The force has a good relationship with SOCA in respect of managing the threats posed by kidnap offences.
- During 2007, the force led two linked series major crime investigations: Operation Fairway – an investigation into stranger rape offences over a ten-year period, involving Warwickshire Police and the Police Service of Northern Ireland; and

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Operation Talrin – an investigation into two murder offences, linked to West Mercia Constabulary.

- Operation Vellby is an example of a cross-border operation with Warwickshire Police to target OCGs committing cash-in-transit robberies. It led to several OCG members receiving substantial custodial sentences and, as a result, the threat posed by such offences has decreased from high in the 2007/08 FSA to low in the current version.

Work in progress

- The force was unable to provide a definitive answer about the number of Osman warnings it has issued, due to inconsistencies in the way in which they are recorded. It is reviewing the way in which Osman warnings are recorded so that it fully understands how appropriately this tactic is being used. The review should be completed by April 2008.
- The force is producing a homicide suppression strategy, which should be completed by April 2008.

Area(s) for improvement

- The recently introduced threat-to-life policy does not include the need to analyse the use of Osman warnings to identify any developing trends. The force should amend the policy to include this issue.

The force has a witness protection capability that is supported by dedicated covert resources. The force operates guidance that is promulgated to, and understood by, all staff. The force is collaborating fully with other forces and partners in this area.

Strengths

- The force demonstrated a comprehensive understanding of how tactics, covert resources and witnesses can be protected.
- WMP has an appropriately resourced criminal justice protection team (CJPT). HMIC found that the force had effective witness protection policies in place.

Work in progress

- None identified.

Area(s) for improvement

- None identified.

The force has an adequate system to monitor the impact of preventative and enforcement activity. There is evidence that the broad range of community policing assets is partially used to help understand levels of harm in the community.

Strengths

- WMP has a comprehensive approach to identifying and managing harm in local communities.
- It completes a quarterly 'Feeling the Difference' survey, which results in contact with 21,000 members of the public a year to assess levels of public confidence and harm in communities. The results are made available to all 21 OCUs, and any changes are identified by the relevant OCU and the force performance review department. 'Feeling the Difference' data can be researched using software known as 'signals from noise', which provides data at OCU, sector and neighbourhood level (although neighbourhood-level data is not statistically reliable due to small sample sizes).
- The community intelligence and interventions team has provided guidance to OCUs on how to assess harm and tension in communities. The guidance includes a three-dimensional approach to assessing tension in communities. The three dimensions are:
 - experience – how do communities feel?
 - evidence – what does our information tell us is happening?
 - potential – what might happen?
- The document is intended to ensure a corporate and consistent approach to the identification and assessment of harm and tension in communities.
- The force maintains KIN members in each OCU, drawing together relevant knowledge and expertise to form a strategic KIN in response to particular need and demand. KIN details are recorded on a force database that includes records of contacts made with members. This has enabled the force to identify that some KIN members are contacted more frequently than they would wish.
- The force encourages KINs to highlight issues that are causing harm in their communities so that the police and partners, if appropriate, can take action to address the problem.
- The force completes CIAs following major crime and critical incidents, to identify harm and potential tension in communities. They are undertaken by the OCU CSBs, which consult with NPTs and KINs for local incidents. The community intelligence and interventions team completes CIAs for major or critical incidents that cross OCU borders or pose a significant threat to the force, eg Operations Gamble, Jivari and Napony. Reviews of CIAs identify the impact of prevention and reassurance tactics used to reduce harm.
- The force has identified those OCGs posing the most serious threat to the communities of the West Midlands and is prioritising activity to combat the threat they pose. Assessments are completed using a locally developed harm matrix.

- Signal crimes are identified and managed at OCU level; activity is directed and reviewed at daily management meetings.

Work in progress

- The force has completed a detailed results analysis on its community engagement that includes inferences about the use of KINs on each of its 21 OCUs and highlights a wide variance in the development of KINs. A small number of OCUs did not respond to requests for information and therefore there is no assessment of the effectiveness of their KINs. The force intends to use this information to ensure a more corporate and consistent approach to the use of KINs.

