



**HM Inspectorate of Constabulary
South of England Region**

**Follow up/ Monitoring visit to Salisbury BCU
Wiltshire Constabulary**

**BCU Inspection Conducted - November 2004
Monitoring Visit Conducted - February 2006**

Date of Inspection	HMIC Revisit Inspector	BCU Commander	Date of final report	Date of monitoring visit
29th Nov-3rd Dec 2004	Chief Inspector Bill Halsey	Chief Supt Jerry Wickham	April 2004	7th February 2006

Introduction

There are approximately 300 basic command units (BCUs) in England and Wales and no two are alike. They vary in size from a little over 100 officers to a little over 1,000. Some serve densely populated, ethnically diverse inner cities, while others cover vast tracts of sparsely populated countryside. However, they share some key aims and objectives, specifically to work with partner agencies on reducing crime in their areas, and to do so with integrity. Scrutiny of police performance has moved from aggregate force outcomes to the performance of individual BCUs, with the recognition that policing is essentially a locally delivered service. But BCUs are not islands; they operate within a framework of policy and support determined by headquarters-based chief officer teams. The precise configuration of policing units and the balance of resources between HQ and BCUs varies across the 43 forces in England and Wales.

The focus on performance in reducing crime is likely to be relentless. Forces and police authorities, working with local authorities and other community safety partners, will need to raise performance outcomes year upon year. Indeed, the statutory regime of Best Value demands 'continuous improvement' and an array of sanctions exist if authorities fail to deliver this. The potential for the Service as a whole to deliver better results in crime reduction and detection cannot conceal an inescapable fact – that performance between BCUs operating in similar policing environments and with comparable resources varies to a degree that is, at times, remarkable.

The purpose of the revisit process is to monitor the progress of the BCU against the recommendations and action plans produced following the full BCU inspection. This report concerns itself with that monitoring process. It is not a further inspection report and makes no further recommendations.

Methodology

Apart from analysis of data prior to and during the inspection, the BCU Commander and Superintendent Operations were interviewed and the daily and fortnightly tasking meetings at Salisbury were attended by the HMIC staff officer. A visit was made to Devizes police station and the acting Detective inspector and a Detective Sergeant from the Force's Dedicated Source Unit were interviewed. In addition, the principle analyst at headquarters and an analyst at Salisbury were spoken to and a demonstration given of the Force's newly acquired mapping software. The inspection concluded with feedback to the BCU Commander.

Significant developments since the original inspection

There have been changes to the command team with the crime manager leaving the BCU to work at headquarters. He has been replaced by a DCI who had previously been a uniform chief inspector on the BCU, but who has extensive detective experience in a number of roles. An acting chief inspector currently performs the post vacated by the DCI.

Crime Recording

Wiltshire Constabulary is in the process of introducing a new computerised record management system which will include an electronic crime and incident tasker. The system is currently used by Hampshire, Merseyside and North Wales and is known within Wiltshire as project Hermes. Hermes was rolled out in phases to Salisbury BCU during 2005 and much of the BCU's crime is now recorded at headquarters by police staff who are contacted directly by members of the public on the telephone - the most common way of reporting a crime. Once a crime is recorded it is reviewed and forwarded to a local officer, if appropriate.

The National Crime Recording Standard (NCRS) was first introduced in April 2002 by the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) and the Home Office. The aim of the Standard is to promote greater consistency between police forces in the recording of crime and to take a more victim oriented approach. It was also intended that it would ensure a more complete picture of reality of crime in communities. The NCRS was attributed with causing rises in some key crime categories, which since the years April 2002-04 have created a new baseline from which comparative performance can now be examined.

During 2005 Wiltshire Constabulary, under project Hermes took a more rigorous stance on the recording of crime, which has resulted in an expected increase in overall crime. The most common category that is usually affected by NCRS is violent crime. Minor disputes and assaults which were not normally recorded before are now fully captured under the new system.

The combination of these two factors may have made a major contribution to the BCU's rise in violent crime. From 1st April 2005 to 31st December 2005 the BCU has seen a 5% increase in reported crime and a 14% increase in detections when compared to the same period during 2004. However, there has been a 26% increase in violent crime, with an increase of 5% in detections.

The increase in violent crime remains a concern to the BCU, who conducted a review at the end of 2005. The conclusion was that the increase was attributable to more accurate crime recording under Hermes with stricter NCRS compliance. A secondary factor was more proactive policing on the streets, including the introduction of fixed penalty notices for S.5 public order offences which may previously not have been recorded. The SMT continue to closely monitor the incidents of violent crime and a further review will take place later in the year.

Original Recommendations

The BCU inspection report in April 2005 made eight recommendations:

1. That the SMT reviews the fortnightly tasking and co-ordination meeting and complements this with a more robust approach on a daily basis.
2. That the introduction of mapping to assist with the identification of series crime should be given a higher priority.
3. That Wiltshire Constabulary consider creating a single dedicated source unit to cover the entire force area.
4. That the SMT makes greater use of notice boards across the BCU and considers how the Force values might be more effectively marketed.
5. That the SMT identifies one of its members to act as a champion for PCSOs.
6. That the SMT should review the support provided by all special constables with a view to improving integration and demonstrating Best Value.
7. Based on demand profiling the SMT should continue to review shift patterns across the BCU in order to improve harmonisation, officer visibility and availability at times of peak demand.
8. That in order to improve file quality and handover packages the SMT should consider secondments to the Prisoner Handling Team.

Performance

Crime Levels and Detections	January to December 2004	January to December 2005	Change
Total recorded crime	10,442	10,421	-0.20%
Total recorded crime per 1,000 population	54.14	54.03	-0.20%
Number of crimes detected	2,993	3,724	24.42%
% Crimes detected	28.66%	35.74%	7.08%pts
Number of sanction detections	2,686	2,929	9.05%
% of Crimes with a sanction detection	25.72%	28.11%	9.27%
Total residential burglary	526	449	-14.64%
Total residential burglaries per 1,000 households	6.79	5.80	-14.64%
Number of residential burglaries detected	85	104	22.35%
% Residential burglaries detected	16.16%	23.16%	7.0%pts
Number of residential burglary sanction detections	83	71	-14.46%
% Residential burglaries with a Sanction detection	15.78%	15.81%	0.21%
Total vehicle crime	1,400	1,071	-23.50%
Total vehicle crime per 1,000 population	7.26	5.55	-23.50%
Number of vehicle crimes detected	114	167	46.49%
% Vehicle crimes detected	8.14%	15.59%	7.45%pts
Number of vehicle crime sanction detections	120	116	-3.33%
% Vehicle crimes with a Sanction detection	8.57%	10.83%	26.36%
Total violent crime	1,689	2,055	21.67%
Total violent crime per 1,000 population	8.76	10.66	21.67%
Number of violent crimes detected	1,105	1,448	31.04%
% Violent crimes detected	65.42%	70.46%	5.04%pts
Number of violent crimes sanction detections	962	1,068	11.02%
% Violent crimes with a Sanction Detection	56.96%	51.97%	-8.75%
Total robbery	69	65	-5.80%
Total robbery per 1,000 population	0.36	0.34	-5.80%
Number of robberies detected	20	20	0.00%
% Robberies detected	28.99%	30.77%	1.78%pts
Number of robberies sanction detections	21	11	-47.62%
% Robberies with a Sanction detection	30.43%	16.92%	-44.40%

