

Strategic Policing Requirement

Gwent Police

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Introduction

The *Strategic Policing Requirement* (SPR) was issued in July 2012.¹ This document sets out the Home Secretary's view of the national threats that the police must prepare for and the appropriate national policing capabilities that are required to counter those threats. The SPR respects the operational independence of the police service, advising what, in strategic terms, it needs to achieve, but not how it should achieve it.

The particular threats specified in Part A of the SPR, and referred to as the national threats in this report, are:

- terrorism;
- civil emergencies;
- organised crime;
- public order threats; and
- large-scale cyber incidents.

Part B specifies the policing response that is required nationally, in conjunction with other national agencies, to counter these threats. This policing response is described in the SPR as follows:

*“the combined national **capacity** of all police forces to respond to these threats, expressed in terms of the outcomes sought – these are drawn, wherever possible, from publicly available national government strategies. Police and crime commissioners and chief constables must have regard to this aggregate capacity when considering the respective **contributions** they will make to it;*

*the **capabilities** that police forces, often working collaboratively, need to maintain in order to achieve these outcomes; the requirement for **consistency** among forces for certain key specialist capabilities where the resources from more than one police force need to be integrated with, or work effectively alongside, each other. In some instances this requirement for consistency may need to involve other key emergency services and agencies; and*

*the **connectivity** arrangements by which resources from several police forces may effectively be co-ordinated or mobilised, together and with those of other*

¹ In accordance with section 37A Police Act 1996. Available from www.gov.uk/government/publications/strategic-policing-requirement

agencies – such as the Security Service and, from 2013, the National Crime Agency. The combination of consistency and connectivity forms the basis for interoperability between police forces and with other partners.”

We report the findings from this inspection of Gwent Police which took place during September 2013 against each of these requirements.

The breadth of requirements that are set out in the strategic policing requirement are outside the scope of a single inspection. Therefore, it has been necessary to plan a series of inspections over three years so that the police response to all the national threats can be examined individually and in-depth over that period.

This year, HMIC has examined how well police forces have established arrangements to respond to strategic policing requirement threats and has conducted in-depth examinations of the police response to two of the national threats: the threat to public order; and the threat of a large-scale cyber incident.

We have produced the following three national reports, available at <http://www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmic>:

- The Strategic Policing Requirement: An inspection of the arrangements that police forces have in place to meet the requirement;
- The Strategic Policing Requirement: An inspection of how police forces in England and Wales deal with threats to public order; and
- The Strategic Policing Requirement: An inspection of how police forces in England and Wales deal with threats of a large-scale cyber incident (including criminal attack).

This report sets out what we found when we examined the arrangements that Gwent Police had in place to meet the strategic policing requirement and follows the format of the first of the national reports listed above.

Capacity and contribution

Terrorism

The chief constable understands his role in tackling the threat of terrorism. The force, together with the counter-terrorism network, has the capacity it needs to contribute to the national counter-terrorism effort.

South Wales Police hosts the Wales extremism and counter-terrorism unit which is part of the national network of dedicated counter-terrorism policing units providing functions such as the gathering of intelligence and evidence to help prevent, disrupt and prosecute terrorist activities.

Gwent Police considers threats and risks from international terrorism and domestic extremism in its strategic threat and risk assessment. Other intelligence documents include information about national, regional and local threats and how they affect Gwent. The subject of counter-terrorism is also included within the force's control strategy.²

The Wales extremism and counter-terrorism unit considers threats and risks from international terrorism and domestic extremism in its strategic plan dated 2010.

Staff from all four Welsh forces³ resource the Wales Extremism and Counter-Terrorism Unit and it includes the functions of special branch, counter-terrorism security advisors and counter-terrorism intelligence units. Staff retain their home force identity and counter-terrorism detective inspectors remain in their force areas but are managed through the Wales extremism and counter-terrorism unit.

The unit has a single budget and joint training, accreditation and equipment ensuring effective interoperability. Most of Gwent Police's capacity to tackle threats from terrorism is provided by the regional counter-terrorism intelligence unit and wider counter-terrorism network.

² Control strategies are used by police forces to define their priorities and how they assess progress in meeting them.

³ Gwent Police, North Wales Police, South Wales Police and Dyfed Powys Police.

Civil emergencies

The force, together with the Gwent local resilience forum, has the capacity to respond to local civil emergencies and to contribute to national emergencies.