Area(s) for improvement

- The force recognises the importance of engagement with KINs to understand the impact that major crime has on communities; however, given the differing levels of development of KINs across OCUs, the force may wish to reassure itself of the effectiveness and consistency of this approach.

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

Strengths

- The force has a standards advisory group to co-ordinate security and vetting issues at a corporate level.
- There are effective processes in place to ensure that the anti-corruption unit (ACU) is informed of all level 2 operations and is involved in appropriate investigations. Processes include the automatic flagging of all covert operations to the head of the ACU.
- The ACC (crime) or the head of crime takes the role of gold commander to ensure that the operational and professional standards aspects of any investigation are co-ordinated.
- The ACU is appropriately resourced and has a wide range of specialist assets available to it, including its own surveillance capability and two accredited financial investigators. The ACU receives sensitive intelligence directly from source, rather than it being directed via the force confidential unit.
- The force has a documented vetting policy that identifies the level of vetting required for all posts.
- The force Gateway programme, which consists of 12 projects to strengthen the security of information and other assets, is effectively the mechanism by which the force seeks to reduce a range of security threats. The programme is comprehensive and is being effectively managed; it should result in enhanced security of information and other assets.
- The force has a confidential telephone and email reporting facility that enables staff to highlight any integrity concerns that they have.
- The force routinely carries out health checks on teams, operations and processes and possesses sufficient IT and covert capability to perform these functions.

Work in progress

- The force recognises that its current approach to vetting is disparate and inconsistent. One of the Gateway projects will make recommendations for improvement in this key area.
- The force is in the process of developing a 'vulnerability' policy to deal with staff who generate service confidence concerns.

Area(s) for improvement

- None identified.

Enforcement

Governance arrangements for major crime investigations are partially effective, with appropriate use made of KINs. Independent community advice is provided to gold command support groups by the chair of the KIN.

Strengths

- The police authority has recently restructured its committees, with the new operations and performance committee assuming responsibility for oversight of major crime activity. Chief officers brief the committee chair on appropriate issues, while the full police authority receives an update on major and serious crime matters at every meeting.
- The ACC (crime), ACC (intelligence), head of crime support and head of intelligence all demonstrated strong, visible leadership in their areas of responsibility; this is recognised and valued by staff.
- The ACC (crime) is involved in the process of categorising homicide investigations. He liaises with the head of the MIU, who records the rationale and appoints an SIO with the relevant experience to lead the investigation.
- The ACC (crime) or head of crime takes the role of gold commander to ensure that the operational and professional standards aspects of any investigation are co-ordinated.
- The ACC (crime) holds a quarterly meeting with the head of the MIU to review the progress of major crime investigations.
- The force has a robust approach to identifying and managing critical incidents. Examples include Operations Gamble, Javari and Peplos. This approach involves the setting up of a gold support group; the corporate diversity and community cohesion department is responsible for creating a strategic KIN to support major investigations, where necessary, and critical incident responses. The strategic KIN comprises members of OCU-based KINs who have knowledge or experience of the relevant issues. Although KIN members do not sit on gold support groups, their advice is provided to the group by the superintendent (IAG/community networks). Police authority members are routinely informed of critical incidents but do not attend gold support group meetings.
- The impressive level 2 TTCG process, chaired by the ACC (intelligence), and the crime support TTCG provide strong governance for the force's response to the threats it faces from major crime.
- The force has developed a performance management framework for level 2 assets that will migrate to a balanced scorecard.

Work in progress

- The chief executive of the police authority and the chair of the operations and performance committee are in the process of being vetted.

Area(s) for improvement

- The force does not include KIN members or other community representatives as members of gold support groups. It would benefit from such representation, to ensure that the impact of incidents on the community is fully understood and that the police response is seen to be transparent and appropriate.

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The ACPO lead and the head of crime are fully trained and competent in the management of linked and series crime and critical incident command. These officers are supported by staff who have undergone comprehensive training and testing in critical incident command, CIAs and policing in partnership.