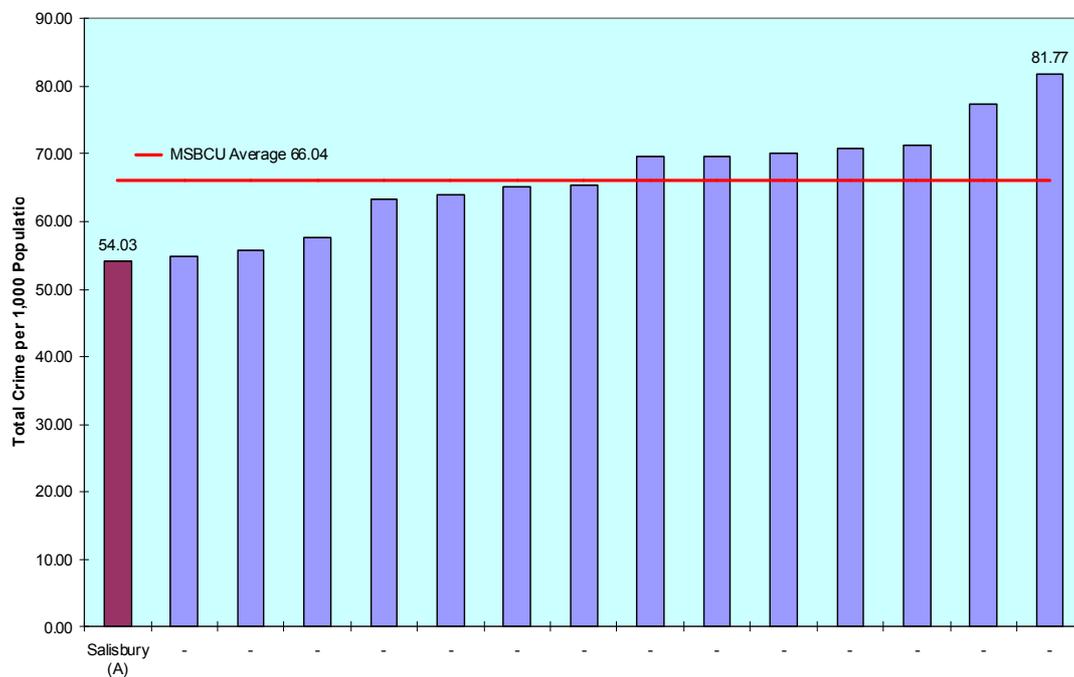
Total Crime

For the period January to December 2005 total recorded crime **decreased by 0.20%** when compared with the previous year. The BCU ranked **1st out of 15** for total crime per 1,000 population in their MSBCU group for the year January to December 2005 and is **below the MSBCU average**. Projections based on the last 3, 6 and 12 months' data show the level of crime **increasing slightly**.

For the period January to December 2005 the actual number of crimes detected **increased by 24.42%** when compared to the previous year. For the same period the overall detection rate for the BCU is **35.74%** compared with **28.66%** the previous year (a 7.8%point increase). The BCU is ranked **3rd out of 15** in the MSBCU group. The BCU is **above** the MSBCU average detection rate. Projections based on the last 3 months data show the detection rate **declining**, projections based on the last 6 months data show the detection rate **remaining at the current level**, projections based on the last 12 months data show the detection rate **increasing**.

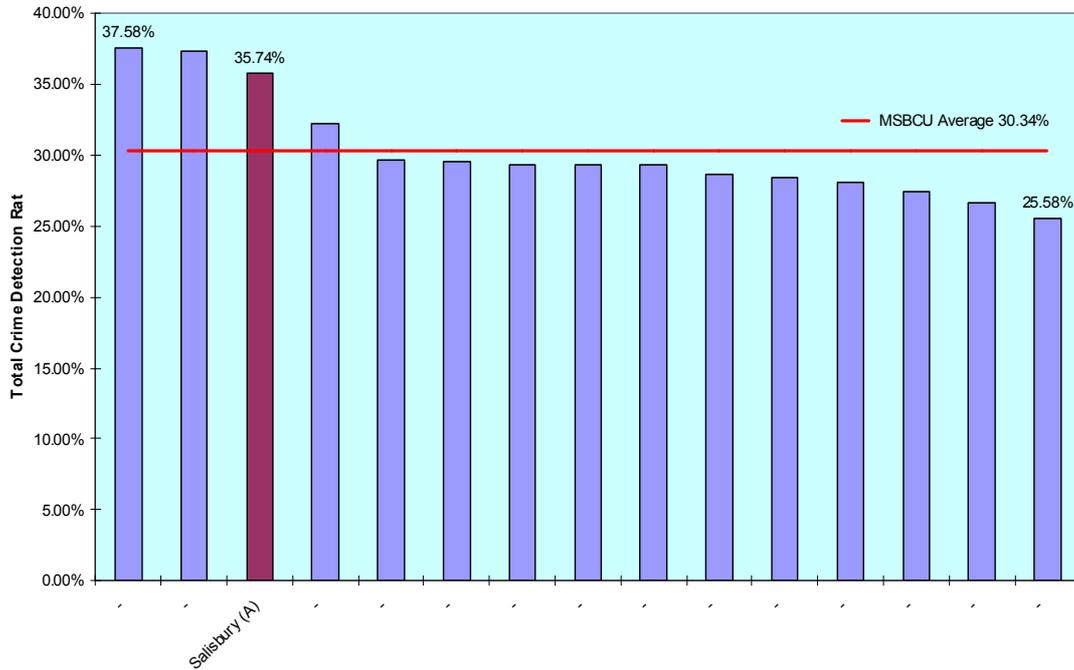
For the total number of crimes with a sanction detection there was an **increase of 9.27%** for the year January to December 2005 when compared with the previous year. For the same period the overall sanction detection rate is **28.11%** compared with **25.72%** the previous year. The BCU is ranked **2nd out of 15** in the MSBCU group.

