

# PEEL 2021/22

## Police effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy

An inspection of the Metropolitan Police Service

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# Overall summary

## Our judgments

Our inspection assessed how good the Metropolitan Police Service is in ten areas of policing. We make graded judgments in nine of these ten as follows:

Outstanding	Good	Adequate	Requires improvement	Inadequate
	Preventing crime	Recording data about crime	Investigating crime	Responding to the public
		Treatment of the public	Protecting vulnerable people	
			Managing offenders	
			Developing a positive workplace	
			Good use of resources	

We also inspected how effective a service the Metropolitan Police Service gives to victims of crime. We don't make a graded judgment in this overall area.

We set out our detailed findings about things the force is doing well and where the force should improve in the rest of this report.

### Data in this report

For more information, please [view this report on our website](#) and select the 'About the data' section.

### Important changes to PEEL

In 2014, we introduced our police effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy (PEEL) inspections, which assess the performance of all 43 police forces in England and Wales. Since then, we have been continuously adapting our approach and this year has seen the most significant changes yet.

We are moving to a more intelligence-led, continual assessment approach, rather than the annual [PEEL inspections](#) we used in previous years. For instance, we have integrated our rolling crime data integrity inspections into these PEEL assessments. Our PEEL victim service assessment will now include a crime data integrity element in at least every other assessment. We have also changed our approach to graded judgments. We now assess forces against the characteristics of good performance, set out in the [PEEL Assessment Framework 2021/22](#), and we more clearly link our judgments to causes of concern and areas for improvement. We have also expanded our previous four-tier system of judgments to five tiers. As a result, we can state more precisely where we consider improvement is needed and highlight more effectively the best ways of doing things.

However, these changes mean that it isn't possible to make direct comparisons between the grades awarded this year with those from previous PEEL inspections. A reduction in grade, particularly from good to adequate, doesn't necessarily mean that there has been a reduction in performance, unless we say so in the report.

## **HM Inspector's observations**

For a considerable time, I have had concerns about several aspects of the Metropolitan Police Service's (MPS) performance. Explanations of these appear in various inspection reports.

A notable example, from March 2022, is our inspection of the MPS's counter corruption arrangements and other matters related to the *Daniel Morgan Independent Panel*. In this report, we described a range of systemic failures. These were not just in relation to counter corruption but more general matters too, such as the quality of basic supervision provided to officers.

This report describes many successes and some examples of innovation. However, it also raises serious concerns about how the force responds to the public and the level of understanding the force has about its demand and its workforce.

In view of these findings, we have taken the decision to place the MPS into our Engage process of monitoring. This will give the force greater access to assistance from HMICFRS, the College of Policing, the Home Office and other law enforcement agencies to make the required improvements. These are the findings I consider most important from our assessments of the force over the last year.

### **The force must get better at how it responds to the public**

The force doesn't have the capacity in its call handling teams to meet the demand for service in a timely way. It doesn't meet the national thresholds for answering calls. Its response to [vulnerable people](#) isn't consistent, and it isn't always based on effective risk assessment.

But the force does allocate incidents to suitably trained staff, and its subsequent attendance is usually within its set target times.

### **The force should record a victim's decision to withdraw support for an investigation or to support an out-of-court disposal or caution, as well as their reasons**

The force isn't correctly documenting the decisions of victims to withdraw from an investigation or to accept an [out-of-court disposal](#), such as a [community resolution](#) or caution. It is important to record victims' wishes to support the criminal justice process and to understand what is stopping victims from being able to complete the investigation process.

### **The quality of the investigation of crime is improving, but supervision isn't always effective**

Since we inspected the force in 2019, it has invested time and money into developing its investigative capacity and improving crime allocation. The force uses an effective decision-making process to make sure it consistently investigates the crimes that involve the most risk and are most likely to be solved.

The force has policies in place for supervising investigations, but supervisors don't always have the capacity to comply with these. A high proportion of inexperienced staff and a lack of experienced tutors means that supervisors are often teaching staff how to investigate crime, rather than supervising them. All investigations should be reviewed by a supervisor.

### **The force is innovative in developing new techniques to improve how it collects evidence and identifies offenders**

The force has developed a new forensic technique for detecting the presence of blood on dark clothing. It has also developed a new rapid testing kit for drink spiking cases, and it is piloting the use of DNA processing units in its custody suites.

### **The force is good at preventing crime and anti-social behaviour**

We found that officers understood the three strategic priorities of prevention, information and collaboration, and applied these in their local crime prevention initiatives. The force has dedicated neighbourhood teams in each ward. We found that staff were working hard to build links with their communities and to widen the variety of engagement techniques they used. The force uses the [scan, analyse, respond, assess \(SARA\)](#) problem-solving model effectively with other organisations to help prevent crime and [anti-social behaviour](#). But it needs to make sure it is accurately recording incidents of anti-social behaviour.

### **The force should improve its understanding of its demand and of the capability, capacity and skills of its workforce**

The force doesn't fully understand the capability and capacity of its workforce, and it lacks a detailed understanding of its workforce's skills. This has led to an unfair allocation of work, which puts undue pressure on some staff. This in turn affects how it provides services and makes it harder to use resources efficiently. The force needs to develop a more comprehensive understanding of demand to make sure that its workforce can meet this now and in future.

My report sets out the more detailed findings of this inspection. The effort required to make the improvements needed should not be underestimated, and I will continue to monitor the force's progress.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M Parr', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

**Matt Parr**  
HM Inspector of Constabulary

## Reducing crime assessment

We have identified seven themes underpinning a force's ability to reduce crime effectively which, taken together, allow an assessment of the extent to which the force is doing all it can to reduce crime. This is a narrative assessment, as police recorded crime figures can be affected by variations and changes in recording policy and practice, making it difficult to make comparisons over time.

The Metropolitan Police Service has some good processes in place to collect and analyse data to understand where crime needs to be reduced. The force has many initiatives that are designed to reduce specific crime types, such as knife crime and [stalking](#). It has an increased focus on reducing crimes against women and girls, following some high-profile cases that affected public confidence. The force has a strong neighbourhood presence and works with partner organisations to respond to community crime.

Other factors contributing to the force's ability to reduce crime are:

- The violence reduction strategy supports the local violence reduction plans and focuses on reducing gang violence related to drugs.
- The force's problem-solving policing work identifies high crime areas and brings together a wide range of partner organisations to tackle the causes and consequences of crime.
- The force is increasing the number of neighbourhood officers in areas of high crime, to build positive relationships with the community to help improve reporting and reduce crime.

I am pleased that the force is addressing the right areas of policing to reduce crime.

But the following areas may negatively affect the force's ability to reduce crime:

- It needs to build enough call handling capacity to make sure it answers emergency and non-emergency calls promptly.
- Call handlers don't consistently use the [THRIVE+](#) framework to prioritise the force's response to incidents.
- The force doesn't have enough capacity and capability in its frontline policing roles to meet demand.
- The force needs to improve its crime recording processes to make sure it records reported crimes correctly and without delay.
- A lack of experience in responding to and investigating incidents of crime leads to delays for victims and makes successful criminal justice end results less likely.
- It isn't consistently supervising crime investigations to a good standard, resulting in some offenders not being brought to justice.

Until the force improves how it responds to incidents and increases the capability and supervision of its investigators, it will not be able to sustainably reduce crime.

# Providing a service to the victims of crime

## Victim service assessment

This section describes our assessment of the service victims receive from the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS), from the point of reporting a crime through to the end result. As part of this assessment, we reviewed 165 case files as well as 20 cautions, community resolutions and cases where a suspect was identified but the victim didn't support or withdrew support for police action. While this assessment is ungraded, it influences graded judgments in the other areas we have inspected.

### **The force needs to reduce the time it takes to answer emergency and non-emergency calls**

When a victim contacts the police, it is important that their call is answered quickly and that the right information is recorded accurately on police systems. The caller should be spoken to in a professional manner. The information should be assessed, taking into consideration threat, harm, risk and vulnerability. And the victim should get the right [safeguarding](#) advice.

The force isn't answering calls quickly enough and in many cases it is failing to meet national standards. When calls are answered, the victim's vulnerability isn't always assessed using a structured process. Repeat victims aren't always identified, which means this isn't considered when deciding what response the victim should have. Call handlers aren't always giving victims advice on how to prevent crime and preserve evidence.

### **In most cases, the force responds promptly to calls for service**

A force should aim to respond to calls for service within the time frames it has set, based on the prioritisation given to the call. It should change call priority only if the original prioritisation is deemed incorrect, or if further information suggests a change is needed. The response should take into consideration risk and victim vulnerability, including information obtained after the call.

On most occasions the force responds to calls well. But sometimes it doesn't attend incidents within its set timescales. Victims aren't always informed of delays, and sometimes their expectations aren't met. This may cause victims to lose confidence and disengage.

## **The force's crime recording isn't of an acceptable standard to make sure victims get the right level of service**

The force's crime recording should be trustworthy. The force should be effective at recording reported crime in line with national standards and have effective systems and processes, which are supported by its leadership and culture.

The force needs to improve its crime recording processes to make sure all crimes reported to it are recorded correctly and without delay.

We set out more details about the force's crime recording in the crime data integrity section below.