Strengths

- The force has dealt successfully with a large number of high-profile major and critical incidents, including Operation Gamble (a terrorist threat), homicide offences involving the use of firearms and knives, crimes in action and major public disorder. These investigations have provided opportunities for staff in a wide range of roles to develop their operational competence.
- The ACPO team members have attended a range of nationally accredited courses, including courses on SCIMITAR, the management of linked series crime and critical incident command. There is also experience in the ACPO team of performing the role of officer in overall command of linked and series investigations.
- The head of the MIU is a nationally accredited SIO and has completed the management of linked and series crime course. She has leadership experience in linked series investigations.
- The force has a cadre of experienced SIOs who have attended the nationally accredited SIO course for kidnap and extortion and who have significant operational experience of leading investigations into crimes in action.
- Members of OCU-based senior management teams (SMTs) are experienced in partnership working and have developed good networks with partners, which they can use in major investigations.
- CIAs are completed by OCU-based CSBs after consultation with NPTs and KINs.
- All DCIs and DIs on the MIU have attended training in the management of linked and series crime.
- During 2007, the force led two linked series major crime investigations: Operation Fairway – an investigation into stranger rape offences over a ten-year period, involving Warwickshire Police and the Police Service of Northern Ireland; and Operation Talrin – an investigation into two murder offences, linked to West Mercia Constabulary.

Work in progress

- One ACC has yet to attend SCIMITAR training, as attendance at two planned courses was cancelled.

Area(s) for improvement

- None identified.

The force's performance in the investigation of major crime is monitored through a regime that reviews each operation in terms of outcomes, costs, inputs and outputs.

Strengths

- Crime support has a structured approach to managing major crime investigations. The OCU operations manager holds a meeting with department heads after the level 2 TTCG to review the progress of current investigations, to allocate operations or activity directed by the level 2 TTCG, and to prioritise crime support activity.
- At the outset of a major crime investigation, the SIO agrees a costed investigative strategy with the head of the MIU; once agreed, an appropriate budget is allocated.
- The head of the MIU holds a weekly meeting (on Mondays) with her SMT, which includes a recently appointed business manager and a representative from the human resources department. The meeting includes an update on budget issues.
- The head of the MIU also meets weekly with her DCIs to review the progress of current investigations, including details of budget issues. The SIO for any investigation that remains undetected after seven days does a presentation to colleagues at the meeting, to enable peers to offer advice and guidance to ensure the effective progress of the investigation.
- The force has made a significant investment in its forensic service facility at Ridgepoint House, Bromford Lane. The involvement of a Forensic Science Service (FSS) scientist as part of the team, together with the appointment of a forensic submission gatekeeper, has helped to reduce costs and improve the mechanisms for dealing with recharging from the FSS.

Work in progress

- Crime support is developing a robust performance management framework to identify the costs, inputs, outputs and outcomes of operations. The framework includes the categorisation of homicide investigations, detection rates and the rate of bringing offenders to justice, completion of personal development reviews and attendance levels. It breaks down the work of MIU teams into a range of activities, enabling managers to have a greater understanding of what staff are doing.
- The framework also includes the results of an online satisfaction survey completed by OCU-based staff.

Area(s) for improvement

- None identified.

Performance management and resilience

The inspection teams found a strong investigative capability in force to meet the predictable major crime investigation demands; however, collaborative agreements with SOCA exist and are deployed as appropriate. These are considered adequate to counter normal and extraordinary levels of need. Force procedures to manage human resources provide extensive protection for the investigative capability.