Total Crime per 1,000 Population January to December 2005



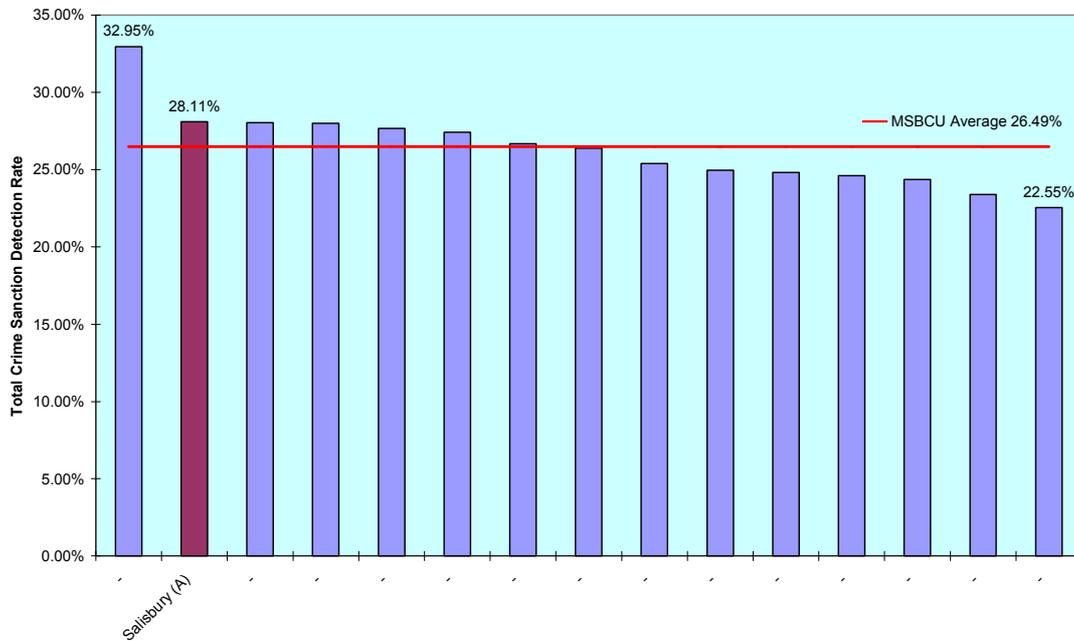
Source: HMIC South of England Region – RDS Crux Matrix 2006
(Only Salisbury BCU have been identified as the 2005/06 data has not been validated or published; this is in accordance with HMIC data release guidelines)

Total Crime Detection Rate January to December 2005



Source: HMIC South of England Region – RDS Crux Matrix 2006
(Only Salisbury BCU have been identified as the 2005/06 data has not been validated or published; this is in accordance with HMIC data release guidelines)

Total Crime Sanction Detection Rate January to December 2005



Source: HMIC South of England Region – RDS Crux Matrix 2006
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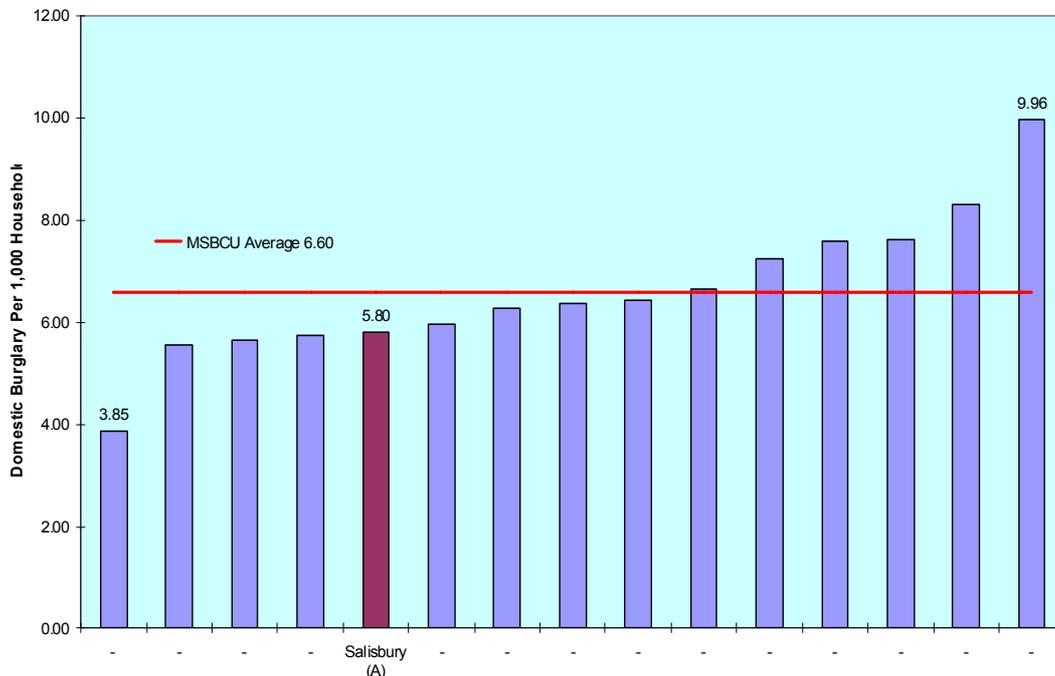
Domestic Burglary

For the period January to December 2005 total recorded domestic burglaries **decreased by 14.64%** when compared with the previous year. The BCU ranked **5th out of 15** for domestic burglary per 1,000 households in its MSBCU group for the year January to December 2005 and is currently **below MSBCU average** for domestic burglary per 1,000 households. Projections based on the last 3, 6 and 12 months' data show the level of crime **reducing**.

For the period January to December 2005 the actual number of domestic burglaries detected **increased by 22.35%** when compared to the previous year. For the same period the overall detection rate for the BCU is **23.16%** compared with **16.16%** the previous year (a 7%point increase). The BCU is ranked **5th out of 15** in the MSBCU group and is **in line** with the MSBCU average. Projections based on the last 3 and 6 months data show the detection rate decreasing, but projections based on the last 12 months data show the detection rate **increasing**.