## **The force allocates crimes to staff with suitable levels of experience, but doesn't always inform victims if their crime won't be investigated further**

Police forces should have a policy to make sure crimes are allocated to trained officers or [staff](#) for investigation or, if appropriate, not investigated further. The policy should be applied consistently. The victim of the crime should be kept informed of who is dealing with their case and whether the crime is to be further investigated.

We found the force allocated recorded crimes for investigation according to its policy. In all cases, the crime was allocated to the right department for further investigation. But victims weren't always updated to inform them that their crime report wouldn't be investigated further. Doing this is important to give victims the right level of service and to manage their expectations.

## **Most investigations were effective and timely, but victims were sometimes not provided with the right level of advice and support for the crime**

Police forces should investigate reported crimes quickly, proportionately and thoroughly. Victims should be kept updated about the investigation and the force should have effective governance arrangements to make sure investigation standards are high.

In most cases, the force carried out investigations in a timely way and completed relevant and proportionate lines of inquiry. Most investigations were reviewed by a supervisor, but not all investigations had an investigation plan. Victims were sometimes not updated throughout investigations. Victims are more likely to have confidence in a police investigation when they get regular updates.

A thorough investigation increases the likelihood of perpetrators being identified and a positive end result for the victim. Victim personal statements weren't always taken. This can deprive victims of the opportunity to describe how that crime has affected their lives.

When victims withdrew support for an investigation, the force didn't always consider progressing the case without the victim's support. This can be an important method of safeguarding the victim and preventing further offences being committed. The force didn't always consider the use of orders designed to protect victims, such as a [domestic violence protection order \(DVPO\)](#). The introduction of DVPO officers in [basic command units \(BCUs\)](#) has improved how the force uses these orders.

The [Code of Practice for Victims of Crime](#) requires forces to carry out a needs assessment at an early stage to determine whether victims need additional support. The outcome of the assessment and the request for additional support should be recorded. The force didn't always complete a needs assessment. This can mean that victims don't get the right level of service.

### **The force usually finalises reports of crime correctly**

Forces should make sure it follows national guidance and rules for deciding the outcome of each report of crime. In deciding the outcome, forces should consider the nature of the crime, the offender and the victim. Leaders should support and oversee these decisions throughout the force. In some cases, offenders can receive a caution or community resolution. If these outcomes are to be used correctly, the offender's previous history and the nature of the offence must be taken into account. The victim's and the offender's views should also be considered and recorded.

In most of the cases we reviewed involving a caution or community resolution, the offender met the national criteria for the use of these outcomes. But we found that the consideration of the victim's wishes wasn't always recorded.

At any point in an investigation when a suspect is identified but the victim doesn't support police action, the force should make an auditable record of the victim's decision. Evidence of the victim's decision was missing in most cases we reviewed. The absence of any record of the victim's wishes and decision to not support an investigation makes it difficult for the force to be certain it is considering what victims want.

### **Crime data integrity**

Adequate

The Metropolitan Police Service is adequate at recording crime.

We estimate that the force is recording 91.7 percent (with a confidence interval of +/- 2.4 percent) of all reported crime (excluding fraud). This is broadly unchanged compared with the findings from our 2018 inspection, when we found it recorded 89.5 percent (with a confidence interval of 1.6 percent) of all reported crime.

We estimate that, compared to the findings of our 2018 inspection, the force recorded an additional 18,300 crimes for the year covered by our inspection. We estimate that the force didn't record more than 69,100 crimes during the same period.

We estimate that the force is recording 86.4 percent (with a confidence interval of +/- 4.4 percent) of violent offences. This is broadly unchanged compared with the findings from our previous 2018 inspection, when we found it recorded 87.6 percent (with a confidence interval of +/- 2.8 percent) of violent offences.

We estimate that the force is recording 95.2 percent (with a confidence interval of +/- 3.7 percent) of sexual offences. This is broadly unchanged compared with the findings from our previous 2018 inspection, when we found it recorded 91 percent (with a confidence interval of +/- 2.9 percent) of sexual offences.

## Areas for improvement

### **The force is poor at recording crime when anti-social behaviour is reported**

The force only recorded 1 of the 21 crimes we reviewed that had been reported by victims of anti-social behaviour. Victims of anti-social behaviour often receive abuse and torment for substantial periods of time. And crime is often committed by neighbours, occasionally motivated by a victim's race or disability. Thorough recording of anti-social behaviour allows the force to identify problems in communities and work with other organisations to protect victims and bring offenders to justice.

### **The force needs to reduce the time it takes to record crimes**

Of the crime we reviewed, the force recorded 38 percent within 24 hours. We found examples of reports of rapes taking more than three days to record. Recording crime without delay helps make sure that victims receive the support they need and establish an effective investigation.

### **The force needs to improve its recording of equality data**

Examining data on victims of crime, we found that age and gender were generally well recorded, whereas ethnicity and other [protected characteristics](#) were often not recorded adequately. The force should be collecting this information to understand the extent to which each protected characteristic is affected by crime and provide a response according to its needs.

## Main findings

In this section, we set out our main findings that relate to how well the force records crime.

### **The force needs to improve its recording of violent crime**

The force isn't always recording [domestic abuse](#) or behavioural crimes, such as [controlling and coercive behaviour](#), stalking and [harassment](#). Many victims of these crimes are victims of long-term abuse. It is important to record these crimes and meet the needs of victims, including safeguarding them.

### **The force has improved how it records rape offences**

The force has improved how well it records rape offences, but not all reports of rape are correctly recorded. Rape is one of the most serious crimes a victim can experience. It is especially important that these crimes are recorded accurately to make sure victims receive the service and support they need.

### **The force records crimes against vulnerable people well**

The force records crimes against vulnerable victims well. It is important that crimes against vulnerable people are recorded to help safeguard them from further offences and to identify perpetrators.

### **The force applies the correct standards when cancelling crimes**

The force generally cancels crimes when it can be shown that no offence occurred, or that the crime was recorded in error. This makes sure that the force and the public have an accurate picture of what crime has taken place in their area.

# Engaging with and treating the public with fairness and respect

## Adequate

The Metropolitan Police Service is adequate at treating people fairly and with respect.

There remain tensions in the relationship between the force and some of its communities, specifically the Black community and other groups which have less contact with, or traditionally have lower trust and confidence in, the police.

## Innovative practice

### **Weekly messaging to key community members**

The crime prevention, inclusion and engagement department produces a weekly publication for its trusted partners and community leaders. This provides detailed information about proposed police activity and changes in policy that, without the support of community groups, could increase fear and damage the public's relationship with the force.

### **Scenario-based immersion techniques for officer safety training**

The force is one of two pilot forces in England and Wales involved in new 'immersive pedagogic' training. This scenario-based style of training encourages officers to recognise the emotional effect that a situation is having on them. This helps them adjust their behaviour and react professionally to what is happening, rather than being driven by their emotions. So far, this has included stop and search training, as well as de-escalation techniques in a variety of simulated policing situations.

## **Interactive awareness package to improve the community's knowledge of [stop and search powers](#)**

'A Different View' is an interactive and immersive exercise aimed at helping community groups understand stop and search and the decisions police officers must make when using this power. It uses real footage from [body-worn video](#) recordings to show the police's perspective of stop and search scenarios. This is increasing the public's awareness of stop and search, and in turn should increase community confidence in the police's use of this power.

## **Police encounter panels allow community scrutiny of police interactions with the public**

Every BCU within the force has police encounter panels (PEPs) to scrutinise policing encounters with the public. PEPs aren't limited to stop and search but scrutinise a wide range of interactions, including the use of Taser devices and [CS spray](#) and other encounters between the police and the public. The strategic intentions of PEPs are:

- to improve public trust and confidence in the force through appropriate scrutiny and transparency of policing encounters by the community;
- to support individual and [organisational learning](#) within the force; and
- to build stronger relationships with community organisations and better record the effect of policing encounters on communities and individuals to improve accountability, policy and practice.

In support of the PEPs, the force has also created the pan-London police encounter panel. This considers themes that are consistent throughout London and provide a place for PEPs to escalate concerns and recommendations if required. The pan-London PEP gives recommendations to relevant corporate boards on lessons learned through its work. These include the force's officer safety board, organisational learning board and inclusivity, diversity and engagement board.

## Area for improvement

### **The force needs to improve its recording of the grounds for stop and search**

Our audit of stop and search records assessed whether the grounds the officers recorded on the forms were reasonable. The officers completing the records must provide enough information on them to justify why they used their power to stop and search someone. A record must be specific and detailed enough for someone else to judge whether a reasonable person with the same information would have carried out a stop and search. Accurate recording of encounters allows scrutiny by supervisors and by the public.

During our inspection, we reviewed a sample of 270 stop and search records from 1 October 2020 to 30 September 2021. Based on this sample, we estimated that 75.9 percent (with a confidence interval of +/- 5.1 percent) of all stop and searches by the force during this period had reasonable grounds recorded. This is lower than we would expect. The proportion is broadly unchanged compared with the findings from our previous 2020 review of stop and search, where we found that 78.2 percent (with a confidence interval of +/- 4.8 percent) of stop and searches had reasonable grounds recorded. Supervisors need to make sure that officers are accurately recording the grounds for a search, to make their decisions more transparent.

We also examined a selection of body-worn video recordings from stop and search encounters. These showed that most searches were of a good standard, and that the officers treated the people searched with dignity and respect.

