

PEEL: Police effectiveness 2015

An inspection of Cumbria Constabulary



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Overview – How effective is the force at keeping people safe and reducing crime?

Overall judgment¹



Requires improvement

Overall Cumbria Constabulary requires improvement at keeping people safe and reducing crime. The constabulary is good at preventing crime and anti-social behaviour. Neighbourhood teams work well with partner organisations to resolve local problems. The constabulary should improve its investigation of crime. How it manages offenders is inconsistent. The training of staff to respond professionally to vulnerable victims is not having the desired impact; and the constabulary's understanding of serious and organised crime has limitations.

This is the first year HMIC has graded forces on their overall effectiveness so comparison of their year-on-year effectiveness is not possible.

Summary

Neighbourhood teams in Cumbria tackle crime and anti-social behaviour effectively; they work closely with partner organisations to prevent local problems escalating and provide solutions. The constabulary could improve how it evaluates the impact of its tactics to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour. The constabulary has good schemes to divert young people away from crime. These include the 'it's your choice' scheme and a 'prevent and deter' panel, which help young people to learn from their mistakes and use rehabilitation as an alternative to appearing in court.

Complex crime investigations are of a good standard and detailed investigation plans help direct investigations to positive outcomes. By contrast, the investigation of crime that is less complex, but that occurs more frequently, is less assured. HMIC established that investigators of these crimes receive training on joining the constabulary; however, there is nothing in place to maintain and improve standards.

HMIC has concerns over how the constabulary obtains and shares intelligence in relation to vulnerable people. The effectiveness of training provided to officers and staff to keep vulnerable people safe is also uncertain.

There is scope to involve the workforce more actively in preventing and disrupting serious and organised crime. The constabulary's standards of offender management fall short of Home Office best practice and require improvement. The risks presented by registered sex offenders are not always managed effectively.

¹ Outstanding, Good, Requires improvement or Inadequate – see Annex A for definitions.

The constabulary is fulfilling its commitment to national policing responsibilities and has recently conducted an exercise with other regional services to test preparedness for a major incident.

Overall Cumbria Constabulary requires improvement at keeping people safe and reducing crime.

How effective is the force at preventing crime and anti-social behaviour, and keeping people safe?



Good

Cumbria Constabulary has a strong focus on tackling crime and anti-social behaviour at neighbourhood level. Neighbourhood policing teams (NPTs) take responsibility for resolving local issues, supported by other partner agencies. Few other frontline staff believe they have a significant part to play in long-term problem-solving. While there are effective countywide partnerships in place, such as through the multi-agency risk evaluation meetings and for road safety, partnership working is most effective at neighbourhood level.

NPTs are effective at problem-solving and providing solutions for community issues. However, little evaluation is done of problem-solving activity across the constabulary.

Face-to-face contact with the public is important to the constabulary; 'street safe', a community engagement initiative, and community access points in supermarkets and other public spaces are important features of this.

The constabulary is also expanding the use of online methods to obtain feedback

How effective is the force at investigating crime and managing offenders?



Requires improvement

The standards of investigation of crime in Cumbria are mixed.

The best examples are in the investigation of complex crime, which is undertaken by specialist teams. Enquiries are comprehensive and lines of enquiry are systematically followed to bring about prosecutions or other positive outcomes.

However, the investigation of less complex crime has shortcomings; prosecution case files are sub-standard, workloads are unmanageable and the retrieval of digital evidence from computers is causing unnecessary delays.

The constabulary's arrangements for managing persistent offenders have a number of shortcomings. The integrated offender management (IOM) scheme is understaffed, the commitment from partner organisations could be stronger and offender management plans are unstructured.

The IOM scheme in Cumbria was the subject of criticism in HMIC's crime inspection in 2014. More should have

and understand more about how crime and anti-social behaviour affects local residents.

A number of well-established 'watch' schemes are in place. These help the constabulary to tackle criminality by raising awareness of a number of different types of crimes, watch groups also promote safer driving in rural locations.

How effective is the force at protecting from harm those who are vulnerable, and supporting victims?



Requires improvement

Cumbria Constabulary requires improvement in the service it provides to vulnerable people. The constabulary should improve its response to vulnerable victims by ensuring that all staff understand how to identify, assess, respond to and safeguard vulnerable victims. HMIC found inconsistencies in the understanding that some staff have of a range of vulnerability issues. The constabulary's work with partners to improve services and share information is good.

The training of staff is a concern to us. Some training has been provided to improve the workforce's understanding of vulnerability and child sexual exploitation.

been done to address these areas for improvement.

The constabulary should also improve its use of criminal records background checks for foreign nationals who are arrested. Knowledge of offences they have committed in other countries is important in determining how investigations are best managed.