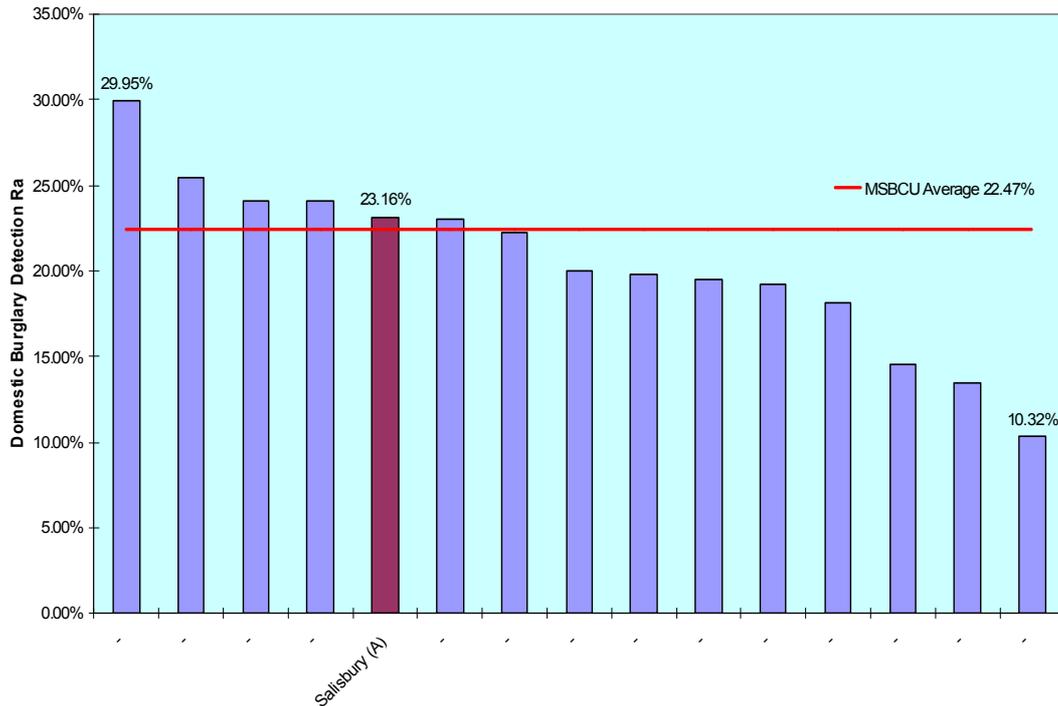
For the total number of burglaries with a sanction detection there was a **decrease of 14.46%** for the year January to December 2005 when compared with the previous year. For the same period the overall sanction detection rate is **15.81%** compared with **15.78%** the previous year (a 0.21%point increase). The BCU is ranked **12th out of 15** in the MSBCU group.

Domestic Burglary per 1,000 Households January to December 2005



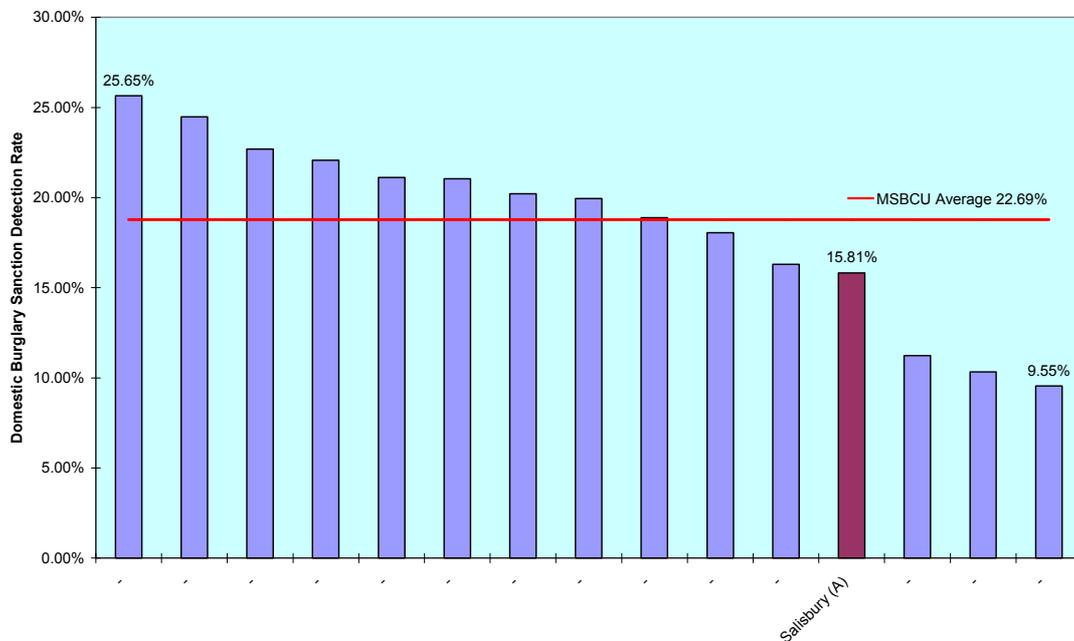
Source: HMIC South of England Region – RDS Crux Matrix 2006
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Domestic Burglary Detection Rate January to December 2005



Source: HMIC South of England Region – RDS Crux Matrix 2006
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Domestic Burglary Sanction Detection Rate January to December 2005



Source: HMIC South of England Region – RDS Crux Matrix 2006
(Only Salisbury BCU have been identified as the 2005/06 data has not been validated or published; this is in accordance with HMIC data release guidelines)

