



Inspecting policing
in the public interest



Working with Police and Crime Commissioners

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) inspects and reports on the efficiency and effectiveness of police forces (Police Act 1996 section 54(2)) and other specified national policing agencies.

HMIC fulfils this role through a regular, programmed cycle of monitoring, inspecting and reporting on policing in England and Wales. Each stage of this cycle produces data, judgments and recommendations which may be of help to Police and Crime Commissioners as they work to hold their forces to account on behalf of the public they represent.

This leaflet summarises:

- how we plan to share our expertise and information with you in a timely, targeted and useful way;
- our proposed mix of scheduled meetings and as-required updates; and
- the ways we will ask for your views on how we can best work together in the future.

A separate publication will outline how you can commission bespoke inspections from HMIC.

Business as usual: Sharing data, judgments and inspection findings throughout the year

■ Monitoring

HMIC monitors police performance across England and Wales in order to identify forces or topics (such as particular crime types) where the risk to the public is increasing. As part of this process, we consider and track trends in national performance data, and examine 'outlier' forces in particular crime types in more detail, so we can recognise and help the police to address issues before they become problems. This work complements and can inform the local monitoring done by forces and PCCs.

To inform our professional judgments, HM Inspectors for all regions meet once a month to consider:

- the latest performance data, looking at change over time and differences between forces;
- feedback from HMIC staff who have regular contact with forces;
- other evidence such as inspection findings; and
- research on what policing issues are concerning the public.

While these meetings are only attended by HMIC staff, we operate on a policy of 'no surprises'. In practice, this means that we will contact the Chief Constable and PCC of any force where we have identified a potential issue, to alert them to the problem (if they were not already aware of it), and to ask more about the context and any unusual circumstances.

In addition, every three months we hold a 'Crime and Policing Monitoring Group' meeting to discuss the findings from the monthly monitoring sessions with external stakeholders. This focuses on forces or issues where the problem has the potential to be both enduring and severe, and looks for ways of helping the force to resolve the situation. The group includes attendees from the Home Office and the Association of Chief Police Officers, and the Chief Constables or PCCs of the forces being discussed may also be invited. We will consult with you on how PCCs wish to be involved in this meeting.

We will circulate a summary of what was discussed to all PCCs and Chief Constables, and again ask for views on any material adverse findings at force level.

Regional HM Inspectors will also provide a force-specific briefing to PCCs on what was discussed (either in a letter, through a telephone call or by a face-to-face meeting).

How we'll keep you informed: HM Inspector contact, circulated minutes, representation at the meeting.

Find out more: HMIC's approach to monitoring forces. Available from www.hmic.gov.uk



■ Inspecting

HMIC's published inspection framework outlines the planned inspections for each financial year. (To note: this does not include bespoke inspections commissioned by PCCs, which will be listed in a separate area of the website.) The Home Secretary approves this framework, and it is laid before Parliament. We consult with the sector and the public on what should be included, and as part of this will contact PCCs to get your views on what areas of policing should be inspected in all 43 forces in 2013/14.



If we are inspecting your force as part of a planned inspection, we will:

- discuss with you why we want to inspect, and what we hope to achieve;
- consult with you before we start on the terms of reference and scope;
- provide you with early findings and feedback as the inspection progresses;
- engage with you as part of the inspection to find out your views and experiences;
- discuss with you (either with your Chief Constable, or separately) our conclusions and any recommendations; and
- provide you formally with the final report, which you are required to respond to (under section 55(5) of the Police Act 1996).

How we'll keep you informed: HM Inspector contact, debrief documents, consultation, formal issuing of final inspection reports.

Find out more: HMIC Inspection Framework 2012/13. Available from www.hmic.gov.uk

■ Reporting

HMIC publishes information on the whole breadth of policing activity, from national reports on the policing of protests to analysis of how police officers can best be equipped to handle crime at street level.

As well as our published reports and the data gathered as part of our inspections (which are mostly available from the HMIC website), we have a number of different tools for analysing data which PCCs can use to support their scrutiny of the force.

These include:

The Crime and Policing Comparator – an interactive online tool that allows comparison of selected areas of a force's performance against that of other similar forces, or against England and Wales as a whole. These performance areas were chosen after consultation with the sector and the public, but can potentially be updated to meet the needs of PCCs. The Comparator is based on the most up-to-date Home Office statistics.



Value for Money profiles – these documents give more detailed data on performance on a force-by-force level. We will offer PCC workshops to explain how the profiles work, and also to elicit views on how the profiles can be adapted to meet PCC needs.

We also maintain and update summaries of the latest academic thinking on '**what works**' in policing to reduce crime. This is available on the HMIC website. Again, we will consult with PCCs about what topics they would like this information to cover.

More formal contact: Regular quarterly meetings between PCCs and HM Inspectors

HMIC is proposing regular quarterly meetings with PCCs. This would offer the opportunity to discuss in more detail and to track issues affecting your force from quarter to quarter (although they would not of course preclude more ad hoc sharing of advice and information throughout the year).

These meetings would be attended by the regional HM Inspector, and normally also by the lead staff officer (LSO) for your force. HMIC will contact every PCC to discuss this proposal in more detail.



Professional advice as and when it's required: Supporting PCCs in holding the Chief Constable to account

The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 refers in several places to the PCC's role in holding the Chief Constable to account. As well as through the regular cycles of sharing information punctuated by more formal, scheduled meetings, HM Inspectors can offer specific support to help PCCs fulfil this role. For instance, we may be able to attend public challenge meetings with you, or offer our professional advice and unique grasp of the national picture for policing to support you in holding your Chief Constable to account in different ways.

HM Inspectorate of Constabulary

6th Floor, Globe House
89 Eccleston Square
London, SW1V 1PN

www.hmic.gov.uk
Tel: 020 3513 0500

 @HMICgov



ISBN: 978-1-78246-086-2
© HMIC 2012