Good schemes are in place to divert young offenders away from crime through the 'prevent and deter' panels and the 'It's your choice' programme.

How effective is the force at tackling serious and organised crime, including its arrangements for fulfilling its national policing responsibilities?



Requires improvement

Staff working in the serious and organised crime unit and on drugs units have a good understanding of the threat posed by serious and organised crime.

Knowledge and awareness of organised crime groups was not as comprehensive amongst front line staff. There was no routine use of officers and police and community support officers to gather intelligence and disrupt organised crime groups as part of an orchestrated, longer term plan to dismantle them.

While there are regular meetings within the constabulary to discuss how organised crime groups will be managed, there is no meaningful non-police partnership involvement. However, the

But it has made little impact on the staff we spoke to.

We found that the constabulary keeps victims updated about the progress of their case well. However, HMIC found that not all victims in Cumbria were offered the opportunity to make a victim statement at the appropriate time.

Work between professionals in the children's safeguarding hub is good and the safety of children is prioritised. However, the constabulary needs to ensure the safeguarding hub has sufficient appropriately skilled police staff to manage referrals and any required safeguarding activity.

The collection and management of intelligence from vulnerable missing people can be improved. Currently this is not being inputted onto constabulary IT systems.

The constabulary is well prepared to respond to child sexual exploitation on an individual, case-by-case basis, once a victim has been identified. Cumbria needs to do much more to improve the quality of information available to increase its understanding of child sexual exploitation across the county and understand the risks better.

Officers attending domestic abuse incidents know how to assess risk and keep victims safe. They understand that safeguarding the victim is paramount. However, frontline staff and supervisors are not always aware of the immediate options available to keep the victim safe and where they can obtain specialist advice although longer term safeguarding issues and support are good.

constabulary has effective relationships with other law enforcement agencies such as the regional organised crime unit and the national crime agency.

The constabulary is fulfilling its commitment to national policing responsibilities and has recently conducted an exercise with other regional services to test preparedness for a major incident. Further similar exercises are planned in the future to enhance the constabulary's capability in this area.

This is the first year HMIC has graded forces on their effectiveness at tackling serious and organised crime, including a force's arrangements for ensuring that it can fulfil its national policing responsibilities, so no year-on-year comparison is possible.

Force in numbers



Calls for assistance

Calls for assistance per 1,000 population 12 months to 31 March 2015

Cumbria Constabulary England and Wales

597

350



Crime

Crimes recorded (excluding fraud) per 1,000 population 12 months to 30 June 2015

Cumbria Constabulary England and Wales

51.7

63.0

Crimes recorded (excluding fraud) per 1,000 population 12 months to 30 June 2014

Cumbria Constabulary England and Wales

47.8

60.3

Changes in recorded crime (excluding fraud) 12 months to 30 June 2014 against 12 months to 30 June 2015

Cumbria Constabulary England and Wales

+8.1%

+4.5%

Changes in recorded crime (excluding fraud) 12 months to 30 June 2010 against 12 months to 30 June 2015

Cumbria Constabulary England and Wales

-5.9%

-12.6%



Charge rate

Charge rate as a percentage of all crimes recorded (excluding fraud) 12 months to 30 June 2015

Cumbria Constabulary England and Wales

22.8%

16.0%



Anti-social behaviour

Anti-social behaviour incidents per 1,000 population 12 months to 30 June 2015

Cumbria Constabulary England and Wales

37.0

32.9

Anti-social behaviour incidents per 1,000 population 12 months to 30 June 2014

Cumbria Constabulary England and Wales

47.4

36.2



Domestic abuse

Domestic abuse as a percentage of all recorded crime (excluding fraud) 12 months to 31 March 2015

Cumbria Constabulary England and Wales

12.8%

10.0%

Domestic abuse as a percentage of all recorded crime (excluding fraud) 12 months to 31 March 2014

Cumbria Constabulary England and Wales

10.9%

8.5%



Organised crime groups

Organised crime groups per million population as at 30 June 2015

Cumbria Constabulary England and Wales

136.6

74.7



Victim satisfaction rate

Victim satisfaction rate 12 months to 31 March 2015

Cumbria Constabulary England and Wales

89.0%

83.8%

Introduction

The public expects their local police force to:

- Prevent crime and anti-social behaviour and, when crime occurs, to investigate it properly and provide support to victims.
- Use appropriately trained officers and staff and approved practice when investigating crime, gathering evidence and building cases to ensure offenders are brought to justice.
- Support victims of crime by responding to calls for service, identifying and putting in place the right help at the first point of contact, keeping them informed and consulting them about the possible outcomes of their case.
- Ensure that vulnerable people who might not have been a victim of crime are identified and given appropriate support, for example people at risk of domestic abuse, children at risk of sexual exploitation and missing or absent children.
- Understand and be prepared to respond to threats beyond their own force boundaries, including national threats such as terrorism, serious and organised crime and cyber-crime.
- Work effectively with local partner organisations and other bodies to prevent all types of crime and re-offending and to protect the public.