## Main findings

In this section we set out our main findings that relate to treating people fairly and with respect.

### **Public scrutiny of the force in the media**

Police forces provide a public service. So it is right that there is public scrutiny of police activity and that this scrutiny is encouraged. The media plays a significant role in highlighting issues affecting the public. The MPS is the largest police force in the country, and is charged with protecting the capital city. This means it is constantly under public and media scrutiny. Some recent cases have generated prominent negative media coverage. Much of this attention is due to the behaviour of individual officers falling far below the standards of professional behaviour expected of British policing.

During this PEEL inspection and other recent inspections, we found many examples of police actions which reflect poorly, or will be seen by many as reflecting poorly, on the force. Examples of these include:

- aspects of the murder of, and subsequent vigil for, Sarah Everard;
- allegations of institutional corruption following the Daniel Morgan inquiry;

- the [Independent Office for Police Conduct](#) investigation into misogyny; and
- the stop and intimate search of some young female students.

Issues such as these have damaged public trust in the force. With negative reports featuring regularly in the media, it would be easy to label the force as failing in how it engages with the public. But, overall, this is not the case. We found many examples of police officers and staff working hard, professionally and with compassion in very difficult circumstances. We also found considerable evidence of fair treatment and inclusive engagement with the communities the force serves.

### **A dedicated command to close the trust gap between the police and the Black community**

The force's strategy for inclusion, diversity and engagement 2021–2025 is based on four main themes: protection, engagement, equality and learning. Its overriding aim is to keep London safe for everyone. The force has also created a dedicated command team (called 'crime prevention, inclusion and engagement') which is responsible for supporting internal and external partnerships. It aims to achieve a fully inclusive culture and a greater focus on preventing crime and engaging with diverse cultures.

The emphasis of the deputy commissioner's delivery group is to close the 'trust gap' with London's Black communities. It oversees the force's activity against agreed actions in the Mayor's Action Plan. Two of its four main aims are focused on the community:

- to improve trust, confidence and accountability for police encounters involving the exercise of powers or use of force in relation to Black communities; and
- to proactively engage with influential people outside the force who are critical of its approach to policing Black communities, and carry out specific engagement activity to encourage mutual listening and learning.

The force is also carrying out significant work on rebuilding trust with the public and creating an ethical and inclusive culture. It has introduced a rebuilding trust team, in response to the independent review of the force's culture and standards of behaviour led by Baroness Casey of Blackstock DBE CB, and the national programme to tackle violence against women and girls.

The force is structured into 12 BCUs, which each have responsibility for a particular geographic area. It has produced a comprehensive BCU engagement plan that sets out the main areas of activity needed at BCU level to make sure engagement with communities "is focused, meaningful, relevant and authentic".

The plan sets out 15 commitments for BCUs. These reflect the findings from a recent internal review of engagement and are aimed at supporting neighbourhood policing. The plan is in the early stages of implementation. We found that within BCUs there was already a comprehensive knowledge of community groups and other engagement opportunities. We look forward to seeing how BCUs turn this knowledge of their communities into engagement, and how this affects public confidence in the force.

## Positive use of independent advisors

The force has several [independent advisory groups \(IAGs\)](#) which provide its own corporate groups (such as those focused on LGBT matters, race, and disability) and BCU-level groups with healthy and robust feedback on the perceptions of local communities. Quarterly meetings take place with all the IAGs, and productive discussions take place in which representatives voice the views of under-represented groups.

The force's strategic advisory group (SAG) is a forum to help it understand the effects of its policies, improve engagement with diverse communities and influence structural change. The SAG comprises senior community leaders and representatives from youth and faith groups, education, academia and US law enforcement. It helps the force judge its responses to [critical incidents](#) and offers advice on high profile cases. Recently, it has given guidance on the diversity and inclusion strategy, the COVID-19 policing response and Black Lives Matter protests.

There are also many subgroups to the SAG. For example, strategic advisory cells involve SAG members being present in the force's special operations room as 'critical friends'. Here they offer support during community events such as festivals, memorial events and protests. This allows for productive two-way conversations. Force commanders can get guidance about the impact of the policing response. And the cell members can take their experiences back to their community to promote understanding of the force's work.

## The force works with its communities so it can understand and respond to what matters to them

The force actively seeks the views of its communities to identify local problems and gather [intelligence](#). Every ward in London has a dedicated team comprised of police constables (PCs) and police community support officers (PCSOs). Separately, each BCU also has a team of PCSOs, who target high crime areas. Neighbourhood officers are deployed in areas of high violence and low trust in policing. We found that the various neighbourhood teams are generally effective. They actively engage with their communities, and most of their working time is spent dedicated to their ward.

We observed many positive community activities, including regular weekly ward meetings, that allowed the public to meet officers in person or virtually. There are dedicated schools officers with effective school engagement plans. And we found many examples of the force actively seeking views from other community workers including LGBT+ advisers, hate crime co-ordinators and local authority staff. In the South Central BCU at Lambeth, for example, the community team is building links with IAG members, youth groups and schools. Similarly, the South BCU engages effectively with the Croydon Voluntary Action, an umbrella group which includes 80 small local charities and community organisations.

It isn't only BCU teams that involve communities in their work. We found examples of the territorial support group working with community groups, and the mounted section actively participating in community events as a way to break down barriers to communication.

The violent crime task force is actively working to involve communities in tackling violent crime. It has held discussions with local people on stop and search powers using role play and role reversal. And it has organised 'ride-alongs' for community members to join officers on patrol. The team encourages representation from all communities in its work. It has been actively encouraging the recruitment of young Black men to take part in the community reference panel (a discussion forum which gives local people the chance to voice any concerns they have).

### **The force recognises public engagement as a risk**

While there is a significant amount of good work being carried out, we note that the force's corporate risk register identifies public and local engagement as one of the long-term risks for the organisation. The force is seeking to understand why certain engagement activities are not increasing the community's trust in it. In particular, the force recognises that it generally lacks the trust and confidence of the Black community.

### **Public attitude survey from the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime**

The Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) publishes a '[public voice dashboard](#)', focusing on public perceptions and victim satisfaction in relation to the force's work. It allows the user to track performance over time, see data on the most important factors affecting public satisfaction, and understand the perceptions of crime victims and different demographic groups.

The data indicates a general decline in satisfaction levels since April 2020. Satisfaction with 'Police actions' fell from an estimated 66 percent in April to June 2020 to 59 percent in October to December 2021. In addition, 'Ease of contact' had fallen to an estimated 83 percent in October to December 2021 from an estimated 89 percent in April to June 2020. (We discuss problems with people contacting the force in the '[Responding to the public](#)' section of this report.) The service area with the lowest levels of satisfaction was 'Follow up' (meaning updating victims about investigations). The survey shows that an estimated 55 percent of victims were happy with their treatment in January to March 2022.

Figures indicating trust and confidence in the force have fallen over the last two years. Trust levels have fallen from an estimated 83 percent in the year ending 31 March 2020 to an estimated 73 percent in the year ending 31 March 2022. Over the same period, the proportion of people who think the police is doing a 'good job' has fallen from an estimated 58 percent to an estimated 49 percent. Although this figure isn't specifically measuring confidence, it is an indicator of public confidence. It can take longer to achieve an upward trajectory in this area, compared to user satisfaction.

### **The entire workforce has received training on unconscious bias**

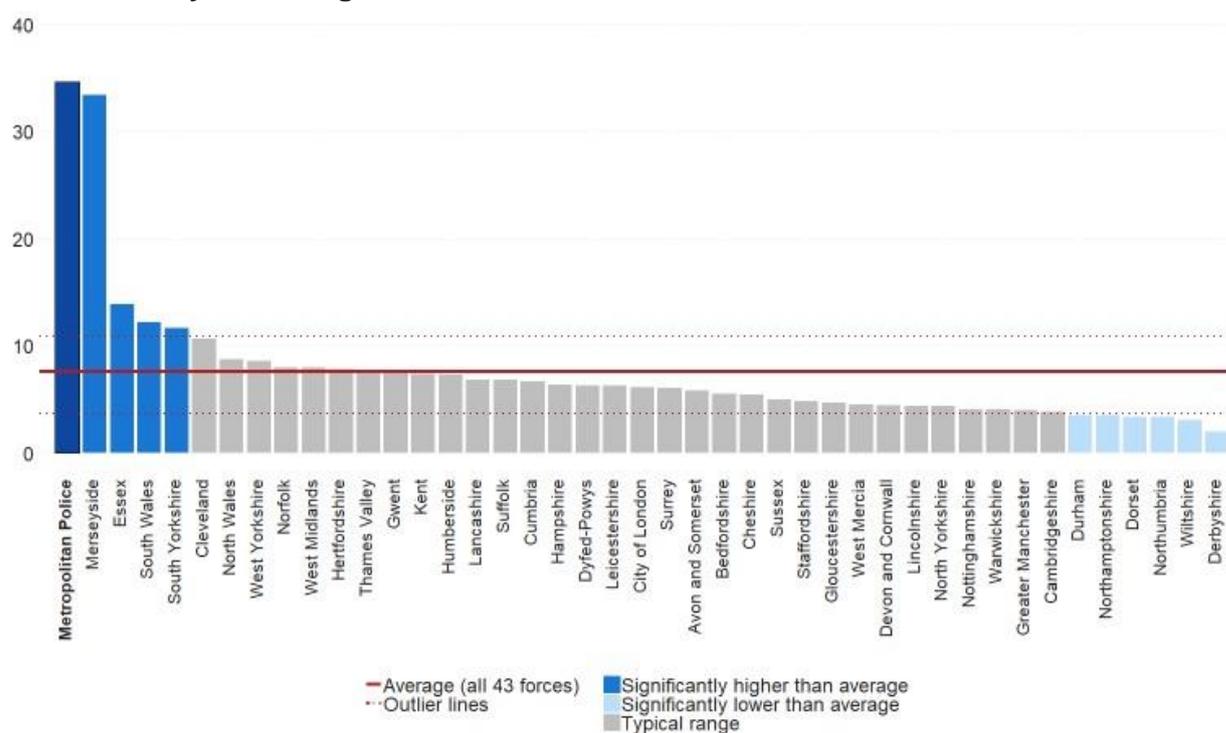
We found that the force has taken steps to make sure all staff have received [unconscious bias](#) training. This is important because it challenges individual perceptions to help officers treat the public fairly and without prejudice. Probationary constables all complete bias training. And promotion courses all include content on equality, diversity and inclusion and unconscious bias.