Strengths

- The force has an appropriately resourced MIU led by a detective superintendent.
- The MIU deals with category A and B homicide investigations, category C homicides that are complex, and serious violence offences involving people suspected of involvement with guns and gangs. It also deals with other investigations tasked by the level 2 TTCCG.
- The majority of category C homicide investigations are dealt with by OCU-based SIOs, all of whom are experienced but are not accredited to PIP level 3. The head of the MIU appoints an SIO to assist and mentor the OCU-based SIO to ensure that the investigation is conducted in accordance with the requirements of the *Murder Investigation Manual*.
- The head of the MIU liaises with the ACC (crime) to ensure that staff with the appropriate level of training and experience are appointed to deal with investigations involving the Health and Safety Executive, national care homes and other institutions.
- The force is focusing the MIU on providing support to OCUs, with each team being aligned to a cluster of OCUs.
- The force has sufficient tier 5 interview advisers, based in the MIU, to meet demand for this expertise.
- The force has a robust call-out procedure, which starts at duty detective superintendent level; this post-holder makes decisions about who else needs to be called out. MIU teams have a well-developed call-out rota.
- The MIU provides weekend working cover, with one team covering the whole force.
- The force has an appropriate number of FLCs and FLOs, based both on OCUs and in crime support. The force FLC sits on the Family Liaison National Executive Board and ensures that good practice is disseminated to staff within the force. All FLOs are subject to mandatory referral to occupational health on a six-monthly basis when deployed.
- The sudden death policy contains clear guidance on how to deal with deaths that are suspicious, violent or unnatural. The policy identifies the level of police response to reported deaths; the force does not attend scenes of routine, presumed natural deaths in home circumstances.

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- There are sufficient senior scenes of crime officers and scenes of crime officers who are trained and experienced in the role of major crime scene managers to meet demand.
- The force delivers HOLMES training for Staffordshire Police and Warwickshire Police, as the small numbers involved do not make dedicated training economically viable.

Work in progress

- SIOs on the MIU will soon be PIP level 3 accredited; they have attended national training but the majority have not yet completed their portfolio. OCU-based SIOs will complete the three-week national SIO course and Hydra training, and will develop a more streamlined portfolio to reflect their more limited role.
- The force is committed to PIP level 1 and 2 accreditation for new officers appointed to crime support and the OCU-based criminal investigation department; however, the force has decided not to undertake PIP level 2 accreditation for existing detectives. It has concerns about the return on investment of this training and will develop its own training that identifies specific areas of need.
- The force recognises the need to improve the quality and consistency of rape investigations. The ACC (crime) chairs a steering group that manages the rape strategic action plan.
- The force has sufficient capacity and resilience to staff key HOLMES management roles in compliance with MIRSAP; however, resilience in respect of indexers is not as strong. New staff have recently been recruited to fill vacancies created by the migration of staff to the CTU.
- The force is developing a talent management strategy and has identified five key corporate leadership roles for which succession planning will be initiated, namely: head of CTU, head SIO (CTU), head of ACU, head of crime and head of MIU.
- Five of the eight teams are based in modern office accommodation, which staff describe as excellent; the accommodation used by two of the other three teams is deemed adequate. The force recognises that one team's site is not fit for purpose and the team will be moved into the modern accommodation with the other five teams.

Area(s) for improvement

- None identified.

Specialist and covert investigations are resourced through a robust infrastructure that is proven to be effective. Some sensitive and covert tactics are delivered through verbal collaborative agreements, which are thoroughly tested. The inspection found evidence of proactive and reactive use of these assets across a wide range of offences.

Strengths

- The force demonstrated strong evidence of its capacity and capability to conduct complex operations to combat the threats posed by major crime. These operations used a wide range of covert, sensitive policing techniques.

Work in progress

- The force has started to consider the most effective way of using the proactive crime team (PCT) and MIU assets to tackle the threats posed by both major crime and serious and organised crime, using the level 2 TTCG to manage this. This is significant, as the balance of threat between major crime and serious and organised crime appears to be changing, based on three significant year-on-year reductions in homicide. Staffing levels in the PCT and MIU represent a significant investment by the force to tackle the threats posed by both serious and organised crime and major crime.

Area(s) for improvement

- None identified.

The force has a full-time and dedicated case review team that is always deployed when current and historical major crime cases are reviewed, in accordance with ACPO guidance. Case review work is efficient. (Refers to impact on cases.)