HMIC's annual inspections into police effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy (PEEL) consider whether forces keep people safe and reduce crime (how effective a force is), whether these activities are being carried out at the most appropriate cost (how efficient a force is), and how forces are ensuring they have the confidence of their communities (the public legitimacy of a force).

All forces are subject to significant cost reductions; this is reflected in our efficiency reports published in October 2015. The judgments we are making in this effectiveness report are made whilst understanding the financial challenges forces are facing. Reports on the efficiency and legitimacy of Cumbria Constabulary are available from the HMIC website (www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/).

HMIC's effectiveness inspections make an assessment of how well forces are preventing and investigating crime and anti-social behaviour; tackling serious and organised crime; and protecting victims and those who are vulnerable. These are the most important responsibilities for a police force, and are the principal measures by which the public will judge the performance of their force and policing as a whole.

Our effectiveness inspection focused on the overall question: "How effective is the force at keeping people safe and reducing crime?"

To answer this question we looked at four in-depth questions, three of which are discussed in more detail within this report:²

1. How effective is the force at preventing crime and anti-social behaviour, and keeping people safe?
2. How effective is the force at investigating crime and managing offenders?
3. How effective is the force at protecting from harm those who are vulnerable, and supporting victims?
4. How effective is the force at tackling serious and organised crime, including its arrangements for fulfilling its national policing responsibilities?

During our inspection, we collected data from forces, reviewed case files and surveyed the public to seek their views on the effectiveness of the force. We also surveyed and interviewed representatives from partner organisations to gather evidence about the effectiveness of their working relationships with the force. We interviewed chief constables and chief officers and held focus groups of officers and staff at all grades and ranks. We also made numerous unannounced visits to police stations to talk to frontline officers and staff about their work. This report sets out the findings from this wide-ranging inspection of Cumbria Constabulary.

² HMIC inspected forces on questions 1, 2 and 4 between September and November 2015. Question 3 was inspected between June and August 2015, and a separate report was published in December 2015 (available from www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/publications/police-effectiveness-vulnerability-2015-cumbria/) In 2014, in preparation for the PEEL programme, forces were inspected to assess how effective they are at cutting crime (available from: www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/publications/crime-inspection-force-reports/).

How effective is the force at preventing crime and anti-social behaviour, and keeping people safe?

The police's ability to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour and to keep people safe is a principal measure of its effectiveness. Crime prevention can be cheaper and more effective than investigating crime, and it makes society a safer place. The police cannot prevent crime on their own; other statutory and non-statutory bodies have a vital role to play. Police effectiveness in this matter is therefore dependent on their ability to work closely with other partner organisations to understand local problems and have access to a wide range of evidence-based interventions to resolve them.

How much crime and anti-social behaviour is there in Cumbria?