The chief constable chairs the local resilience forum. The co-ordination group, that sits below the local resilience forum, is chaired by chief executives of local authorities who take responsibility on rotation. This group co-ordinates activity to respond to civil emergencies.

An assistant chief constable attends the local resilience forum and the all Wales joint emergency planning and steering group.

The force has considered likely threats that it may face from civil emergencies, but has not produced a strategic threat and risk assessment. Instead, the Gwent local resilience forum risk assessment working group has prepared a Gwent community risk register, which is published on the forum's website and describes risks that the members may have to deal with. The entry on the website is dated 2013/14.

The major incident preparedness group and the business continuity group both provide force level oversight of the risks faced by the force. These groups are supported by a further 20 working and sub-groups, which ensure that there are plans for effective responses.

The force has arrangements to request mutual aid – the provision of resources from other police forces – and any specialist skills required for dealing with civil emergencies. For the police forces in the region, mobilisation of specialist resources is co-ordinated by South Wales Police which also supports the national police coordination centre, which mobilises resources across the country.

Gwent Police has, or has access through the other forces in the region, to sufficient numbers of trained staff to deliver basic chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear capabilities.

Serious organised crime

The force has appropriate capacity to meet threats from serious organised crime, either with its own trained staff, or through its regional organised crime unit, known as Tarian.

An assistant chief constable provides clear leadership of the force's response to serious organised crime. Serious organised crime is considered in the force's control strategy dated September 2012.

The force applies nationally approved methods to disrupt organised crime groups. There is a clear way of making sure that appropriate measures are taken against organised crime groups in accordance with the force's assessment of the potential

threat, risk, harm and demands that these groups pose. The force can respond to these threats using its own resources, or it can request assistance from the region or other forces across the country.

There is a structure to decide how resources are allocated to investigate, disrupt and prosecute organised crime groups.⁴ Organised crime groups that have been identified are discussed at local, task-allocation meetings and actions from these meetings are then allocated across the force.

Public order

The chief constable understands his role to provide police support units⁵ to deal with public order incidents across force boundaries and to make a contribution to the national requirement.

Gwent Police has completed a public order strategic threat and risk assessment, dated April 2012.

In addition to regional arrangements for tackling serious organised crime and counter-terrorism, Gwent Police has developed collaborative arrangements with South Wales Police and Dyfed-Powys Police for the provision of certain capabilities including public order mobilisation. These arrangements are referred to as the South Wales collaboration arrangements. South Wales Police leads on the co-ordination and mobilisation of public order resources for the South Wales collaboration and supports the National Police Coordination Centre.

For each force, HMIC compared the number of police support units they declared they had, with the number of police support units that they told us they needed to respond to local outbreaks of disorder. The force assessed that it needed five police support units to respond to local threats and had trained five. The force can provide the three police support units that it has assessed it requires to contribute towards national mobilisation.

The force has sufficient specialist public order staff⁶ and senior officers to command responses to major events and public disorder.

⁴ The United Kingdom law enforcement approach to tackling serious organised crime is based upon the identification of organised crime groups, assessment of the harm posed by them and their management by disruption, investigation and prosecution.

⁵ Police Support Units are the basic formations used by the police service for the policing of major events. The composition of a police support unit is standardised across all of the 43 police forces in England and Wales and consists of one inspector, three sergeants and 18 police constables, plus three drivers trained and equipped to carry out public order tactics to national standards, with three suitably equipped personnel carriers. Formations of a sergeant and six constables are referred to as serials.

The use of mutual aid is another indicator of the extent to which police forces either have or do not have sufficient trained public order resources. Data provided by forces on their provision and receipt of mutual aid for 2011/12 and 2012/13 shows that Gwent was one of 31 forces that were net providers for public order policing mutual aid.

Large-scale cyber incident

At the time of our inspection, the force's plans to respond to threat of a large-scale cyber incident were still under development.

Gwent Police had not completed a strategic threat and risk assessment linked to the likelihood of a large-scale cyber incident.

Senior leaders within the force explained that they are awaiting guidance from national police leadership about what capabilities they need to develop to deal with cyber threats. The force is contributing to discussions about the development of regional capabilities to investigate cybercrime and other threats. If the force were to be faced with a significant cyber threat, it would rely on the regional organised crime unit and national capabilities to assist in providing a response.

Gwent Police has assessed the threats and potential impact of a denial of service attack⁷ on its own systems and has prepared a procedures manual⁸ which defines the forces response to cyber security incidents. The document is dated May 2012.