Strengths

- The force has a documented policy for reviewing major crime, with reviews conducted by a dedicated major crime review team. The team also manages the response to Operations Advance and Cube, which re-examine forensic evidence from unsolved, historical offences to exploit developments in forensic technology. The review team also undertakes cold case reviews, which are prioritised using the assessment matrix developed by the Metropolitan Police Service. Early consultation takes place with the Forensic Science Service and the Crown Prosecution Service to identify the key issues for each investigation.
- The review team is appropriately resourced and the staff are experienced, well-motivated and have a wide range of skills and experience.
- There is an evident review culture in respect of ongoing major crime investigations involving review by both MIU SIOs and the head of the MIU. Reviews are generally seen by SIOs as supportive and helpful.
- The head of the MIU reviews homicide investigations after seven days. The review team undertakes a review after 42 days rather than the 28 days recommended in the *Murder Investigation Manual*. The rationale for this departure from national guidance is that key information about forensic and telecommunications data is generally not available within 28 days, and this severely limits the value of the review.
- The review team has recently widened its remit to include the review of high-risk missing persons, to ensure that investigations are completed effectively.

Work in progress

- None identified.

Area(s) for improvement

- Although one example was provided of how working practices changed as a result of a review, it was unclear how robust and consistent is the method of embedding learning from reviews.

The inspection found evidence that the force is predominantly compliant with relevant ACPO standards in the *Murder Investigation Manual* and the major incident room standardisation administrative procedures (MIRSAP) manual.

Strengths

- The ACC (crime) is the identified lead ACPO officer for homicide and major crime investigations.
- The force has a 24-hour detective superintendent call-out rota to ensure that the appropriate resources are deployed to any homicide or major crime investigation.
- Although the force has not created an IAG, it has KINs in each of its 21 OCUs and draws together relevant members to form a strategic KIN in response to particular need and demand. KIN details are recorded on a force database that includes records of contacts made with members. This has enabled the force to identify that some KIN members are contacted more frequently than they would wish.
- OCU-based NPTs are responsible for managing their KINs and the corporate diversity and community cohesion department is responsible for creating a strategic KIN to support major investigations, where necessary, and critical incident responses. The strategic KIN comprises members of OCU-based KINs who have knowledge or experience of the relevant issues.
- The force provided strong evidence of establishing gold support groups to manage critical incidents, with these groups chaired by a chief officer.
- In November 2007, WMP took part in an exercise to review the capacity and capability of national casualty bureau arrangements to respond to more than one mass fatality incident.
- Category A and B homicide investigations are dealt with by the MIU, while category C investigations are normally dealt with by OCU-based SIOs. An MIU SIO is appointed to assist and mentor the OCU-based SIO. There is often a significant impact on OCUs, which retain ownership of a category C investigation.
- The force has an appropriately resourced MIU. The rationale for the level of capacity was based on the level of homicides faced by the force three years ago. As the force has been successful in reducing the level of homicide, the size of the MIU has nonetheless remained consistent. The MIU now undertakes a wider range of investigations, including supporting professional standards and counter-terrorism investigations, as well as undertaking sensitive investigations such as allegations of corruption.
- Each team within the MIU has a self-contained HOLMES capability.
- The force has a clearly defined and documented process that requires the head of the MIU to categorise homicide investigations, record the rationale and appoint an SIO with the relevant experience to lead the investigation. This process takes place in consultation with the ACC (crime).
- The force makes a considered decision at an early stage on whether or not to establish a major incident room and utilise HOLMES for a major investigation.

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- The force has a robust approach to completing CIAs. The process is managed by OCU CSBs and involves NPTs and KINs. There are examples of SIOs attending community meetings to provide personal updates regarding the progression of investigations.

Work in progress

- SIOs on the MIU will be PIP level 3 accredited and have attended national training, but the majority have not yet completed their portfolio. OCU-based SIOs will complete the three-week national SIO course and Hydra training, developing a more streamlined portfolio to reflect their more limited role.

Area(s) for improvement

- None identified.