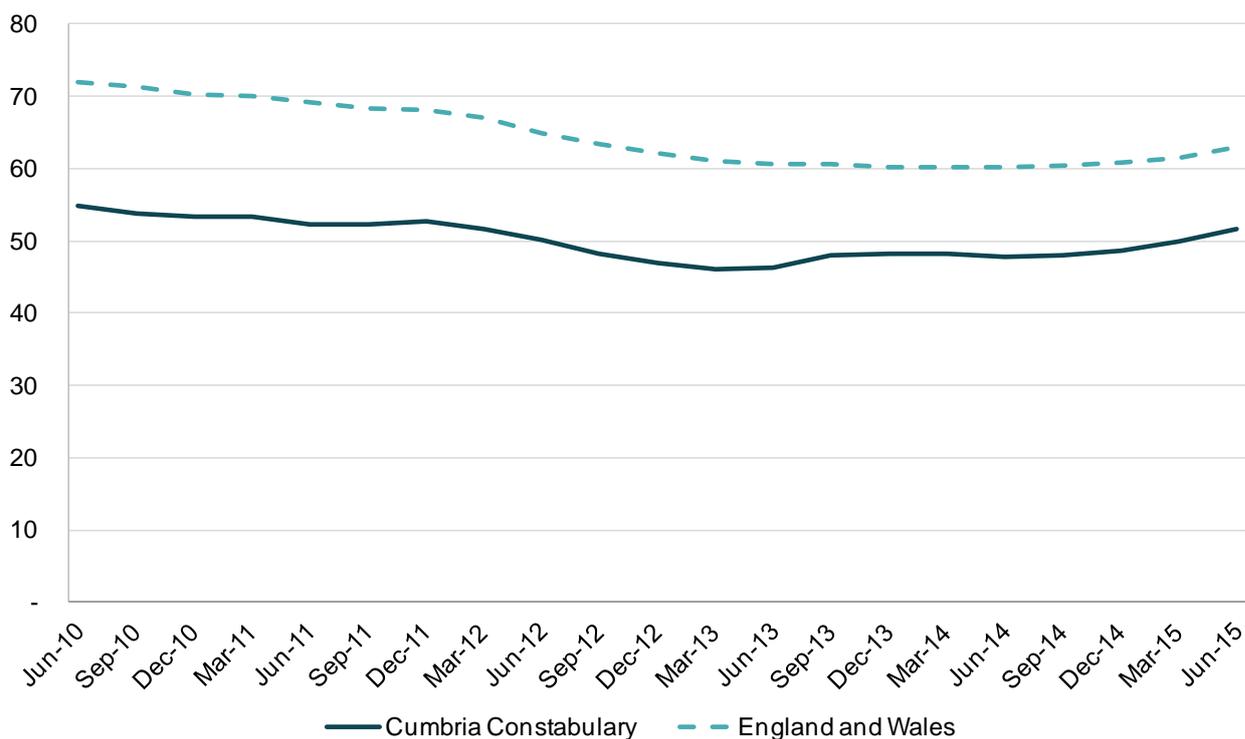
Although police recorded crime is by no means a complete measure of the totality of demand for calls on its service that a force faces, it does provide a comparable indication of performance across all forces. Crime rates are reported as a number of crimes per 1,000 population in each force area to enable comparison between areas. Total recorded crime is made up of victim-based crime (e.g. theft) and non victim-based crime (e.g. possession of drugs). More than two-thirds of forces showed an annual increase in total police recorded crime (excluding fraud) in the 12 months to 30 June 2015. This increase in police recorded crime may have been affected by the renewed focus on the quality and compliance of crime recording since HMIC's national inspection of crime data in 2014.

In 2010 the Home Secretary set a clear priority for the police service to cut crime. When compared with the 12 months to 30 June 2010, police recorded crime (excluding fraud) for the 12 months to 30 June 2015 fell by 6 percent in Cumbria compared with a reduction of 13 percent across all forces in England and Wales.

Over this same period, victim-based crime (i.e. crimes where there is a direct victim such as an individual, a group, or an organisation) decreased by 5 percent in Cumbria, compared with a reduction of 12 percent across England and Wales.

When compared with the previous year, police recorded crime (excluding fraud) in Cumbria increased by 8 percent for the 12 months to 30 June 2015. This is compared with an increase of 4 percent across England and Wales over the same period.

Figure 1: Police recorded crime rates (per 1,000 population) for the five year period to 30 June 2015



Source: Home Office data

The volume of police recorded crimes and incidents of anti-social behaviour per head of population indicates how safe it is for the public in that police area.

Figure 2 shows crime and anti-social behaviour rates in Cumbria (per 1,000 population) compared with England and Wales.

Figure 2: Police recorded crime rates (per 1,000 population) for the 12 months to 30 June 2015

Rates per 1,000 population	Cumbria Constabulary	England and Wales
Recorded crime (excluding fraud)	51.7	63.0
Victim-based crime	44.3	56.0
Sexual offences	1.6	1.6
Assault with injury	6.2	6.3
Burglary in a dwelling*	3.4	8.4
Anti-social behaviour incidents*	37.0	32.9

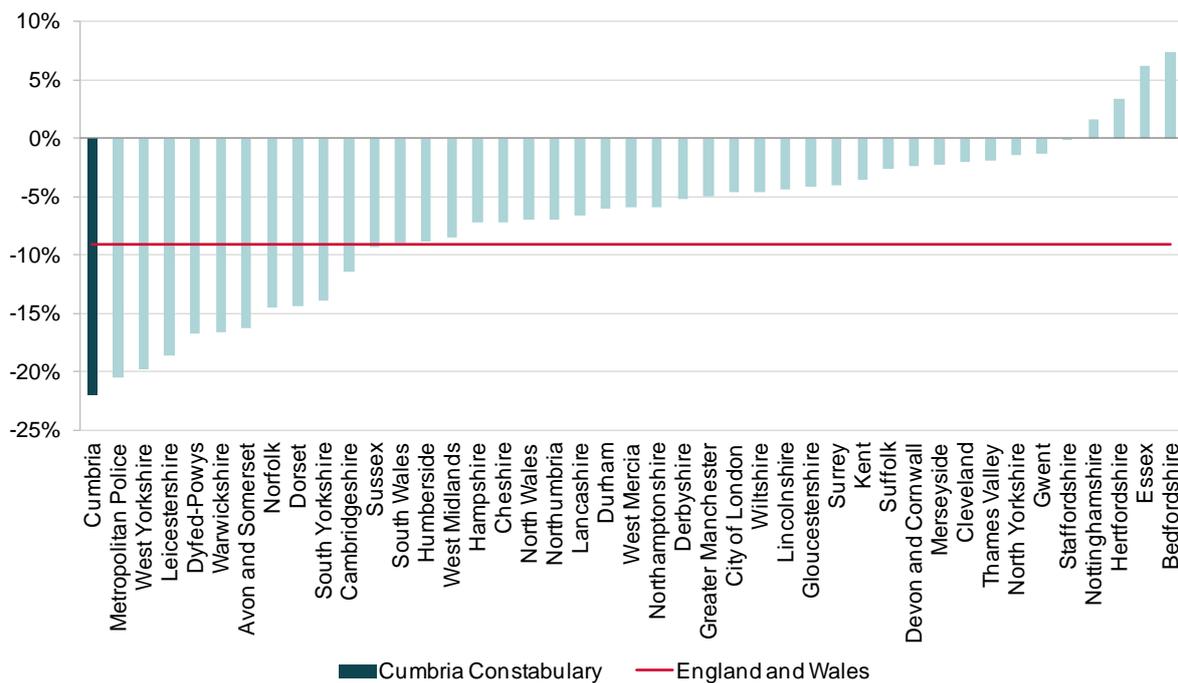
Source: Home Office data, HMIC data return