But the force needs to assure itself that its staff have a sound understanding of unconscious bias. We found that some staff were unclear about what it means, and even whether they had received training on it.

### The force carries out the highest number of stop and searches in England and Wales

In the year ending 31 March 2021, the force carried out 316,747 stop and searches on persons and vehicles under all legislation. Of these, 311,295 were person stop and searches, representing 34.6 stop and searches per 1,000 population. This was significantly higher than the average of all forces in England and Wales of 7.6 per 1,000 population.

#### Person stop and searches per 1,000 population throughout forces in England and Wales in the year ending 31 March 2021



### The force has strong governance to make sure stop and search is supervised effectively

The force uses internal scrutiny to help it understand its use of stop and search, and any disproportionality in relation to different demographics.

It has set up a monthly meeting for senior leaders to review stop and search performance and discuss any other matters relating to stop and search.

The continuous policing improvement command (CPIC) also holds a monthly meeting that makes sure there is oversight and accountability for stop and search. The stop and search leads for each borough attend this meeting. They are held accountable for stop searches in their area and report on data, outcomes, learning and community engagement relating to stop searches. The CPIC reviews all authorisations for stop searches under section 60 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994.

The force recognises that the Black community and other under-represented groups generally do not trust it. It sees the use of stop and search as an important part of policing, and one that needs to be handled sensitively.

The force has a central stop and search team, which reports to a strategic lead and promotes the proportionate use of the tactic. The lead receives statistical information every two weeks from a dedicated analyst. At a local level, we found that daily 'pacesetter' management meetings in BCUs include stop and search data as an agenda item to help the units understand their use of stop searches.

BCUs follow a policy of transparency to encourage community understanding of how and why stop and search is used. For example, each borough has an active community monitoring group. These independent and rigorous external scrutiny panels are led by MOPAC and are making valuable contributions to making sure stop searches are used effectively.

We were told that supervision rates for stop and search had increased over the last two years. And we found that the supervision of stop and search was good. Supervisors in the CPIC regularly dip sample body-worn video footage. This is in addition to the dip samples that each BCU is required to carry out itself.

Through its website, the force makes positive efforts to demonstrate transparency in its use of stop and search. It publishes a comprehensive, user-friendly dashboard which includes data from the previous 24 months. The dashboard has multiple filter options to view data by categories such as gender, age, ethnicity, location, type of search and outcome.

### **Officers and staff are trained in stop and search and how to use force fairly and correctly**

The force's public personal safety training (PPST) has significantly changed over the last year. It now uses an 'immersive pedagogic' approach (see [innovative practice](#) above) which encourages officers to consider the effects of their actions on an individual during an encounter.

The new PPST programme teaches officers not to use handcuffs without justification when searching passive people. In general, handcuffing is only justified if the officer has a reasonable belief that the person may cause harm to themselves, the officers or others, may attempt to impede the search or discard items, or may try to escape. The training balances both officer and public safety against the harm that unjustified handcuffing of passive people can do. Many officers we spoke to told us that this approach is ingrained into officers' minds and followed.

From April 2022, the force is increasing PPST training time. There will be two days of PPST training and one day of emergency life support training per year for all frontline officers. It will introduce the new PPST curriculum in line with the timescales set by the [College of Policing](#).

# Preventing crime and anti-social behaviour

Good

The Metropolitan Police Service is good at prevention and deterrence.

## Innovative practice

### **The force works with other organisations to deal with incidents of violence and to prevent violent offending**

The force has adopted a proactive approach to early intervention and information sharing in a concerted effort to reduce violence throughout London. Senior leaders have implemented a daily violence assessment meeting with other organisations.

These meetings involve the police, local authority community safety leads, and probation services sharing violence-related intelligence. The participants agree actions for ongoing incidents and plan for events likely to attract violence to help prevent it happening. We found that there was excellent daily attendance and a willingness to share intelligence. We can't say at this stage what impact the meetings have had on violent crime figures.

## Main findings

In this section we set out our main findings that relate to prevention and deterrence.

### **The force prioritises the prevention of crime, anti-social behaviour and vulnerability**

The force's priorities are clearly set out in its business plan and crime prevention strategy. There is robust and active oversight of crime prevention, both by senior leaders at a force-wide level and by BCUs through daily meetings. We found that officers understood the three strategic priorities of prevention, information and collaboration, and applied these in their local crime prevention initiatives. For example, we found examples of neighbourhood officers working with 'designing out crime' officers and the relevant local authority to reduce opportunities for crime in public spaces.

The force has reviewed how it involves communities in its work. Each BCU now has a clear community engagement strategy which includes scrutiny forums and working with schools. A 'schools watch' scheme, which involves dedicated officers being deployed in schools, is being implemented throughout all priority schools. The force has identified 263 priority schools based on crime levels and socio-economic data. Of these, 100 are already participating in the scheme. We found that recommendations in the community engagement strategies have been, and are continuing to be, implemented.

As discussed in the [previous section of this report](#), the force has dedicated neighbourhood teams in each ward. In the BCUs we visited, we found that staff were working hard to build links with their communities and to widen the range of techniques they used to involve communities. These include increasing the use of social media and other online engagement, holding community events with partner organisations in harder to reach and under-represented areas, and adding a contact function for safer neighbourhood teams to the [Police.uk](#) web page.

In July 2021, the force's strategic insight unit launched Operation Avert after consulting with BCUs. For this, it has identified 240 locations as having higher levels of crime, and is increasing the numbers of neighbourhood officers in these areas.

In addition, the violent crime taskforce is leading a force-wide project to reduce violence. The force has invested in new BCU violence suppression units to identify and target the most serious violent offenders, and patrol hotspot areas.

### **The force uses the SARA problem-solving model effectively with other organisations to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour**

We found that the force had good problem-solving capabilities and had adopted the SARA model for its crime prevention strategy. SARA has been integrated as a template into the force's IT systems. This allows officers to break down the steps of the problem-solving process and record their decisions for each stage. The model also forms part of the initial training given to all student police officers.

The force uses 'designing out crime' officers to reduce opportunities to commit crime. These officers work with local authorities in the planning stages of new development proposals – particularly those which relate to the night-time economy, nightclubs and late licences for bars. They currently certify 14,000 new homes a year to the police's Secured by Design standards. We were told that the force's evaluation showed that crime had reduced in most neighbourhoods where 'designing out crime' officers had been used.

We found problem-solving community initiatives in each of the BCUs we visited. One example is the 'Walk and Talk' initiative, developed in partnership with the local community following the murder of Sarah Everard. This involved officers walking with local women to discuss the issues that matter to them. It helps local officers to understand the experience of women and girls in the community, identify their concerns and develop a meaningful policing response to these.

We also found examples of imaginative community work with other organisations. This included schools officers working with the charity Elevated Minds to help run an

early intervention programme. The programme involved mentoring vulnerable children, predominantly from ethnic minority backgrounds. It aimed to help them build emotional intelligence and develop self-awareness to reduce the risk of becoming a victim or a perpetrator of crime.

### **The force understands the demand facing [neighbourhood policing teams](#)**

The force intends to increase the number of officers in neighbourhoods with the biggest crime and anti-social behaviour problems. To help achieve this, it is putting officers on duty at the right times in the right places, and developing effective relationships with other organisations. The force works hard to identify areas of high demand and vulnerable locations, groups and people. We saw that it has carried out modelling of neighbourhood wards and has identified 75 (of the total number of 650) that are at higher risk. In response, it has placed an extra 500 officers into town centre teams and an extra 150 into dedicated ward officer roles.

The force has introduced a centrally managed performance data pack which measures anti-social behaviour demand and how the force is responding to that demand. In addition, a neighbourhood performance data pack is produced monthly to give neighbourhood officers and supervisors information on anti-social behaviour, the anti-social behaviour early intervention scheme, community contact sessions and ward panel surveys.

### **Neighbourhood officers spend significant amounts of time policing their communities**

We were pleased to see that neighbourhood officers were spending a significant amount of time in education and prevention initiatives working with young people. The force records time spent by neighbourhood officers in their wards, and BCUs monitor the amount of time that officers spend abstracted from this role to other tasks.