The force undergoes an annual accreditation that assesses the risks for all the systems in force. The force uses specialist hardware and software to minimise the risk of attack.

Staff demonstrated an understanding of the implications of a cyber attack. The force had prepared business continuity plans⁹ to enable the force to continue functioning in the event of disruptions to services, including its IT systems. These include a plan illustrating what should be done in the event of a cyber attack.

⁶ In addition to public order trained police officers, forces have specialists who are trained in a number of capabilities. These include liaison with protestors to facilitate peaceful protest and the removal of uncooperative protestors causing obstructions.

⁷ A denial of service attack is an attempt to make a computer or network of computers unavailable to its users.

⁸ Shared resource service and Gwent Police cyber security incident response policy and procedures manual.

⁹ Business continuity plans set out how the force will operate following an incident and how it expects to return to normal business in the quickest possible time afterwards.

Capability

Terrorism

Gwent Police has, or has access to, the necessary capability to conduct complex investigations into terrorism. It has the systems in place to manage the training of special branch officers to maintain the necessary skills to provide specific counter-terrorism capability.

Gwent Police and the counter-terrorism intelligence unit work together to ensure that all available information is gathered and analysed. This provides intelligence that informs regional and national understanding of terrorist and domestic extremism threats. The force produces regular intelligence assessments that review how effectively staff are achieving objectives and how police and partner activity is affecting what is known about threats, risks and harm. These documents are also used by force staff to manage task-allocation meetings.

The Wales extremism and counter-terrorism unit provides the capability needed to undertake complex investigations, respond to critical incidents (including using command and control) and provide specialist equipment and training to national standards.

Gwent Police uses a secure video conferencing system to facilitate daily management meetings with the other forces in the region. Details about terrorism intelligence and the forces' responses are discussed and shared securely.

The head of special branch analysed its training needs in July 2013 which confirmed that the force has sufficient trained and accredited staff locally to support all four strands of the counter-terrorism CONTEST¹⁰ strategy.

Civil emergencies

The force is meeting the strategic policing requirement to provide capability to meet civil emergencies which span the borders between Gwent and surrounding forces.

Events that could threaten human welfare are recorded in the Gwent local resilience forum community risk register.

The head of Gwent Police emergency planning has prepared a number of operational resilience and disaster recovery plans for the local resilience forum and the force assesses its capacity and capability against the roles identified within these plans.

¹⁰ CONTEST – the government's counter-terrorism strategy. The four strands are; pursue, prevent, protect and prepare.

The local resilience forum has a business continuity management group that is chaired by the emergency planning leader of the Health Board. This group links with the Gwent Police business continuity group which is chaired by a chief superintendent from the force.

The Gwent local resilience forum has a training and exercise programme that validates the force's capability to co-ordinate responses, with partner agencies, to events threatening human welfare (such as nuclear incidents or industrial accidents). The last exercise took place in 2013 and involved a simulated incident in the Severn Tunnel.

Gwent Police maintains records of the training provided to staff.

Serious organised crime

Gwent Police has the capabilities required, either internally or through officers provided by the regional organised crime unit, to meet threats from serious organised crime.

HMIC found that, in the region, the chief constables have agreed their detailed plans for the further development of the regional organised crime unit. The force holds task-allocation meetings every two weeks to agree on what is dealt with by the different levels of response (local, regional or national). Matters that require immediate attention are dealt with in similar, daily meetings.

Regional task-allocation meetings, chaired by a Gwent Police assistant chief constable, decide the allocation of resources to investigate, disrupt and prosecute organised crime groups based upon threat risk and harm. All cases that require resources beyond the capabilities of individual police forces, and require regional or national assistance, are considered in the regional task-allocation meetings.

The force reviews the training required for staff dealing with serious and organised crime annually and staff are trained to national standards and have appropriate equipment to fulfil their roles. Training requirements are reviewed annually. Records of staff skills and accreditation are kept and there is a way to make sure that it can maintain its capability as staff move on.

Public order

Gwent Police has the capabilities required to respond to public order threats.

The force has completed a self-assessment of its public order capability using the College of Policing's capability framework. This involves assessing how the force meets ten capabilities that are sub-divided into 32 definitions. The force reported that they fully complied with 24 of the 32 definitions.

Gwent Police trains its staff in accordance with national standards, including the use of tactics to end incidents of disorder before they become worse.