Appendix 1: Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations

A

ACC	assistant chief constable
ACPO	Association of Chief Police Officers
ACU	anti-corruption unit
ANPR	automatic number plate recognition
ASBO	Anti-Social Behaviour Order

B

BCU	basic command unit
BIA	Border and Immigration Agency
BRGV	Birmingham Reducing Gang Violence

C

CAM	covert asset management
CHIS	covert human intelligence source
CIA	community impact assessment
CID	criminal investigation department
CII	covert internet investigator
CIMU	covert intelligence management unit
CJPT	criminal justice protection team
CSB	community safety bureau
CSP	community safety partnership
CTU	counter-terrorism unit

D

DC	detective constable
DCI	detective chief inspector

DI detective inspector

DS detective sergeant

E

ECT economic crime team

F

FCIS force communication and intelligence services

FID force intelligence department

FLC family liaison co-ordinator

FLINTS force linked intelligence system

FLO family liaison officer

FSA force strategic assessment

FSS forensic science service

FSU forensic services unit

G

GOWM Government Office for the West Midlands

H

HMI Her Majesty's Inspector

HMIC Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary

HMRC Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs

HOLMES Home Office Large Major Enquiry System

HTCU high-tech crime unit

I

IAG independent advisory group

K

KIN key individual network

L

LEA local education authority

LSCB local safeguarding children board

M

MAPPA multi-agency public protection arrangements

MAPPP multi-agency public protection panel

MARAC multi-agency risk assessment conference

MIRSAP major incident room standardised administrative procedures

MIU major investigation unit

MoPI management of police information

MSF most similar force(s)

N

NaBIS National Ballistic Intelligence Service

NIM National Intelligence Model

NPIA National Policing Improvement Agency

NPSAT National Protective Services Analysis Tool

NPT neighbourhood policing team

O

OCG organised crime group

OCU operational command unit

OSC Office of Surveillance Commissioners

Osman Osman v UK (1999) 1 FLR 193, where the court established that in certain circumstances the state has a positive obligation to take

preventative measures to protect an individual who is at risk from the criminal activities of others

P

PCT	proactive crime team
PIP	professionalising the investigative process
PMB	performance management board
POCA	Proceeds of Crime Act 2002
PPSU	public protection support unit

R

RART	regional asset recovery team
RIG	regional intelligence group
RIU	regional intelligence unit

S

SCIMITAR	serious crime, intelligence management, information technology and resources
SGC	specific grading criteria
SIO	senior investigating officer
SMT	senior management team
SOCA	Serious Organised Crime Agency
SPI	statutory performance indicator

T

TCD	technical collections department
TST	technical support team
TTCG	tactical tasking and co-ordination group

W

WMP West Midlands Police

Appendix 2: Developing Practice

INSPECTION AREA: Major crime

TITLE: A joined-up approach to tackling guns and gangs

PROBLEM:

Tackling guns and gangs within the West Midlands

Gang-related shootings from the year 2000 took on the aspect of organised assassinations in relation to conflicts around drugs. However, by 2003 these shootings had evolved into issues best summed up as relating to respect, revenge and revenue.

SOLUTION:

A joined-up approach, with partners, to tackle the following underlying areas.

Intelligence

Operation Axel monitors, researches and assesses the level of threat posed by firearms incidents on a daily basis. Intelligence assessments are produced based on crimes, incidents and intelligence, to ensure the most accurate assessment of threat:

- Crimes – all recorded firearms offences. This provides an accurate indication of the number of confirmed discharges and recoveries and how firearms are being used in the commission of offences.
- Incidents – including sightings of firearms and shots heard. This ensures that unconfirmed discharges are reported.
- Intelligence – collection and assessment.

Operation Epic was established in January 2007 to provide a framework within which to effectively identify and assess individuals involved in the criminal use of firearms and/or Class A drugs. The operation includes the following areas:

- Building on the knowledge of the market, the possession and criminal use of firearms within the WMP area, the links between Class A drugs and firearms, and the relationship between gang culture and the possession or use of firearms:
 - identify opportunities for intervention and disruption;
 - identify and publish intelligence requirements;
 - increase submission of intelligence to organisational memory;
 - strengthen intelligence structures within HM Prison Birmingham to fill intelligence gaps; and
 - drive activity through the level 2 tactical tasking and co-ordination group (TTCG) to support OCUs.
- Using the definition of a criminal gang member, identify nominals operating for or affiliated to particular networks.
- Using a robust risk assessment in which to effectively assess those who pose the greatest risk in the criminal use of firearms and/or supply of Class A drugs:
 - identify the level of threat posed to WMP from the criminal activities of a particular Network; and
 - identify the nominals who pose the greatest risk.
- Providing a firm foundation for offender management:
 - correctly flag and offender manage identified nominals in an effort to suppress critical incidents.