*Anti-social behaviour data is from the constabulary's data return and the rate for burglary in a dwelling is the rate per 1,000 households, not population.

HMIC has chosen these types of crime to indicate offending levels in the constabulary area. We are not judging the effectiveness of the constabulary on police recorded crime rates only.

In the 12 months to 30 June 2015, Cumbria Constabulary recorded 18,418 incidents of anti-social behaviour. This is 22 percent fewer incidents than the constabulary recorded during the previous 12 months. When considering all forces across England and Wales, there were 9 percent fewer incidents in the 12 months to 30 June 2015, than recorded during the previous 12 months.

Figure 3: Percentage change in the volume of anti-social behaviour incidents, by force, comparing the 12 months to 30 June 2015 with the 12 months to 30 June 2014



Source: HMIC data collection

How well does the force work to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour, and keep people safe?

How well is the force prioritising the prevention of crime and anti-social behaviour?

Cumbria Constabulary has a strong commitment and focus on the reduction of crime and on keeping people safe. The constabulary's annual planning process attempts to assess realistic priorities and resourcing in the constabulary's overall strategic approach. Planning takes place annually around the strategic assessment and a single control strategy³ for the whole constabulary. This process used to be split into the three territorial policing areas (TPAs): north, south and west. The six priority areas within the current control strategy are protection and vulnerability; violent crime; acquisitive crime; alcohol related crime and disorder; anti-social behaviour; and drug supply.

The strategic assessment and the control strategy are devised through analysis of constabulary data and with reference to information from other organisations such as the NHS, Cumbria County Council (public health, education, social care, housing, and highways), the local safeguarding children board (LSCB), and the third sector (NSPCC, Barnardos). The data collection plan specifically includes these partner agencies. This influences the intelligence requirement and all operational work should be consistent with the control strategy. The constabulary intelligence requirement provides direction to intelligence units, frontline officers and support staff as to what information should be collected.

HMIC found that recent changes to the policing model have resulted in frontline staff, other than those on problem-solving teams at neighbourhood policing team (NPT) level, believing their role was now primarily to respond to calls from the public rather than to work on crime and anti-social behaviour prevention. Few response officers we spoke with considered they now had a significant part to play in long-term problem-solving as part of their new role. Although changes to the constabulary structure have only been recently introduced, the constabulary must address this issue quickly if its commitment to problem-solving and preventing crime is not to be undermined.

How well are resources allocated to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour?

At the daily demand management meetings held in the TPAs each morning, anti-social behaviour is discussed and directions given to staff on the 'hotspot' areas that required patrolling during their tour of duty. This focus has increased recently through the introduction of a constabulary-wide daily operational review meeting.

This moves patrols around the constabulary to ensure that available resources are allocated where the need is greatest.

³ Control strategy: this sets out and communicates the operational priorities for the force or command area and sets the long-term priorities for crime prevention, intelligence and enforcement.

On a daily basis, officers and staff are working effectively within neighbourhoods to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour. The problem-solving team are at the centre of this activity; HMIC found evidence of police and community support officers (PCSOs) routinely working with residents and other service providers to find sustainable solutions to local problems. To reinforce the impact of the NPTs, the constabulary makes every effort to ensure that officers and PCSOs are not reassigned from their neighbourhoods to other priority duties.

Cumbria Constabulary also uses some volunteers to assist its efforts to tackle community priorities. For example, volunteers run their own 'speed watch' campaigns to encourage a more responsible use of the road in remote areas of the countryside.