The force has reviewed the number of officers with skills that it needs to perform specific roles and assessed that there are no gaps. Information provided by the force included an assessment that it was able to provide five police support units with the requisite equipment.

Gwent Police has established procedures, to use during planned operations, to understand how those involved in disorder are using social media. This means that the use of social media (such as that which occurred during the 2011 disorders by people to communicate where disorder was taking place) can be monitored. It can also use its constant intelligence management capability to perform this role in the event of spontaneous outbreaks of disorder. This contributes to national intelligence gathering and enables incident commanders to deploy their resources using the best available information.

Gwent Police train their public order staff in force and provide four days training per year. Staff who have been deployed for public order events and on training exercises are debriefed to make sure that the force is using the most effective tactics and equipment. Although there is no specific training facility in the force, the public order training staff are resourceful in finding suitable and varied venues. Officers are confident that their views are considered in developing the force's public order capability.

HMIC tested, without notice, the force's capability to mobilise and conduct mutual support across boundaries to outbreaks of public disorder. Control room staff in Gwent demonstrated effective ways of responding to the scenario given in the test.

We found that there were plans to establish command, control and communications support to respond to incidents. An inspector trained in commanding police responses to public order incidents was available immediately. A senior officer was also available who would co-ordinate longer-term responses. One fully equipped serial would be available within 30 minutes and there were plans to secure further serials from elsewhere in the force area. Control room staff were not aware of the standard operating procedures or the plan for cross-border mobilisation, which set out how the force should obtain assistance from other forces in the region, and would contact the on-duty senior officer or logistics planning staff to facilitate additional resources.

Staff had access to contingency plans through the force's command and control systems and they were available in hard copy in the force control room.

We inspected one of the force's police support unit carriers and found it to be fully functioning and equipped to national standards.

Large-scale cyber incident

Gwent Police, like most forces, is not yet able to identify or understand fully the threats, risks and harm posed by cybercrime. The force is not yet taking full advantage of opportunities being made available to train its workforce to deal with cybercrime.

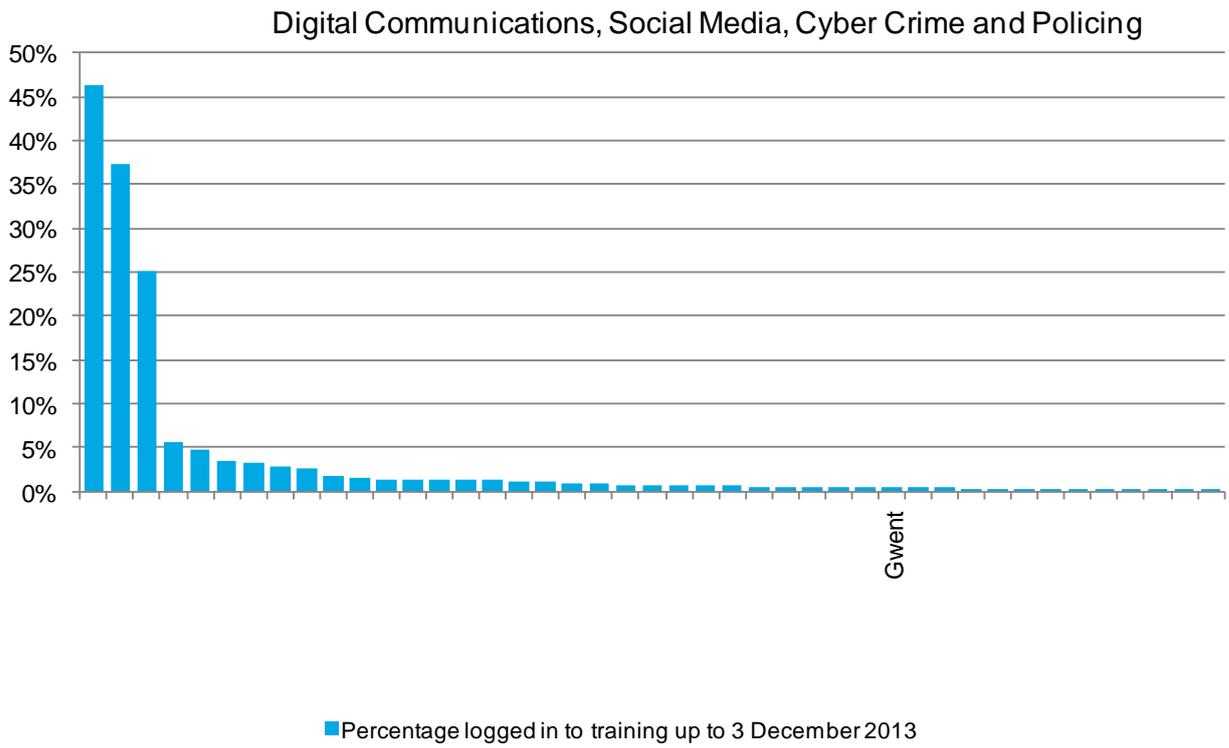
At the time of the inspection visit, the force was working to improve its understanding of cyber issues and its response to a cyber attack.