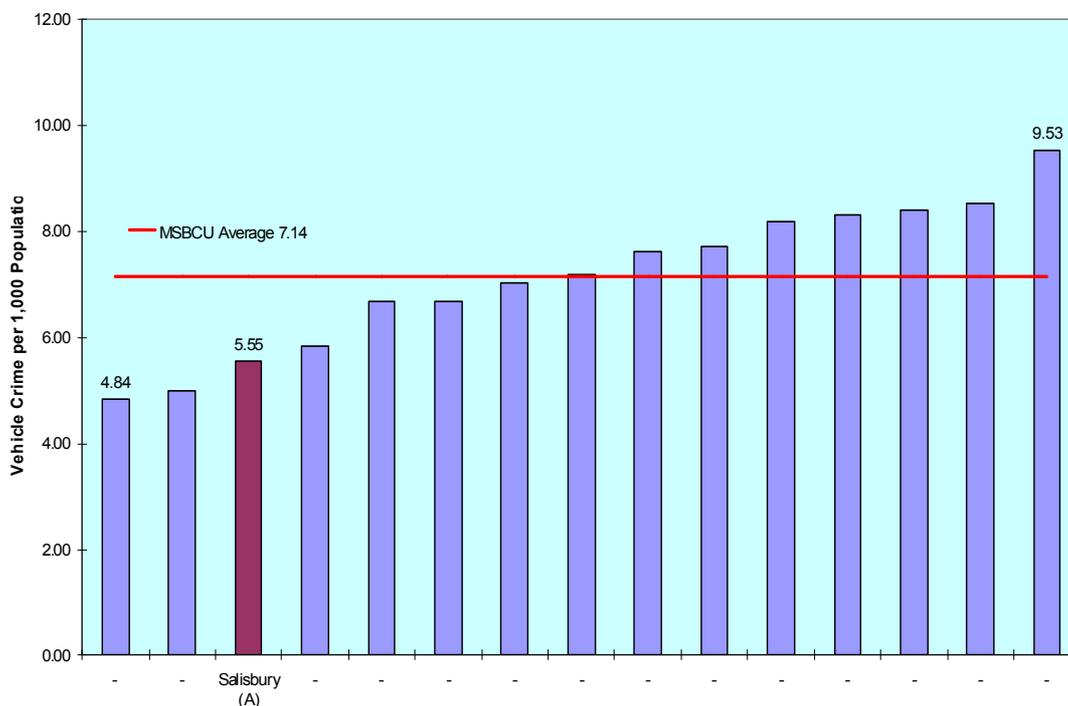
Vehicle Crime

For the period January to December 2005 total recorded vehicle crime **decreased by 23.50%** when compared with the previous year. The BCU ranked **3rd out of 15** for vehicle crime in its MSBCU group for the year January to December 2005 and is **below** the MSBCU average for vehicle crime per 1,000 population. Projections based on the last 3 months show the level of vehicle crime **remaining at the current level**, but projections based on the last 6 and 12 months data show the level of crime **decreasing**.

For the period January to December 2005 the actual number of crimes detected **increased by 46.49%** when compared to the previous year. For the same period the overall detection rate for the BCU is **15.59%** compared with **8.14%** the previous year, the BCU is ranked **2nd out of 15** in the MSBCU group for the year January to December 2005 and the BCU is **above** the MSBCU average. Projections based on the last 3 and 6 months data show the detection rate **decreasing**, but projections based on the last 6 months data show the detection rate **increasing**.

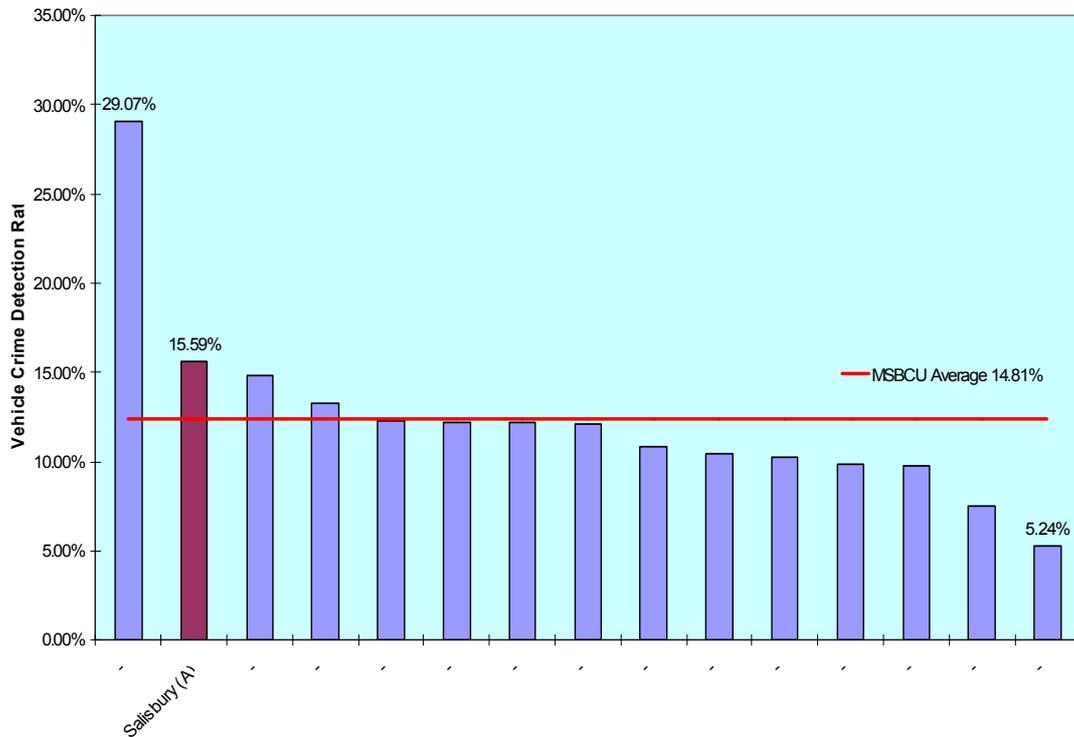
For the total number of vehicle crimes with a sanction detection there was a **decrease of 3.33%** for the year January to December 2005 when compared with the previous year. For the same period the overall sanction detection rate is **10.83%** compared with **8.57%** the previous year (a 26.36%point increase). The BCU is ranked **8th out of 15** in the MSBCU group.

Vehicle Crime per 1,000 Population January to December 2005



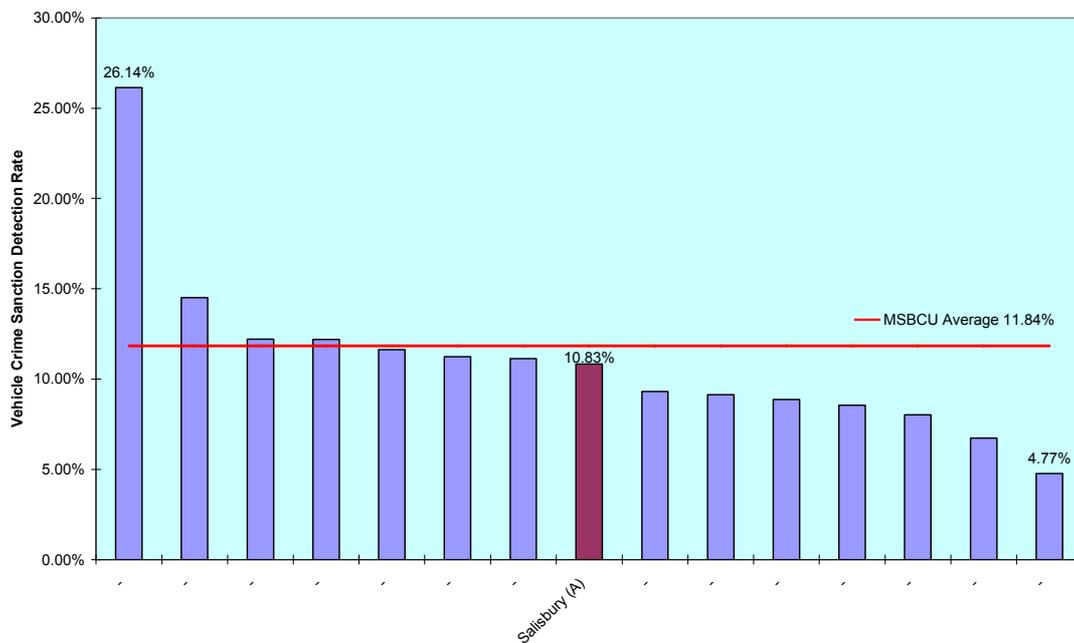
Source: HMIC South of England Region – RDS Crux Matrix 2006
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Vehicle Crime Detection Rate January to December 2005