The constabulary is expanding its preventative work into areas of more serious offending. Police officers from community safety teams on each area give presentations in senior schools on the risk presented by sexual predators and the dangers of drugs misuse. PCSOs run similar campaigns in junior schools to raise awareness of staying safe online.

How well is the force using a broad range of effective tactics to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour?

Cumbria Constabulary uses a broad range of tactics to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour and keep people safe. HMIC found a good understanding and use of new anti-social behaviour powers, for example the use of closure orders and dispersal notices to tackle problem premises or areas where groups gather to cause nuisance to local people.⁴ As an indicator of success, the constabulary has seen the largest reduction (22 percent) in anti-social behaviour in England and Wales over the last 12 months.

Little evaluation of problem-solving activity happens at constabulary level. This does not encourage organisational learning and the dissemination of best practice in the constabulary. HMIC recognises that finding local solutions to local problems has served the constabulary well, not least because of the distinctive characteristics of its demographics. The workforce and the communities it serves are widely dispersed and local knowledge and innovation are important factors in finding successful resolutions.

However, in the context of budgetary constraints, the evaluation of policing tactics and what works best is important to give greater certainty that the constabulary is using its resources to best effect.

⁴ The Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 includes two new measures which are designed to give victims and communities a say in the way anti-social behaviour is dealt with: Community Trigger and Community Remedy as well as early and informal interventions such as Civil injunction; Criminal behaviour order; Dispersal power; Community protection notice; Public spaces protection order; and Closure power.

Available at www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/12/contents/enacted

Problem solving plans are clearly recorded by local officers but we found minimal evidence of the use of any formal problem solving methodology in the constabulary. There was some research into incidents using an analytical tool, which focuses on 'victim, offender, and location', but this was limited. The result of this was that each activity focused on the immediate prevention of the specific case under consideration, with little thought as to how broader and longer-term prevention or disruption could lead to a successful outcome. As the constabulary adapts to budgetary constraints, the challenge will be to combine the experience of local officers with dependable, long-term problem solving techniques. This will be critical in ensuring that the constabulary has the capacity to deliver an effective neighbourhood policing service.

To assist it to tackle crime across the county the constabulary has invested in a number of 'watch' schemes. For example, rural watch members have been part of an operation to tackle organised theft of farm vehicles. Other schemes such as poacher watch and shop watch are well established.

The constabulary maintains contact with these schemes and other members of the community via a variety of means. These include a community messaging system that can contact all or part of the community. There are a limited number of Twitter accounts available to selected NPT staff and officers can post messages on the constabulary Facebook profile through the constabulary's media team.

The constabulary is in the process of moving away from formal meetings with the public and has replaced them with initiatives such as 'police desk'; this involves officers and PCSOs meeting the public in areas of high footfall such as supermarkets, parish councils and community centres to discuss issues relevant to that local community. The constabulary should review whether this method of public contact is achieving the expected outcome or whether alternative methods of engagement could be more beneficial.

If an emerging crime trend or anti-social behaviour issue becomes apparent in a particular locality, the constabulary has an option to embark on a 'street safe' campaign. This is an intensive community engagement process in which a number of constabulary staff are deployed to the area to canvas the views of residents. Local people will be asked for their views on crime and quality of life issues affecting them. The constabulary considers that the 'streetsafe' approach affords local people the opportunity to influence directly the priorities to be addressed by the neighbourhood policing teams working with other local partner services. This is in keeping with the constabulary adopting a 'local response to local issues' approach to problem-solving.

Effective local initiatives are also in place for dealing with crime related to the night time economy and licensed premises. These include regular checking of licensing conditions and review of door staff credentials to ensure compliance with the law and to prevent disorder.

How well does the force work with partners to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour, and keep people safe?

How committed is the force to working with partner organisations?

Cumbria Constabulary is committed to working with partner organisations. There are strong and effective links at a local level, with partnership arrangements that are well embedded and understood. Problem-solving teams at NPT level have specific responsibility for identifying and resolving local issues, supported by partner agencies. This approach has a strong emphasis on local delivery that suits the geography and demographic picture within Cumbria. We found clear evidence of joint working through local multi-agency problem-solving meetings (LMAPS) with partners, to tackle neighbourhood issues.

At a strategic level, HMIC found the picture less clear. Although there is a constabulary wide 'Safer Cumbria' community safety partnership (CSP), HMIC found limited evidence that the CSP undertook an effective strategic co-ordination role. There is some duplication between the local CSPs and the work of the LMAPS. This limits the opportunity to co-ordinate and disseminate good practice properly across the constabulary area.