Gwent Police's hi-tech crime investigators – staff who investigate cybercrime – have been trained to nationally agreed standards and some have relevant higher education qualifications. The force is not working with academic institutions or private industry organisations that focus on the recruitment of people with IT skills, or asking for assistance from volunteer IT professionals. The force has acknowledged that this would improve its skills in this area and is currently reviewing the situation.

The College of Policing has developed eight computer-based training courses to improve the police service's knowledge and skills to deal with cybercrime. Data has been provided and analysed to understand the proportion of the workforce who have sought the training up to the beginning of December 2013.¹¹ Tables that show the proportion of staff, for each force, who have enrolled for the training are included in our national report on the police service's response to cyber threats. The following charts demonstrate how many of Gwent Police's workforce took three of the eight e-learning courses designed to improve awareness. The courses were selected to be representative of the force's commitment to this aim for both general front-line policing (Digital Communications, Social Media, Cybercrime and Policing introduced in April 2013 and Cybercrime and Digital Policing – Introduction introduced in August 2013) and for investigators (Introduction to Communications Data and Cybercrime introduced in July 2011).

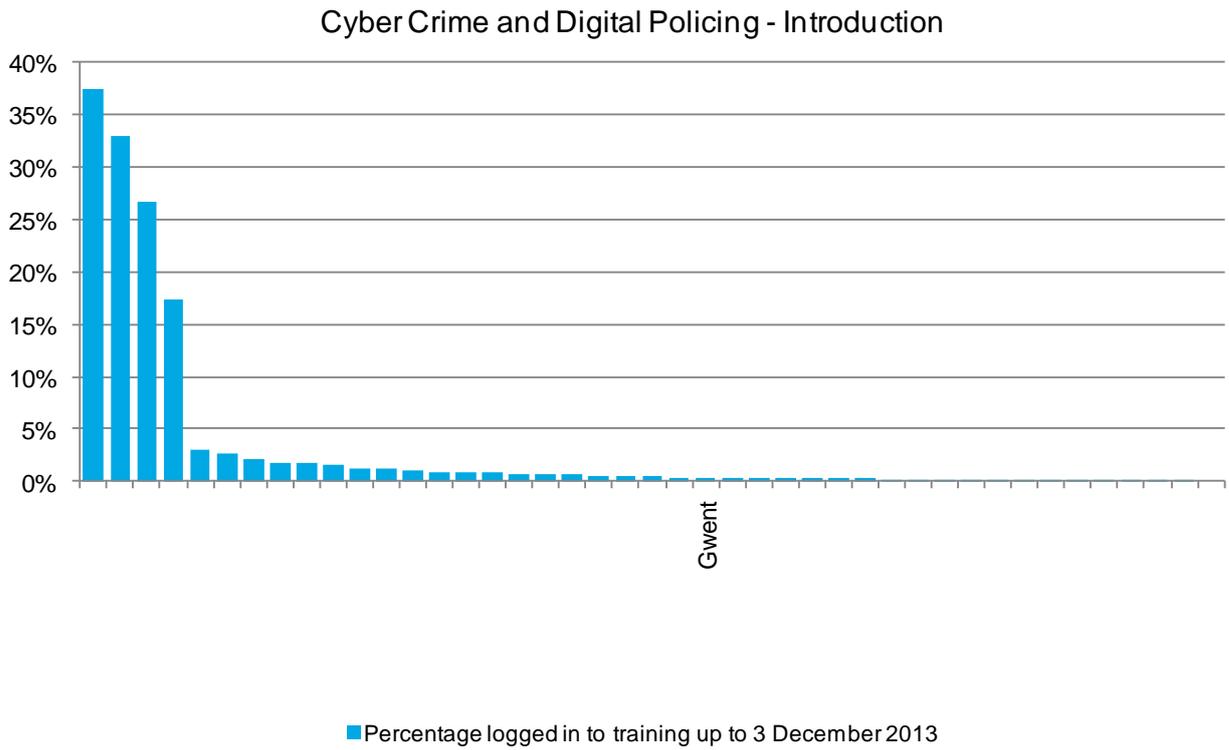
¹¹ Information provided by the College of Policing dated 10 February 2014 – completion figures for Communication Data and Cybercrime Modules (period ending 31 January 2014).