Abstraction levels away from neighbourhood functions were reasonable ('abstraction' means diversion to duties that aren't part of the officer's core duties, and not necessarily emergencies, for an extended period). We found that this was mainly being done to cover exceptional events such as national football matches, licensed festivals and national celebrations. Such events are planned for, and staff generally get sufficient notice to plan their time.

But we found that both response and neighbourhood officers were being diverted from community policing to deal with non-policing matters, particularly managing mental health issues. This is having a knock-on effect on the amount of time neighbourhood officers spend policing their community.

# Responding to the public

## Inadequate

The Metropolitan Police Service is inadequate at responding to the public.

### Cause of concern

The force needs to improve how it answers calls for service and how it identifies vulnerability at the first point of contact.

#### Recommendations

Within six months the force should:

- improve the process for risk assessing callers to identify those that are vulnerable or at risk;
- make sure that repeat callers are routinely identified; and
- make sure that call takers give good advice on the preservation of evidence and crime prevention.

Within nine months the force should:

- make sure emergency calls made to the force are answered promptly; and
- make sure it can answer a larger proportion of non-emergency [101](#) calls so that caller attrition levels are reduced and kept as low as possible.

### Main findings

In this section we set out our main findings that relate to how well the force responds to the public.

## **The force doesn't always have the capacity to provide an effective and timely response to demand**

The current MPS Command and Control Centre (MetCC) staffing model was based on 2013 demand. It was designed in 2014 based on an '80/20' model. This means that 80 percent of the staff manage the day-to-day duty requirement and 20 percent of staff can be mobilised to work at times of peak demand. MetCC receives 6.3m contacts a year. This includes 1.8m 'mentions' on social media. It has identified 600,000 contacts as involving vulnerable people, with a mental health-related call every three minutes. An increase in demand now means that the 80 percent of staff managing the day-to-day duties can't meet demand without overtime working. This is not sustainable.

On 31 May 2022, the Home Office published data on 999 call answering times. Call answering time is the time taken for a call to be transferred to a force, and the time taken by that force to answer it. In England and Wales, forces should aim to answer 90 percent of these calls within 10 seconds.

Since the Home Office hadn't published this data at the time we made our judgment, we have used data provided by the force to assess how quickly it answers 999 calls.

The force acknowledges that it isn't meeting the national thresholds for answering calls. It told us at the time of our inspection that 63.9 percent of 999 calls it received were answered within 10 seconds (the target is 90 percent) and that 36.6 percent of 101 calls were abandoned (the target is fewer than 10 percent).

The factors the force states are affecting timeliness include the capacity of call-handling staff, increased complexity of calls, increased call volume and additional demand created by social media. We also found a consensus that the force was spending much of its time dealing with non-policing issues, especially during the pandemic.

## **The force fails to identify and understand risk effectively at the first point of contact**

THRIVE+ is a model for assessing vulnerability risk consistently, from the point of first contact with the force to the closure of a crime report. Our victim service assessment found that the force didn't use the THRIVE+ model consistently (in accordance with force policy) to make sure that incidents are accurately assessed. Only 21 of the 107 applicable incidents we reviewed had received a THRIVE+ assessment.

But we found that when THRIVE+ was used, it was an accurate reflection of the call in all 21 cases. Every officer we spoke to in frontline policing, or who was involved in call handling, told us that they had received relevant training, mostly through e-learning. The use of THRIVE+ was an area that we previously highlighted in the 2019 PEEL inspection as requiring improvement, and we are disappointed to see that the situation hasn't improved.

MetCC monitors the use of THRIVE+ as a performance indicator. To do this, it carries out dip sampling on each shift of call handlers in each call centre. This sampling was described to us as “limited”, with Met CC supervisors dip sampling three calls per shift for compliance. We also heard that many supervisors don’t fully understand the THRIVE+ process. The force needs to assure itself that supervisors can highlight any areas of concern when dip sampling to monitor the use of THRIVE+, and respond accordingly.

### **The force is inconsistent in checking for victim vulnerability**

While the evidence indicated that call handlers were usually considering vulnerability, this wasn’t being consistently recorded. In 54 out of 97 applicable cases we reviewed, the force carried out checks to identify vulnerability.

We also found that call handlers weren’t consistently carrying out checks to identify repeat victims. This was done in only 39 of the 96 applicable cases we reviewed. And when the right checks did take place and repeat victims were identified, they weren’t always recorded on the force’s systems. We found that 17 of the 27 cases involving repeat victims were recorded as required. This inconsistency means that callers who are repeat victims of crime may not receive a good service. The force may also not be taking every opportunity to reduce repeat victimisation.

### **The force provides the right response to incidents**

We found that call handlers were polite and professional. The force grades calls correctly with the information the call handlers obtain. There is a consistent approach to allocating incidents to the workforce, and the right resources are deployed. Response times are within the force’s targets and there is a proportionate use of the appointment system.

### **The force needs to make sure that call handlers give good advice on the preservation of evidence and crime prevention**

The force has a detailed guidance document to help call handlers give advice on how to preserve potential evidence. But our victim service assessment found that callers weren’t always being given appropriate advice on preserving evidence. Scene preservation advice was given in only 15 out of 35 cases we reviewed where this would have been appropriate. And crime prevention advice wasn’t always provided either. Advice on preventing crime was given to callers in only 31 out of 43 cases we reviewed.

This means that the force is missing opportunities to preserve evidence which may help investigations. And in some cases, it is failing to give victims advice to prevent further crime, which could reduce repeat victimisation.

## **The force is providing professional development on first point of contact and emergency response policing**

MetCC aspires to have a fully multi-competent workforce, where staff are able to switch between different roles within the centre. This would create the flexibility it needs to meet fluctuating demand. We found that many staff already have additional skills to support this model, and that training is planned to give all the centre's workforce the right skills. MetCC has its own training academy, which has recently invested in an accreditation scheme to support continuous professional development. The academy has benchmarked all professional development modules to approved standards. This means the workforce can get nationally recognised management qualifications.

## **The force needs to understand and plan for the increasing demand facing MetCC**

The growth forecast for MetCC suggests that demand will continue to increase over the next few years. The factors affecting demand include new online reporting tools, the time needed to record crimes during calls and additional vulnerability assessment processes. The force stated that unless the MetCC model is transformed, within 3 years up to 50 percent of demand may not be met. In the short term, the force will manage demand by increasing the budget for MetCC to fund overtime, recruitment and training.

In the longer term, the force is relying on a planned new IT system to increase efficiency and reduce demand for MetCC. The system is scheduled to be implemented after the implementation of the CONNECT IT programme, which will integrate many of the force's IT systems. Both programmes are delayed.

# Investigating crime

Requires  
improvement

The Metropolitan Police Service requires improvement at investigating crime.

## Areas for improvement

### **The force needs to make sure that it complies with the requirements of the Victims' Code of Practice**

The force must complete victim needs assessments and take victim personal statements. Victim needs assessments establish whether a victim is entitled to an enhanced service, which can include special measures to assist them giving evidence. The assessment also identifies any additional safeguarding support the victim may require from other agencies.

### **The force should record a victim's decision to withdraw support for an investigation, support an out of court disposal or caution and their reasons**

The force isn't correctly documenting the decisions of victims to withdraw from an investigation or to accept an out-of-court disposal, such as a community resolution or caution. It is important to record victims' wishes to support the criminal justice process and to understand what is preventing victims from being able to complete the investigation process. This knowledge will help the force and organisations it works with to offer better support for victims in the future.

## Innovative practice

### **The force is innovative in developing new techniques to improve evidence collection and the identification of offenders**

- The force has developed a new forensic technique for detecting the presence of blood on dark clothing using infrared technology.
- It has also developed a new rapid testing kit for harmful substances in drink spiking cases. Evidence for these is often lost quickly as samples naturally deteriorate. On-scene testing is improving the chances of successful prosecutions, which will help deter offenders from committing these crimes.
- The force is piloting the use of DNA processing units in its custody suites. Typically, when a DNA sample is obtained from a suspect it is sent to a laboratory for analysis to compare against the national DNA database. This process usually takes about two weeks. The force is trialling equipment called RapidHIT ID, which analyses DNA samples in 109 minutes using equipment on-site. This has already led to successes where offenders have been identified through DNA analysis, leading to swift justice rather than inappropriate release on [bail](#).

With further investment and development, in future it may be possible to complete DNA examinations at serious crime scenes.

## Main findings

In this section we set out our main findings that relate to how well the force investigates crime.

### **The quality of crime investigation is improving**

In 2019, we said that the force needed to improve the quality of its investigations. It had to improve its assessment of risk, make sure crimes were investigated by the right people with the right skills, improve [digital forensics](#) and increase the capability and capacity of investigators. In this inspection, we found that the force has invested time and money into developing its investigative capacity and improving crime allocation. But we found that there was only a slight improvement in both risk assessment and digital forensics. We want to see further improvements in these areas.

We note that the force is focusing on three main improvement themes: the use of THRIVE+, maximising investigative interviewing skills, and the efficient and effective use of digital evidence.

The force has a policy for most areas of crime investigation, including general investigation policies and specific policies for individual crime types. Due to finite numbers of investigators, the force can't investigate each reported crime to the same standard. It uses THRIVE+ and the [Crime Assessment Principles](#) to improve the quality of its decision-making for investigations on the basis of risk, vulnerability and potential solvability.