At this strategic level, there is a lack of clarity over the planned direction and some difficulty in the co-ordination of partnership working as all agencies work through the current funding challenges. The constabulary and its partners should review how it provides direction to support and develop a more streamlined, co-ordinated approach that complements the effective arrangements in place at a local level. We acknowledge that the constabulary has created a post at chief superintendent rank to begin to address this issue.

HMIC found evidence of some effective constabulary-wide partnerships, for example with CRASH (a road collision reduction partnership) and RAP (an alcohol reduction initiative). Partner agencies spoken to were extremely positive regarding the commitment that the constabulary makes to partnership working at a neighbourhood level. HMIC found established partnership working on-going with agencies such as housing associations, social landlords and local authorities and councils.

The constabulary uses staff from such agencies to provide training to police officers and staff and to raise awareness of new powers and legislation that enhance opportunities for more combined working across the different partners' services.

This approach is effective for Cumbria as neighbourhood teams find themselves commonly working closely with colleagues from other public services and charities, owing to the geography and demographic of the county.

How well does the force share and use information with partners to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour?

Cumbria Constabulary has effective mechanisms for sharing information with partners, based in information sharing protocols and agreements. Due to recent changes to the constabulary structure, these agreements are in the process of being revised to match new arrangements in place.

The local nature of the partnership working in Cumbria reflects the way that information is most commonly shared between police and partner services. Information is shared by local agencies during face-to-face meetings, during phone calls or via email. Some information is available on a shared database in the safeguarding hub,⁵ but HMIC found limited use of shared systems beyond this.

The constabulary and its partners can deal well with the immediate problems being discussed in a local context. However, the current limitations of countywide information sharing systems mean that opportunities for sharing and analysing wider data across the county as a whole are few.

The constabulary does contribute to a process called the Cumbrian Observatory, which is a data warehouse to which a number of agencies contribute and to which agencies and the public have access via the internet. HMIC found very limited knowledge of this facility within the constabulary, particularly amongst neighbourhood policing officers. There may be scope to broaden knowledge and access to this facility to support understanding and problem-solving amongst NPTs.

How well is the force working with partner organisations to keep people safe and tackle anti-social behaviour in local neighbourhoods?

HMIC saw a number of good examples of effective problem-solving with partner organisations at a local level to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour and keep people safe, including:

- Multi-agency information sharing meetings (LMAPS) that set common objectives and focused activity on shared problems;
- Operation Rodeo: multi-agency activity to tackle gangs in one area of the county in order to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour; and
- MARE: multi-agency activity aimed at providing early and appropriate support for members of the community with mental health problems and long-term

⁵ A multi-agency children's safeguarding hub (MASH) is located at Penrith. A MASH brings together into a single location key safeguarding agencies to better identify risks to children (and in some areas, vulnerable adults), and improve decision-making, interventions, and outcomes. The MASH enables the multi-agency team to share all appropriate information in a secure environment, and ensure that the most appropriate response is provided to effectively safeguard and protect the individual.

solutions appropriate to their needs. MARE includes offenders in custody who have mental health problems.

With the exception of MARE, it is noticeable that most initiatives tend to be locally driven on NPTs with little central co-ordination or evaluation of their effectiveness and little dissemination of any learning across the constabulary. The constabulary may wish to review this, in order to maximise the effectiveness of such schemes.

Summary of findings



Cumbria Constabulary has a strong focus on tackling crime and anti-social behaviour at neighbourhood level. Neighbourhood policing teams (NPTs) take responsibility for resolving local issues, supported by other partner agencies. Few other frontline staff believe they have a significant part to play in long-term problem-solving. While there are effective countywide partnerships in place, such as through the multi-agency risk evaluation meetings and for road safety, partnership working is most effective at neighbourhood level.

NPTs are effective at problem-solving and providing solutions for community issues. However, little evaluation is done of problem-solving activity across the constabulary.

Face-to-face contact with the public is important to the constabulary; 'street safe', a community engagement initiative, and community access points in supermarkets and other public spaces are important features of this.

The constabulary is also expanding the use of online methods to obtain feedback and understand more about how crime and anti-social behaviour affects local residents.

A number of well-established 'watch' schemes are in place. These help the constabulary to tackle criminality by raising awareness of a number of different types of crimes, watch groups also promote safer driving in rural locations.

Areas for improvement

- The constabulary should use evidence of 'what works' drawn from other constabularies, academics and partners to continually improve its approach to the prevention of crime and anti-social behaviour. There needs to be routine evaluation of tactics and sharing of effective practice.
- The constabulary should adopt a structured and consistent problem solving process to enable it to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour more effectively.

How effective is the force at investigating crime and managing offenders?

When a crime occurs, the public must have confidence that the police will investigate it effectively, take their concerns as victims seriously, and bring offenders to justice. To be effective, investigations should be well planned and supervised, based on approved practice, and carried out by appropriately trained staff. The risk posed by those who are identified as being the most prolific or dangerous offenders must also be properly managed (in partnership with other organisations), to minimise the chances of continued harm to individuals and communities.