Figure 1: Digital Communications, Social Media, Cybercrime and Policing¹²



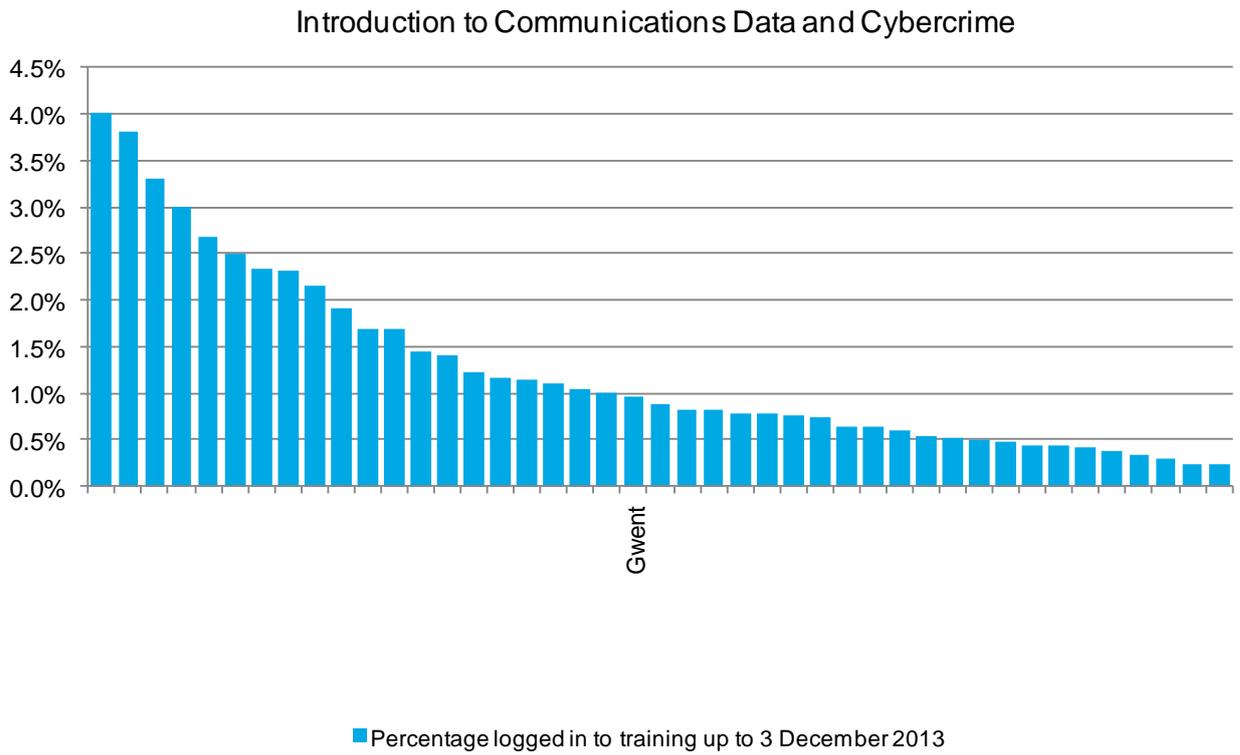
¹² This course, designed for all staff, aims to develop awareness of digital communications technology and how it affects different areas of cybercrime, social media, law enforcement and policing.

Figure 2: Cybercrime and Digital Policing – Introduction¹³



¹³ This course is designed for all police officers, special constables and other individuals in a law enforcement community. It is aimed at helping them develop a general awareness of the types of emerging threats and risks from criminals exploiting technology. The training is linked to relevant legislation and also covers cybercrime prevention.

Figure 3: Introduction to Communications Data and Cybercrime¹⁴



¹⁴ This course is aimed at investigators and demonstrates the skills needed for a basic level of understanding of the uses of communications data in law enforcement, including guidance on cybercrime prevention.