## **THRIVE+ is widely used in investigations, but often without an understanding of its purpose**

THRIVE+ is used in all investigations from the point of first contact with the force. Most investigators we spoke to considered THRIVE+ to be more of a bureaucratic exercise than a tool to genuinely assess risk and vulnerability. We found that the quality of assessments was mixed. The force needs to improve investigators' understanding of the purpose of THRIVE+ and make sure it informs all investigations.

## **Crime allocation is consistent, and crimes are generally investigated by the right teams**

In this inspection, we found that investigations were generally effective. Our victim service assessment found that investigations were allocated to the right teams and in accordance with the crime allocation policy in almost all (100 of 105) the cases we reviewed. Arrests were made at the earliest opportunity in 24 of 26 relevant cases we reviewed.

The force has a policy that identifies eight serious and complex case types that should be assigned to its criminal investigation department. If it isn't one of these case types, an investigation stays with investigators within response teams. BCUs can direct crimes to be investigated by particular teams based on local priorities. This means that BCUs can allocate crimes to teams with the capacity to investigate them. But we found that in order to do this, ad hoc units were sometimes being created outside of the force's operating model. This often reduced officer numbers in frontline policing roles. BCUs should assess any changes like this against the force's operating model to judge their overall efficiency and effectiveness.

## **The force recognises the importance of forensic evidence and is investing to meet future demand for forensic examination**

The force is investing in improving forensic services to support investigations. This includes additional forensic kiosks to transfer digital evidence from devices. There is a programme aimed at improving the retention of forensic staff. This includes improved conditions, including more development opportunities, and better welfare support to deal with trauma.

## **The force has processes to manage its investigations demand**

Demand is monitored daily through 'pacesetter' meetings in BCUs. This is supported by accurate data that is published weekly and scrutinised at the monthly frontline policing crime board. Force-wide performance is monitored at the force strategic performance board, which is chaired by the deputy commissioner.

Each BCU has its own weekly performance data pack, containing information on crime and the successful conclusion of investigations. We found that all the key performance indicators within this showed substantial improvement since our last inspection, with the notable exception of victim satisfaction.

## **The force has effective governance to improve the quality of investigations**

There is an investigations improvement plan, which sets out clear actions to improve all aspects of investigations. Senior leaders oversee the plan's implementation. This has led to an increase in the number of detectives in frontline policing investigations. But there is a lack of experience and skills among newer detectives, who tend to have large caseloads. Local policing teams have the highest numbers of inexperienced investigators. The force needs to increase skill levels and reduce caseloads.

The force recognises that it lacks investigative capacity. Its operating model set staffing levels in 2019, but demand has substantially increased since then. The force needs to review its operating model to make sure staffing levels can meet demand.

To help increase the number of detectives, the force offers a personal tutoring programme to help suitable candidates to pass the National Investigators' Exam. It gives them mentors, digital study aids, virtual seminars and classroom lessons. They can then complete mock exams. The force told us this has resulted in an increase in the pass rate by 18 percent.

The improvement plan has led to generally better investigations and to increased numbers of investigators in the force. But the force's ongoing improvement is dependent on implementing the CONNECT IT programme. The reliance on IT upgrades is a concern to us, as many of the planned IT upgrade programmes have already experienced delays.

## **The supervision of investigations isn't always effective**

The force has policies for the supervision of investigations. We found that the high proportion of inexperienced staff and a lack of experienced tutors for detectives meant that supervisors were often teaching staff how to investigate crime rather than supervising them. And not all investigations had supervisor reviews. We found that good supervisors created good investigative plans. And investigations with both good supervision and well drafted plans led to better outcomes for victims.

# Protecting vulnerable people

Requires  
improvement

The Metropolitan Police Service requires improvement at [protecting vulnerable people](#).

## Areas for improvement

**The force should review its public protection improvement plan to make sure improvements continue to be made and the pace of change is increased**

Our 2019 inspection found that the force needed to improve how it investigated incidents involving vulnerable people. In response, the force developed an improvement plan in 2020. We found that there has been some progress in implementing the plan, but that the rate of change is too slow.

The force should review the improvement plan, setting clear priorities for the different elements within it. It should create a clear governance structure setting out the roles of the person who is responsible for the plan, the strategic lead for public protection, and those who manage BCU public protection teams. We found that BCUs had little capacity to dedicate time to implement changes set out in the plan.

### **The force should make sure that there are enough suitably trained public protection staff to meet demand and to proactively prevent and reduce offending involving vulnerable victims**

Staffing levels for public protection were set in 2019 as part of the force operating model. But staff told us that the number of incidents involving vulnerable people has grown substantially since these levels were set. So there is a need for more public protection staff. In addition, the staff in this area of work are generally inexperienced and don't stay for long. The force needs to examine how it decides where and when to post experienced staff to prevent the loss of experience to areas of work with less potential risk.

The force has provided funding to support short-term responses to high caseloads. But the lack of available experienced staff means that even when funding is available, the extra staff must still be sourced from within public protection and paid for overtime work. This simply moves the demand from one part of public protection to another, rather than meeting the department's overall demand.

### **The force should review how multi-agency safeguarding hubs operate throughout the force**

Our 2021 National Child Protection Inspection identified problems with how [multi-agency safeguarding hubs \(MASHs\)](#) operate throughout the force. We found that the hubs have limited capability for risk-based decision-making. Instead, they tend to share all available information with safeguarding authorities, often overwhelming them. The force needs to make sure there are enough capable staff within MASH to effectively risk assess and prioritise information. When sending information to local authorities, they should clearly distinguish between formal referrals and less urgent notifications. Sending information indiscriminately may mean that the force's risk assessment decisions aren't communicated clearly to the local authority. This may result in it overlooking a need for an urgent response.

### **The force should engage with vulnerable victims to understand their experience and improve future service**

We found there was limited engagement with victims to establish how they felt they were treated. This means the force has little data to help improve the service it offers to victims in future. The force should make victim feedback integral to the investigative process and use this feedback to improve victims' experiences.

## Main findings

In this section we set out our main findings that relate to how well the force protects vulnerable people.

### **The force's governance of its service to vulnerable people is disjointed**

We found that there was strong strategic oversight of the public protection portfolio. The force has created a public protection improvement plan which covers each of the twelve categories of vulnerability, as set out in the National Vulnerability Action Plan. Each of the categories has a lead [senior officer](#). And areas such as [rape and serious sexual offences \(RASSO\)](#), child protection and domestic abuse have full-time leads.

There has been good progress in providing training to child protection investigators and there is a programme to train the remainder who haven't yet received this.

But there is a lack of cohesion between the people responsible for the governance of the improvement plan and those responsible for the staff implementing it. The plan is being implemented by staff within the frontline policing command, who are given different performance targets to those set out in the plan. We found that this was creating tension for public protection leaders, who were having to balance the expectations both of local leaders and of corporate strategic leads.

In addition, there remains a strong focus on criminal justice outcomes as an end in itself, rather than on achieving the best outcome for victims. The priority should be the safety and wellbeing of a victim.

Our inspection recognised that senior leaders and staff working within public protection investigation teams want to respond well to keeping vulnerable people safe.

### **The force doesn't always have enough capacity to meet the needs of vulnerable victims**

Staff and supervisors in units dedicated to dealing with vulnerable victims, such as domestic abuse investigation teams, told us that their caseloads were often unmanageable. We found that overtime was being used routinely to keep up with demand. And there was evidence of staff working on rest days to complete tasks.

We found that public protection teams had the least experienced staff of all the force – mostly people still in their initial detective training period. The force appears to see public protection as a role that anyone can perform, and one everyone should gain experience of early in their investigative career. We found that roles in public protection aren't valued for their high levels of risk management or for the nuances of dealing with the most vulnerable victims. Experienced staff are generally quick to leave them. And public protection leaders are powerless to stop them leaving, despite the overwhelming demand they face.

## **The force contributes to the effectiveness of multi-agency risk assessment conferences**

The force's participation in [multi-agency risk assessment conferences \(MARACs\)](#) is well established. MARACs are held in each local authority area covered by the force. At the conferences we observed, we found good attendance and participation from statutory and non-statutory bodies (including social services, children's services, housing and health organisations, and independent advisors on domestic and sexual violence). The meetings included active information sharing and activities to support the safeguarding of victims and families. The chair made sure that actions were recorded and tracked in the minutes. We found that the MARACs were constructive and resulted in plans that increased the safety of the victims discussed.

## **Dedicated officers support the use of domestic violence protection orders**

Domestic violence protection order (DVPO) officers in each BCU assess all domestic violence cases every morning. They then give advice on whether an application for a DVPO should be considered. And they give expert support to investigators throughout the application process. This has led to the increased use of these orders, and an improved understanding about them within public protection teams.

## **The management of online child abuse is a reducing risk for the force**

In previous inspections, we have found large backlogs in processing online child abuse cases. The force uses a central team and local teams in combination to manage the investigation of online child abuse. It has developed a prioritisation process to make sure that cases involving the highest risk of ongoing abuse of children are dealt with by specialist trained staff. The backlog of cases has been steadily declining, from 1,300 in October 2021 to 329 in June 2022.

# Managing offenders and suspects

Requires  
improvement

The Metropolitan Police Service requires improvement at managing offenders and suspects.