Source: HMIC South of England Region – RDS Crux Matrix 2006
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Vehicle Crime Sanction Detection Rate January to December 2005



Source: HMIC South of England Region – RDS Crux Matrix 2006
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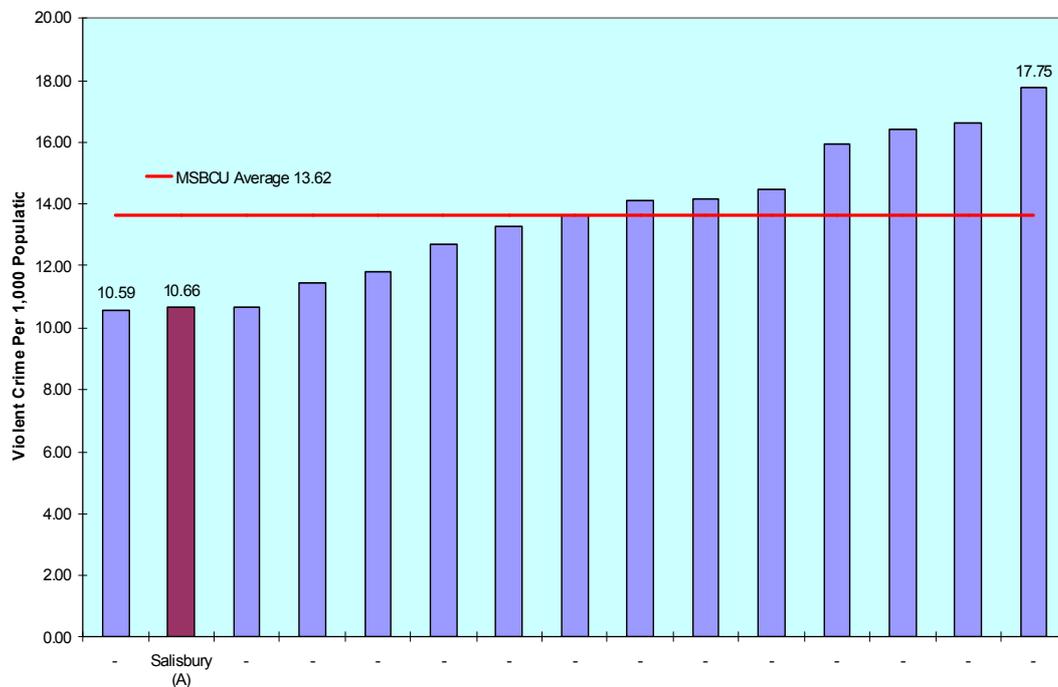
Violent Crime

For the period January to December 2005 total recorded violent crime **increased by 21.67%** when compared with the previous year. The BCU ranked **2nd out of 15** for violent crime in its MSBCU group for the year January to December 2005 and is **below** the MSBCU average for violent crime per 1,000 population. Projections based on the last 3, 6 and 12 months' data show the level of violent crime **increasing**.

For the period January to December 2005 the actual number of crimes detected **increased by 31.04%** when compared to the previous year. For the same period the overall detection rate for the BCU is **70.46%** compared with **65.42%** the previous year. The BCU is ranked **3rd out of 15** in the MSBCU group and **above** the MSBCU average. Projections based on the last 3 months data show the detection rate **decreasing**, but projections based on the last 6 and 12 months data show the detection rate **increasing**.

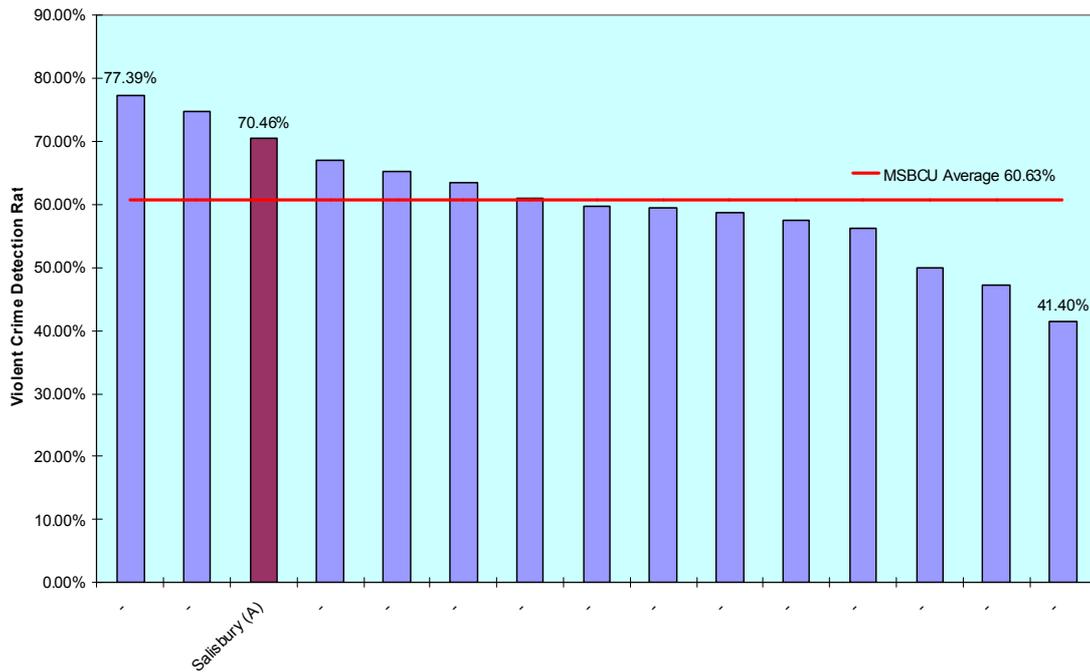
For the total number of violent crimes with a sanction detection there was an **increase of 11.02%** for the year January to December 2005 when compared with the previous year. For the same period the overall sanction detection rate is **51.97%** compared with **56.96%** the previous year (an 8.75%point decrease). The BCU is ranked **7th out of 15** in the MSBCU group.