Prevention

Following an increase in firearms incidents in Birmingham during April and May 2007, a decision was taken to establish a multi-agency team to specifically target gang members with civil injunctions and ASBOs in order to:

- control their behaviour;
- limit their association with other gang members; and
- restrict them from vulnerable areas (which include the gang territories).

The injunctions are available under section 222 of the Local Government Act 1972 and ASBOs under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

This is an intelligence-led initiative and the offenders are selected if they provide opportunities to **maximise**:

- disruption of gang activity;
- crime reduction; and
- public reassurance.

The use of ASBOs and injunctions is a critical part of a process designed to 'weed and seed' communities within Birmingham that are threatened by the activities of gang members. The multi-agency team described above 'weeds out' the impact players with the use of injunctions and orders that are rigorously enforced, while other initiatives work in collaboration to 'seed the community' with resources and support to resist the threats posed by the gangs and to prevent them replacing those impact players.

Mentoring: West Midlands Mediation and Transformation Services

This group is made up of representatives from the public authorities, ie Birmingham City Council (Youth Services), and WMP together with a number of other influential bodies within the city.

Vision: To assist in the creation, where required, of peaceful, safe and flourishing neighbourhoods, where each community feels empowered to make meaningful and significant contributions.

Purpose: To provide a trained, skilled and credible body of expertise, committed to a cessation of gang-related violence and the delivery of our vision.

Aims: To facilitate a negotiated cessation of hostilities between those engaged in gang-related shootings and the use or threat of extreme violence across Birmingham and the wider West Midlands.

To assist and encourage a process of transformation, whereby those engaged in armed conflict feel able to lay down their guns and any other weapon, embrace their communities and make meaningful contributions to a safer environment.

Working with partners: BRGV

The BRGV strategy has made real inroads through its use of innovative approaches to tackling guns and gangs issues. The identification of key nominals through the use of a matrix based on an individual's behaviour (Operation Axel) links resource allocation to a National Intelligence Model (NIM)-based process. There is a common understanding of language, risk and threat across partner agencies. While there have been positive outcomes relating to the reduction in murders of young men with firearms, there is also evidence of success at a fault line and contextual level.

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Prevent and deter

Intervening to stop/prevent the criminal activity of gangs.

Catch and convict

Bringing to justice those who engage in or facilitate gang-related violence.

Resettle and rehabilitate

Facilitating an exit strategy.

Influence

Developing personal and community resistance.

OUTCOME(S):

Since August 2007, 72 individual gang members have been subject to consideration for an ASBO or injunction, with a total of ten ASBOs and two Criminal ASBOs granted.

The force is currently awaiting the result of an appeal lodged following the dismissal at county court of the applications for the first two full injunctions.

FORCE CONTACT:

DI Dave Murcott (tel. 0845 113 5000 ext 7630 6516)

BRGV: DS Sharon Naughton (tel. 0845 113 5000 ext 7630 6159)

INSPECTION AREA: Managing major crime

TITLE: MIU performance framework

PROBLEM:

The current WMP MIU capability was formed in April 2005, moving from a precept resource model to a permanent establishment. This has proved to be an extremely positive move and has no doubt had an impact on service delivery in the area of homicide investigation and reduction.

However, the unit had no performance framework with which to gauge success or otherwise. It was identified that there was a minimal performance culture among staff and no method of quantifying underperformance.

Since the inception of the MIU, the roll-out and implementation of neighbourhood policing took place. The role of the MIU in delivering and supporting neighbourhood policing was unclear.

In addition, detailed knowledge was lacking in relation to homicide across WMP, other than the basic headline performance data (ie year-on-year comparisons of the murder and detection rates).