## Areas for improvement

### **The force has reduced the number of outstanding suspects, but it needs to reduce this further**

The number of outstanding suspects was an area for improvement for the force following our 2019 inspection. The force has worked hard to reduce this number. It fell by 25 percent between March 2019 and March 2022, but is still high. This matter remains an area for improvement, as the number of suspects remaining outstanding for long periods of time is growing.

The force has a clear management policy for apprehending outstanding suspects and offenders. It uses an IT solution, Emerald, for recording offenders who are 'wanted' by the force. The responsibility for the management of individual offenders lies with the officer in the case. This officer must review the status of an offender on the Emerald system every 28 days. And the force checks the offender's status against the [Police National Computer](#) every two weeks. The force uses the daily BCU 'pacesetter' management meetings to make sure activity to apprehend outstanding suspects progresses in a timely way. A data pack is available for local managers to monitor progress.

The force has introduced predatory offender units to locate and arrest outstanding high-harm offenders, such as those targeting women and girls. The force told us that it arrested 1,200 outstanding suspects in the first 5 months after introducing these units.

### **The force should implement its plan to improve the management of suspects released from custody under ongoing investigation**

In our 2020 report on the use of bail and [release under investigation \(RUI\)](#), we found there was an inconsistent use of RUI in managing suspects and offenders. Following this inspection, the force published a plan for managing suspects RUI. This aims to reduce the number of legacy cases involving RUI (those more than six months old), reduce the future use of RUI and introduce a process for managing and monitoring RUI. But we found that progress on implementing the plan had been slow. Between September 2020 and May 2021, work to review legacy RUI cases reduced these by 69 percent. But there was an overall increase in RUI cases of 6.5 percent over the same period. At the time of our inspection, there had been no progress on introducing a process to manage RUI in future.

### **The force needs to produce accurate data to monitor offender management**

The [management of sex offenders and violent offenders](#) teams in the force are referred to as ‘Jigsaw’ teams. There is no clear, standardised approach for collating, recording and scrutinising the number of outstanding offender visits or outstanding risk assessments. So the force can’t assure itself that Jigsaw teams are effectively managing demand.

### **The force should improve the quality of supervisor reviews in Jigsaw teams**

We found that Jigsaw supervisors’ knowledge of their legal responsibilities and of the national guidance for reviewing the management of registered sex offenders was good. But the recording of activity and decisions about the management of offenders is inconsistent. The force should make sure supervisor reviews provide detailed case direction and set actions.

The force’s policy doesn’t require staff to record checks of intelligence systems if these don’t yield new information. So it isn’t possible for us to say whether these are being carried out. Supervisors should make sure that intelligence checks are completed and that the results of all these checks are recorded.

## **Main findings**

In this section we set out our main findings that relate to how well the force manages offenders and suspects.

### **The force uses recognised risk assessment tools and dedicated investigation teams to manage registered sex offenders and violent offenders**

We found that the force is using approved risk assessment tools for managing sex offenders and violent offenders. It uses these to create good, well-structured risk management plans for the continual management of offenders.

The Jigsaw teams actively work with neighbourhood policing teams to help with managing offenders. They share intelligence where possible, and neighbourhood staff actively seek to fill intelligence gaps.

### **The force should review its policy of removing experienced staff from Jigsaw and online child abuse and exploitation teams**

The force has a policy of removing detectives from the Jigsaw and online child sexual abuse and exploitation teams, to increase investigation capacity elsewhere. But we found that there was a shortage of experienced officers in both of these teams. The time and cost taken to train people as specialists and then move them elsewhere in the department may be justified. But it may also be an inefficient use of their skills.

### **The force uses software to effectively manage sex offenders' use of digital technology**

The force installs ESAFE software on sex offenders' computers to monitor their use. It also uses this software to monitor offenders subject to [sexual harm prevention orders](#) with conditions that restrict their access to harmful material. This allows officers to detect any further offences and to accurately assess the risk a person poses. This can be done while visiting the home address of a registered sex offender using portable triage equipment.

# Disrupting serious organised crime

We now inspect [serious and organised crime \(SOC\)](#) on a regional basis, rather than inspecting each force individually in this area. This is so we can be more effective and efficient in how we inspect the whole SOC system, as set out in HM Government's SOC strategy.

SOC is tackled by each force working with [regional organised crime units \(ROCU\)](#). These units lead the regional response to SOC by providing access to specialist resources and assets to disrupt [organised crime groups](#) that pose the highest harm.

Through our new inspections we seek to understand how well forces and ROCUs work in partnership. As a result, we now inspect ROCUs and their forces together and report on regional performance. Forces and ROCUs are now graded and reported on in regional SOC reports.

Our SOC inspection of the Metropolitan Police Service hasn't yet been completed. We will update our website with our findings (including the force's grade) and a link to the regional report once the inspection is complete.

# Building, supporting and protecting the workforce

## Requires improvement

The Metropolitan Police Service requires improvement at building and developing its workforce.

### Areas for improvement

#### **The force should implement an effective personal development annual appraisal process to improve how it manages and monitors individual performance**

In our 2019 inspection report, we stated that the force needed to provide support to its supervisors in making fair and effective assessments so that staff value the process. It also said that the force should make sure performance development reviews happen consistently and fairly throughout the organisation. And it said that the force should manage poor performance effectively.

We continue to find that the force doesn't have an effective personal annual appraisal system. Only 33 percent of the workforce completed an annual appraisal in the year ending 31 March 2021. The force should make sure that these appraisals are completed. And it should make sure that one-to-one conversations between managers and staff focus sufficiently on performance, as well as being supportive and considerate to wellbeing.

#### **The force should provide suitable training and support for its supervisors so that they are fully equipped and confident to manage the performance and development of their staff**

Our 2019 inspection report said that the force should support its supervisors to manage their staff.

In this inspection, we found that supervisors aren't managing poor performance or giving opportunities for development. Supervisors are often having to spend time tutoring their staff in the basic tasks of their role at the expense of providing leadership and direction.

### **The force needs to review its training requirements to make sure its workforce is supported to meet the demands it faces**

The force needs to review its strategy for training its staff. It should make sure that it has a detailed understanding of what training staff need to support their development. This will help make sure that the force invests in its workforce to improve its welfare and wellbeing.

Our 2019 inspection recommended that the force reviews the information it has about the skills and capabilities of its workforce, including its leaders. The force still can't identify who has what skills. It is reliant on a planned new IT system for improving this understanding. The learning management system has been promised for some time. At the time of the inspection, its first phase was due to be implemented in summer 2022. If it isn't implemented, the force needs to find an alternative way of understanding its training requirements.

## **Innovative practice**

### **The force has attempted to break down barriers deterring women from joining the police by recruiting part-time constables**

The force is the first in the UK to offer part-time positions to new recruits. From November 2021, all new constable recruits have been able to choose between full-time or part-time working hours. This followed research carried out by the force which showed that full-time working hours deterred some women from considering a career in policing.

### **The force has launched a support programme to improve the experience of pregnant employees and new parents**

The force provides additional support to pregnant employees and new parents. It has programmes to help staff maintain a connection with the force and keep up their skills while they are away from work. These include formal 'keep in touch' days as well as a coaching service and other measures to support female officers returning to work. The force also offers paid special leave for IVF medical treatment.

## Main findings

In this section we set out our main findings that relate to how well the force builds and develops its workforce.

### **The force is aware of the need to rebuild trust with the community, and is investing in this work**

The force recently introduced a rebuilding trust team. This was in response to many high-profile incidents that have damaged the reputation of the force and its relationship with the community. The team's work is being overseen by a senior leader to make sure that its importance is understood and to provide impetus throughout the organisation. Several of the work programmes aim to improve standards of behaviour in the workforce. The force will clearly set out and communicate its expectations to promote a professional, ethical and inclusive culture.

### **The force's efforts to support staff wellbeing are being undermined by high workloads, poor training and poor supervision**

Staff generally feel supported by their managers, and feel that managers genuinely care about their welfare. The force has extensive [occupational health services](#) and continues to invest in these. There are also local arrangements in place in BCUs for informal wellbeing support. These include organised activities such as exercise classes, and set times when managers are available to chat.

But we found that many frontline policing staff felt too busy to use the available occupational health or informal wellbeing services. Some told us that they didn't tell their supervisors about how they felt at work because their supervisors couldn't reduce the pressure from their overwhelming workloads. Other factors negatively affecting wellbeing include the poor training and supervision covered in other sections of this report.

The force has a good process for monitoring personnel assaulted during their duty. Operation Hampshire is its programme for notifying management teams of any assaults on their staff so they can arrange any necessary support.

Staff generally felt that occupational health services had improved recently. But waiting times have increased. The average waiting time for a worker to receive an appointment increased from 7 days in January to March 2020, to 11 days in January to March 2021, and 12 days in January to March 2022.

Psychological screening is in place for certain high-risk roles, such as those which involve viewing indecent images of children. Screening should happen every 6 months, but some staff aren't receiving assessments for 18 months.

The health, safety and wellbeing board is now responsible for the governance of health, safety and wellbeing. This board has only recently taken on responsibility for wellbeing, so it wasn't possible to assess the impact of its oversight at the time of our inspection.