Violent Crime per 1,000 Population January to December 2005



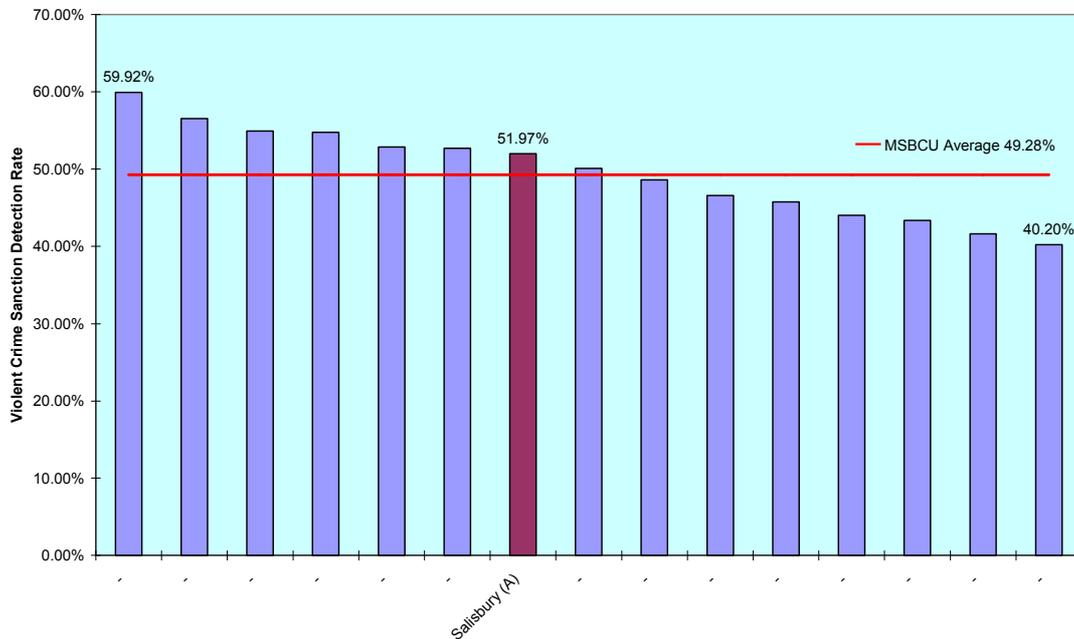
Source: HMIC South of England Region – RDS Crux Matrix 2006
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Violent Crime Detection Rate January to December 2005



Source: HMIC South of England Region – RDS Crux Matrix 2006
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Violent Crime Sanction Detection Rate January to December 2005



Source: HMIC South of England Region – RDS Crux Matrix 2006
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Inspection Recommendations

<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>Action taken by BCU</i>	<i>Measurable impact</i>
The SMT reviews the fortnightly tasking and coordination meeting and complements it with a more robust approach on a daily basis.	After visits to other forces the T&CG meeting has been reorganised and the SMT has introduced daily tasking and intelligence meetings.	It is difficult to quantify the impact on performance, however, the T&CG meeting is now a dynamic and efficient process and NIM compliant. The BCU has introduced daily tasking meetings, demonstrating a firm grip on performance and activity.
The introduction of mapping to assist with the identification of series crime should be given a higher priority.	The introduction of mapping facilities has been a force project which, after pressure from the BCU, installed new software just before the revisit.	All analysts now have mapping facilities and are fully trained, however, the system has not been running for long enough to measure its effectiveness.
Wiltshire Constabulary considers creating a single dedicated source unit to cover the entire force area.	The implementation of the dedicated source unit was managed by headquarters CID to which the BCU contributed 2 staff.	A dedicated source unit under headquarters CID began operating on 1st April 2005 which has generated 944 intelligence logs for the BCU, 248 of which have been actioned with 48 resulting in arrests.
The SMT makes greater use of notice boards across the BCU and considers how the force values might be more effectively marketed.	Notice boards at all stations display appropriate performance targets and information. Posters display the new force values and objectives across the BCU.	There is no direct measurable impact from this recommendation, however, it is clear that the grip on performance is being maintained and staff are aware of priorities.
The SMT identifies one of its members to act as a champion for PCSOs	A chief inspector is now the SMT lead for PCSOs.	The BCU is participating in the national Neighbourhood Policing Team Project as a pathfinder BCU and the role of the

		PCSOs is yet to be finalised. However, the SMT ensure that they are fully integrated into the reassurance agenda and deployed accordingly.
The SMT should review the support provided by all special constables with a view to improving integration and Best Value.	This has been undertaken as part of a force-wide review of the Special Constabulary which will be reflected in the launch of the Neighbourhood Policing Teams.	The BCU will align and deploy Special Constables within forthcoming Neighbourhood Policing Teams, but is awaiting the results of the force review before progressing further.
Based on demand profiling the SMT should continue to review shift patterns across the BCU in order to improve harmonisation, officer visibility and availability at peak times.	The BCU has developed a resource allocation model which is being used as an interim measure until a force single VSA pattern has been agreed. The BCU Commander is seeking advice from Merseyside on best practice for a less formalised VSA.	The BCU has not been able to make meaningful progress due to a direction from headquarters to await the force VSA which will be implemented with the Neighbourhood Policing Teams.
In order to improve file quality and handover packages the SMT should consider secondments to the Prisoner Handling Team.	The Prisoner Handling Teams have been replaced by case management teams. Secondments to the teams are conducted following identified training needs in staff through PDRs	The criminal justice investigators now interview 40% and process 60% of the BCU's prisoners. The number of prisoners on 47(3) bail has been reduced by 100.

Monitoring assessment & follow-up action

It was clear to the HMI Staff Officer that all the recommendations contained within the original report had received attention at BCU level, but not all had been implemented due to on-going work at force level.

Tasking

The BCU has responded well to the recommendations made during the previous HMIC inspection and some tangible improvements are evident. Since the inspection the Supt Ops and intelligence Detective Inspector have visited Kent and Surrey Police to study best practice in both daily and fortnightly tasking arrangements.

The daily tasking meeting has been running since 30th March 2005 and the BCU has introduced telephone conferencing to ensure that every sector is represented and to capture activity across the BCU. The meeting follows a set agenda and includes a breakdown of arrests over the previous 24 hours, an analysis of notable incidents, intelligence, updates on missing persons, forensic hits and CSI reports. The meeting attended by the HMIC staff officer was appropriately succinct and business-like with an update on actions from the previous day.

The fortnightly tasking and coordinating group (T&CG) had appropriate attendance from departmental and sector heads and was again conducted in an efficient and business-like manner. The meeting was driven by an analytical report which gave a comprehensive breakdown of all control strategy crimes, detailing emerging trends and current intelligence. Although the T&CG meeting did not analyse performance in great detail there was a high degree of accountability amongst managers who were required to report progress and activity from their staff against outstanding actions. This robust approach ensures that the T&CG process contributes directly to performance against BCU priorities.