In summary, the MIU lacked clarity of purpose.

SOLUTION:

The MIU commissioned its internal analysts (NIM) to produce a problem profile of homicide in the WMP area. This was completed and published in March 2007.

In April 2007, the MIU developed a performance framework for the unit with a very clear strategic aim:

“Provide a quality of service to OCUs (BCUs) and their communities by investigating and reviewing homicides and major incidents with the intention of bringing offenders to justice and reducing the fear of crime.”

The strategic aim is underpinned by the following seven objectives:

- investigate and review all category A and B homicides;
- assist with all category C homicides;
- investigate and review ‘critical incidents’ and serious harm offences;
- integrate at all levels with OCUs, neighbourhoods and communities;
- protect the public;
- assess performance; and
- ensure that our staff achieve their full potential.

Each objective is measured using quantitative and qualitative data. On a quarterly basis, the data is assessed and presented within a quarterly strategic review to the ACC (crime) and head of crime support/MIU. The information is also presented to members of the MIU SMT (DCIs and DIs) to be used as management information to assess team performance.

The details surrounding method of delivery and measurement criteria are available for inspection.

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The quarterly strategic review also incorporates an overview section of all homicides that have occurred within the WMP area in the preceding quarter. The homicide data is subject to NIM analysis and broken down by way of category. It is added to a pre-existing homicide problem profile covering the period April 2004 to March 2007, together providing a greater awareness of the homicide phenomenon in the West Midlands.

The ongoing quarterly strategic assessment of the MIU, together with the problem profile, is fed into WMP's force intelligence department to be considered as part of the formal FSA process.

OUTCOME(S):

The performance framework was formally introduced in April 2007 following a series of practitioner workshops and consultation with all leaders within the MIU (DS and police staff equivalent supervisors and above).

This led to the introduction of a three-month rotating strategic analyst role for pre-existing MIU investigative analysts.

While the unit has produced and presented only its first quarterly assessment (July 2007), the early signs demonstrate:

- greater clarity of purpose for MIU staff;
- the integration of a central team into neighbourhood policing principles;
- geographical alignment of MIU teams to territorial OCUs;
- maximised WMP capability to increase capacity;
- the ability to pass judgement on improved performance or underperformance;
- the ability to receive meaningful feedback from OCU colleagues to assess opportunities for continuous improvement;
- an improvement in overall performance;
- murder suppression; and
- informed decision making regarding the effective and efficient use of force resources.

FORCE CONTACT:

Detective Superintendent Mick Treble – Head of MIU (tel: 0121 626 5558 (office)/07968 572902 (mobile))

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INSPECTION AREA: Major and serious and organised crime

TITLE: Management of the forensic budget

PROBLEM:

To manage the forensic budget within the limits set by the WMP (under £8 million). In order to deliver best value while maximising forensic outcomes to help further criminal investigation across a broad spectrum of offence types, with particular emphasis on major and serious crime.

SOLUTION:

WMP has introduced a forensic strategy that ensures strict management of the forensic budget. This strategy outlines that forensic examination should be undertaken in a sequential order with set aims (based on the requirement/level of the investigation and case) and there should be appropriate levels of testing to achieve those aims. Forensic costs are reduced drastically using this strategy, with no detriment to the forensic investigation process.

This process is co-ordinated by the forensic submissions manager, who manages the forensic strategy with the SIO, investigation team and suppliers of forensic services.

Partnership working is also a large part of this strategy; WMP is currently working with its main partner, the Forensic Science Service, by looking at ways to reduce costs and improve service across the business.

OUTCOME(S):

The strategy has allowed WMP to maximise meaningful forensic intelligence and evidence while making substantial savings within the forensic budget. *Evidence from the 2006–08 full year end and half year 2007/08 total spend figures.*

Part of the bigger picture has meant that WMP now delivers best value in terms of the budget to stakeholders, while increasing its financial opportunities to forensically examine a wider number of cases. In addition, it has allowed for an opportunity to develop and offer several forensic services in house, with future potential saving opportunities. *Evidence provided in the Invest to Save Scheme 2006/07.*

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