## **The force has an effective plan to recruit new staff, but it also needs to focus on retaining existing staff**

The force understands its recruitment needs and is recruiting large numbers of new officers as part of the Police Uplift Programme. It has a target of recruiting 4,557 additional officers by March 2023. By 31 December 2021, it had recruited 78 percent of its allocation for the first two years of the programme (to 31 March 2022).

This recruitment drive is creating an inexperienced workforce. All frontline policing teams are facing similar problems. New, inexperienced staff with limited practical experience are being managed by similarly inexperienced supervisors trying to balance supervision with providing basic training. Opportunities for staff to learn from experienced officers are being lost as many staff join specialist units soon after they finish their probationary period.

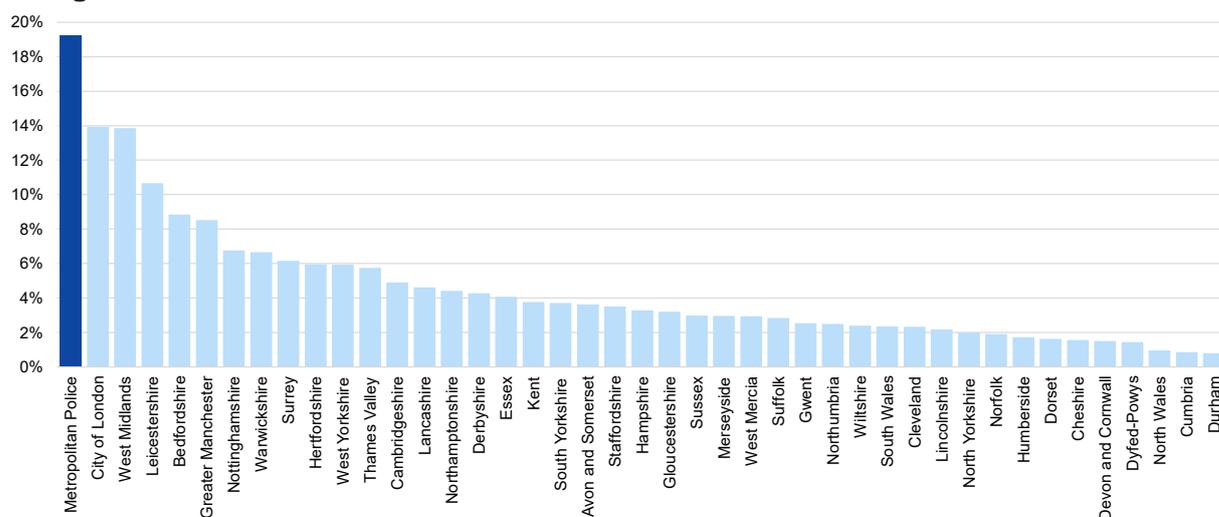
Around 1,500 officers are leaving the force every year, in part due to high workloads and poor supervision. Attrition rates this high undermine the force's success in recruitment. Investment in staff retention is more cost-effective than training new recruits.

## **The force is taking effective action so that its workforce better reflects its communities**

The force has a clear plan to recruit a workforce that better reflects the community. Its inclusion and diversity strategy sets out projects which should help to achieve greater diversity. There is a policy of taking positive action to recruit officers and staff from under-represented communities. And the force has a dedicated outreach team, who attend local events to engage with under-represented communities. The force told us that more than 4,000 people have registered interest in joining it as police officers following contact with outreach staff. Of these, over 50 percent were from ethnic minority backgrounds and over 40 percent were female. The force provides support through the application process, with applicants given a named caseworker. There is also a 'buddy' scheme for all new recruits from ethnic minority backgrounds, to give support during periods of training where previously recruits tended to drop out.

On 31 March 2021, 19.2 percent of the force's workforce who stated their ethnicity were from an ethnic minority background. This was the highest proportion of all forces in England and Wales, in which the average figure is 7.8 percent. But the 2011 Census estimates that 40.2 percent of the population of London is from an ethnic minority background, so there is still some way to go for the force to be truly representative of its community.

## Proportion of the workforce (that stated their ethnicity) from an ethnic minority background across all forces as at 31 March 2021



## Vetting and counter corruption

We now inspect how forces deal with vetting and counter corruption differently. This is so we can be more effective and efficient in how we inspect this high-risk area of police business.

Corruption in forces is tackled by specialist units, designed to proactively target corruption threats. Police corruption is corrosive and poses a significant risk to public trust and confidence. There is a national expectation of standards and how they should use specialist resources and assets to target and arrest those that pose the highest threat.

Through our new inspections, we seek to understand how well forces apply these standards. As a result, we now inspect forces and report on national risks and performance in this area. We now grade and report on forces' performance separately.

The Metropolitan Police Service's vetting and counter corruption inspection hasn't yet been completed. We will update our website with our findings and the separate report once the inspection is complete.

We have, however, recently carried out an [inspection of the MPS counter-corruption arrangements and other matters relating to the Daniel Morgan Independent Panel](#). The force received five causes of concern in this report.

# Strategic planning, organisational management and value for money

Requires  
improvement

The Metropolitan Police Service requires improvement at operating efficiently.

## Areas for improvement

### **The force has an ambitious programme of transformation, but many large-scale IT projects are behind schedule**

The force has an ambitious project to replace many of its IT systems with a single system, CONNECT. But the project is experiencing delays to its launch and full implementation. These delays affect other projects, including a planned upgrade to the command and control system. This in turn delays much needed improvements to how effectively the force responds to the public.

The force recognises the risk arising from the project's effect on other change programmes such as the new command and control system. Each programme has a lead officer who reports on progress or delays to a governance board. The force should assure itself that its governance is proactive enough to make sure these programmes are implemented on time.

## **The force should improve its understanding of its resources, including its workforce's capacity and skills**

In our 2019 report, we found that the force needed to improve its understanding of its workforce's skills and capabilities and use a central database to manage this information.

We found that the force is still struggling to fully understand the capability and capacity of its workforce throughout all areas of policing. It also lacks a detailed understanding of the skills in its workforce. This has led to an unfair allocation of work, which puts undue pressure on some staff. This in turn affects service delivery and makes it harder to use resources efficiently.

This workforce information is important to help the force effectively consider its response to demand and specific crime types. Being able to allocate the right person with the right skills will improve efficiency and support victims more effectively.

This area for improvement reiterates the findings of our previous report.

## **The force needs to develop a more comprehensive understanding of demand to make sure that it has staff available to meet this, now and in future**

The force's operating model, comprising 12 BCUs, hasn't been reviewed since it was fully implemented in 2019. We frequently heard from staff about increases to their workloads and reductions in the numbers of available staff. This was most notable in frontline roles such as those in response, neighbourhood and public protection teams. We found that many shifts were working at or below the force's stated minimum personnel levels most of the time. This was negatively affecting officers' welfare. In some teams, notably public protection teams, inexperienced staff were holding cases that they were not fully equipped to deal with, and lacked supervisory support.

The lack of detail in the force's understanding of demand can be seen in how it responds to specific demand pressures. For example, some BCUs investigate higher numbers of RASSO than others but have similar supervisor numbers. The force recently created an additional RASSO inspector post for every BCU regardless of the demand each unit was facing. This isn't matching resource to demand or providing the right support to staff.

The force has an investigation policy that gives guidance about acceptable caseloads. Despite this, we found that many officers were carrying excessive workloads and being required to work overtime. Staff are regularly working from home to manage high-risk offences, as this is the only way they feel they can work uninterrupted.

## Main findings

In this section we set out our main findings that relate to how well the force operates efficiently.

### **The force actively seeks opportunities to improve services through collaboration with other agencies**

The force collaborates well with other organisations in some areas of its work. This includes sharing some firearms officers with the counter terrorism network. The force has formal arrangements to work closely with Transport for London, City of London Police and British Transport Police. And it has developed operational protocols with other forces to manage cross-border work such as [county lines](#) drug dealing.

The force also focuses its collaboration efforts on aspects of its work where its resources are often used to respond to incidents despite not being the primary responsible agency. One example of successful collaboration is in the context of mental health. The force has formed crisis attendance teams who jointly patrol with mental health practitioners, to provide better care and reduce the burden on police staff.

### **The force makes the best use of the finance it has available, and its plans are both ambitious and sustainable**

The force has robust financial management in place. MOPAC and the force are audited jointly by external auditors. These have consistently found that the force has good processes in place to make sure it manages its finances with “economy, efficiency and effectiveness”.

The force has an ambitious transformation programme whose stated aims prioritise work that benefits the public first and the force second. The transformation portfolio manages 14 improvement programmes, comprising 80 individual projects. There is a clear governance structure connecting the transformation work to all areas of work, and a review programme to make sure the stated benefits are achieved. Projects range from making the estate more efficient (getting more people into less space) to increasing the numbers and capability of police officers.

### **The force produces extensive data showing crime trends and its performance in tackling them**

The force and MOPAC produce regular and accessible data allowing the public to understand the issues facing their community. Internally, the force provides clear data dashboards for each area of its work, including partnerships with local organisations. We found that the use of this data varies between teams, depending on the leadership’s capacity and capability at understanding data. Some BCUs use the data dashboards to effectively prioritise work and move staff to meet changes in demand.

There are good examples of the force working in partnership with other organisations to provide better services to the public. The force shares local data with other agencies. But there was little evidence that the shared data is then used to make decisions about partnership priorities. We found that information about vulnerability is shared with safeguarding partners, for example. But this didn't lead to planning joint activity.

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