The T&CG meeting followed a tactical assessment which ensured that the BCU's tactical capability was identified and the strands of enforcement, prevention and intelligence addressed in a logical manner.

Mapping

After a considerable delay the BCU's analysts were given Blue 8 XD mapping software and have been fully trained in its use. The BCU Commander has campaigned for mapping facilities since the inspection and the system should soon pay dividends, however, the software needs to be linked to force databases to ensure analysts do not have to spend time inputting information.

The HMIC staff officer received a demonstration of the mapping software and whilst this represents a significant analytical tool it was noted that surrounding forces are using a different system which is not compatible with Wiltshire's and this may ultimately limit the BCU's capability for analysing cross-border criminality.

Dedicated Source Unit

The Force's dedicated source unit (DSU) became operational on 1st April 2005 and is led by a Detective Inspector with 2 Detective Sergeants operating from a central office with 2 handlers on each BCU.

There are currently no female handlers which limits the capability of the DSU. The ACPO manual of standards for handling CHISs recommends that of the 2 handlers meeting a CHIS one of them should be the same sex as the CHIS. As far as juvenile sources are concerned one of the handlers must be of the same gender as the source. Currently 35% of the DSU's registered sources are female. The Force is aware of this situation and is taking steps to recruit female handlers.

The DSU's performance figures show that between April 2005 and January 2006

Salisbury BCU received 944 intelligence logs from the DSU, 248 of which were actioned resulting in 48 arrests. The vast majority of intelligence logs generated by the DSU related to class A drugs and it is envisaged that female handlers will allow the unit to recruit more CHISs who will contribute intelligence on acquisitive crime. Notwithstanding this issue, the number of arrests generated by the DSU's intelligence logs demonstrates a good level of productivity.

The HMIC staff officer was informed that the 2 handlers at Salisbury were based in a room where staff in a neighbouring office could hear their conversations. This concern was brought to the attention of a member of the SMT who agreed to look into the matter further.

Notice Boards

The BCU now displays performance data from iQuanta charts on notice boards at all its stations. The information links to force data and posters are now displayed with a simplified version of the Force's values and objectives. A Quality of Service charter is to be published in the near future.

The HMIC staff officer saw notice boards at Salisbury and Devizes which reflect the work undertaken. Both stations had notice boards containing clear information for staff on performance progress on recorded crime and detections against required targets. Both stations displayed the new force values and objectives on posters in conspicuous locations.

PCSOs / Special Constables

The BCU has appointed a chief inspector as the lead SMT member for PCSOs. There are eight PCSOs on the BCU based in pairs at Devizes, Amesbury, Salisbury City Centre and Bemerton Heath estate (Salisbury). As part of the process of integrating PCSOs into the service the BCU is ensuring that new PCSO recruits are trained in the BCU's probationer development unit where they will receive a condensed version of the initial course given to constables.

Since the inspection the BCU has been given "pathfinder" status as it is piloting the Neighbourhood Policing Team Project which is run from Force Headquarters. The BCU recognises that the roles of PCSOs and Special Constables will be determined in the near future by the requirements of the Neighbourhood Policing Project and is awaiting guidance on their deployment and remits. As a result of the work at force level the recommendation to improve integration of Special Constables and demonstrate Best Value has not been finalised.

Shift Patterns

The recommendation that the BCU reviews shift patterns to improve officer visibility and availability at peak demand has been delayed due to an instruction that BCU Commanders must await the completion of a report proposing a force-wide VSA pattern. A decision was originally due in September 2005, but has yet to be announced. The BCU Commander appreciates the complexities of the problem, but is understandably anxious to ensure that his staff are aligned to match peaks in demand

and has begun working with a colleague in Merseyside to establish a less formalised basis for VSA developments.

The BCU may wish to consider recent work already undertaken by Hertfordshire Police who have realigned shift patterns to cope with peaks in demand and to help overcome the challenges of implementing neighbourhood policing.

Secondments to Prisoner Handling Teams

Since the inspection the BCU's prisoner handling teams have evolved into case management teams with a far wider remit. Whilst case management teams conduct interviews they also complete the bulk of paperwork and administrative duties on behalf of investigating officers. This is an innovative approach which has a real impact on performance in terms of improving file quality and returning officers promptly to patrol functions once a prisoner has been handed over. The BCU does not currently collate statistics to show the improvements in file quality, but the criminal justice manager provided verbal evidence of good progress in this area and relations with the CPS have improved since the teams were introduced.

The BCU has invested considerable resources into this work, providing 3 criminal justice teams each with a case manager, 4 police staff and 1 constable. The teams now interview 40% of the BCU's prisoners and process 60%. The number of prisoners on 47(3) bail at any one time has been reduced by a 100.

The BCU accepted the principle of the recommendation, but in light of the wider remit of the case management teams it has decided to give officers attachments to the teams only if there is a recognised training need to be addressed. Officers are attached to the teams once their training needs have formally been identified through the PDR process. In view of the changes to this area of the BCU's business since the inspection this is a sensible measure. The Force is planning a review of criminal justice processes across its BCUs and changes are anticipated. In light of the changes made at Salisbury and the forthcoming introduction of statutory charging on 20th March 2006 a period of stability would be welcomed in order to assess the effectiveness of the current arrangements.

Conclusion

It is the view of the HMIC staff officer that the senior management team at Salisbury BCU have invested considerable time and effort in responding to the recommendations made in the HMIC BCU inspection report of November 2004. Those recommendations which the BCU has been able to influence have been implemented. It is hoped that the issues around shift patterns and special constables will be resolved in the near future.

The BCU has made particularly notable progress in the implementation of NIM and the fortnightly T&CG and daily management meetings are now operating well.

As illustrated above, when comparing 2005 with 2004 there has been a very slight

increase in total recorded crime (0.20%); there has been a substantial decrease in vehicle crime (23.50%) and dwelling burglaries (14.64%). This, together with the 7.08% improvement in all crime detections, is to be welcomed. However, the increase in violent crime 21.67% should continue to be an issue of concern to the BCU and it is hoped that this figure is as a result of increased police activity at hotspots and more accurate crime recording practices which have been implemented at Force Headquarters. This year should be considered as a 'baseline', against which violent crime will be measured in the future. Any significant increase will require immediate action by the BCU.

The HMIC staff officer considers that there is no need for any further inspection activity, other than routine monitoring.

HMIC BCU reports represent a snapshot in time, ie when the inspection occurred. It is acknowledged that performance may have changed since the time of the inspection. Every effort is made to publish reports as soon as possible after inspection.