Consistency

Public order

The arrangements to train public order officers and procure public order equipment are consistent across all forces within the South Wales collaboration arrangements.

Public order equipment is purchased through regional procurement arrangements and can be shared by all South Wales collaboration forces. The force uses nationally agreed procurement standards for its public order protective shields and its procurement staff take part in national discussions at the national police procurement executive, about standards of public order equipment.

Staff trained in public order expressed confidence that their equipment was up-to-date and compatible with that used by other forces. They are able to operate effectively with other forces' public order staff.

Gwent Police acknowledged that little training takes place with other forces in the region and the force is working to increase the frequency of these exercises.

Responding to chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear incidents

Gwent Police is able to operate effectively with other emergency services to respond to chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear incidents.

Gwent Police has not recently procured equipment to enable its staff to operate in areas contaminated by chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear material but has sufficient existing equipment.

There is a local resilience forum chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear joint working group where representatives from the Gwent and South Wales group consider how to respond effectively to these types of incident across resilience forum areas.

In the event of the force being faced with incidents requiring specialist capabilities that it does not have, it would seek assistance from other forces and agencies.

Connectivity

Terrorism

The force and its neighbouring forces in the region have effective ways to co-ordinate and mobilise resources to deal with incidents of terrorism. These are supported by secure information technology and radio communications.

Gwent Police participates in daily national counter-terrorism network meetings at which threats are discussed and the police service's response is determined. The counter-terrorism unit also co-ordinates regional daily meetings where representatives from forces in the region discuss threats that are developing and agree actions to respond to them. The force has clear arrangements to ask for assistance from the Wales extremism and counter-terrorism unit and the wider counter-terrorism network.

The force is able to co-ordinate covert activity in support of operations linked to counter-terrorism and serious organised crime.

The force uses the Airwave radio system to communicate effectively with other police forces in South Wales and with the regional organised crime unit.

Civil emergencies

Gwent Police is able to communicate with other Gwent local resilience forum partners in the planning of responding to, civil emergencies.

Emergency services in the Gwent area work with the national joint emergency services interoperability programme and the force works effectively with the other emergency services.

The force uses information about the way it deploys its personnel to both real incidents and to exercises for the purpose of learning and development.

The local resilience forum has a learning and development group that examines the response to incidents and assesses training required to improve joint performance. The next training exercise, the response to a pandemic, was being planned and was scheduled to take place in October 2014.

Serious and organised crime

The force communicates effectively with other forces in the region and with the regional organised crime unit about the mobilisation of resources, sharing of equipment and tactics, and communication with other partners. It is participating actively, through the regional organised crime unit, in the national tasking arrangements.

The region has an effective way of prioritising organised crime issues that require operational activity, allocating tasks to officers at either a force or regional level, and co-ordinating activity across the Gwent region. There was evidence that resources are prioritised to deal with the most serious organised crime groups.

Gwent Police collaborates with the other forces in the Gwent region, the regional organised crime unit and the Wales extremism and counter-terrorism unit to make sure they can share equipment.

The force reviews the operations which are carried out with other forces, and was able to demonstrate good levels of interoperability.

The force is able to share intelligence securely with the regional organised crime unit.

Public order

We found that the chief constable of Gwent Police is co-operating with the arrangements for cross-boundary mobilisation of officers to deal with public order incidents.

South Wales Police co-ordinates the regional mobilisation of public order resources for the three forces that are part of the South Wales collaboration. Forces have agreed a regional mobilisation protocol which has been effective in a number of instances including the recent support the force provided to the Police Service of Northern Ireland.

In the past two years, the force has not received assistance from other forces in the form of police support units. The force, in turn, has provided six¹⁵ police support units to others.

¹⁵ This analysis excluded three major policing operations – the 2011 widespread disorder experienced in England in August 2011, the London Olympics 2012 and the removal of the residents at Dale Farm, Essex in 2012 (Operation Cabinet) – as they were exceptional incidents that skewed the results.

Cyber connectivity

Gwent Police has not been faced with a large-scale cyber incident that would require a joint response. The workforce was aware, however, of where they could get help if it was needed.

The force has not had to investigate or deal with the consequences of a serious cyber attack and currently has no plans to test its response to such an attack. Senior leaders in the force recognise that, if they were faced with such a challenge, they would seek access to national expertise through the National Cyber Crime Unit of the National Crime Agency.