HMIC referred to national standards and best practice in examining how well the force allocates and investigates both complex and non-complex (e.g. burglary, robbery and assault) crime. This included the full range of ways police officers and staff can gather evidence to support investigations (these include the more traditional forensics, such as taking fingerprints, as well as digital sweeps to find evidence of online abuse, for instance).

We also looked at how well the force works with partners to identify vulnerable offenders and prevent them from re-offending, and how well it identifies and manages repeat, and dangerous and sexual offenders.

How well does the force bring offenders to justice?

Since April 2014, police forces in England and Wales have been required to record how investigations are concluded in a new way, known as 'outcomes'. Replacing what was known as 'sanction detections', the new outcomes framework gives a fuller picture of the work the police do to investigate and resolve crime. The new broader framework (now containing twenty different types of outcomes) is designed to support police officers in using their professional judgment to ensure a just and timely resolution. The resolution should reflect the harm caused to the victim, the seriousness of the offending behaviour, the impact on the community and deter future offending.

Given the work involved in amending police force crime-recording systems to accommodate fully the new outcomes framework, two forces have not yet been able to provide a full year of data for all new outcomes types. Cumbria Constabulary, however, has been providing the Home Office with full data since August 2014. The complete range of new outcome types will be used in future HMIC inspections, once all forces have provided a full year of data. Figure 4 shows only those outcome types for which full data is available for all forces in England and Wales.

Figure 4: Outcomes recorded in the 12 months to 30 June 2015 for all police recorded crime (excluding fraud)^{6 7 8}

Outcome type/group	Cumbria Constabulary Number of outcomes	Rate	England and Wales Number of outcomes	Rate
Charged/Summonsed	5,853	22.8	577,678	16.0
Taken into consideration	52	0.2	21,318	0.6
Out-of-court (formal)	1,568	6.1	165,384	4.6
Caution - youths	196	0.8	19,703	0.5
Caution - adults	1,198	4.7	115,000	3.2
Penalty Notices for Disorder	174	0.7	30,681	0.8
Out-of-court (informal)	1,403	5.5	159,915	4.4
Cannabis/Khat warning	229	0.9	41,964	1.2
Community resolution	1,174	4.6	117,951	3.3

Source: Home Office crime outcomes data

Outcomes are likely to differ from force to force for a number of reasons. Certain offences are more likely to be concluded without offenders being prosecuted; typically including types of crime such as cannabis misuse. If this type of crime is particularly prevalent in a force then it is likely that the level of 'cannabis/khat⁹ warning' outcomes would be greater.

The frequency of outcomes may also reflect the force's policing priorities. For example, some forces work hard with partners to ensure that first time and low-level offenders are channelled away from the criminal justice system. In these areas, locally-based community resolutions are likely to be more prevalent than elsewhere. Cumbria Constabulary has one of the highest rates for 'charged / summonsed', of all forces in England and Wales.

⁶ Rate based on number of outcomes recorded in 12 months to 30 June 2015 divided by number of offences recorded in 12 months to 30 June 2015.

⁷ For a full commentary and explanation of outcome types please see *Crime Outcomes in England and Wales 2014/15*, Home Office, London, July 2015. Available from www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/445753/hosb0115.pdf

⁸ Community resolutions are an out-of-court disposal the police can use to deal with anti-social behaviour and low-level crime. 'Taken into consideration' is when an offender admits the commission of other offences in the course of sentencing proceedings and requests those other offences to be taken into consideration.

⁹ A plant native to Africa and the Arabian Peninsula, the leaves of which are frequently chewed as a stimulant; the possession and supply of khat became a criminal offence in England and Wales in 2014.

Cumbria Constabulary has the third highest percentage of cases resulting in a charge or summons to court, and an above average rate of cases resolved by community resolution.

The constabulary makes good use of community resolution.¹⁰ It has provided extensive training to its staff. All PCSOs are trained in the restorative justice approach and the constabulary is providing training in more advanced restorative justice techniques to some PCSOs in order to build on expertise and improve the effectiveness.¹¹ In addition, the constabulary has introduced a 'virtual' restorative justice hub, which is intended to widen the scope of this approach to include more adults. Overall, the constabulary is demonstrably effective at bringing offenders to justice.

How well does the force investigate crime and keep victims safe and informed?

How well does the force initially investigate and allocate cases?

It is important that when the police are called to an incident they respond in a timely manner, with officers or staff who are trained and competent to keep people safe, and who can take steps to apprehend offenders and investigate the circumstances if a crime has occurred. An effective initial response by the police increases the likelihood of a successful outcome for both the victim and the criminal justice system. Subsequent investigation by detectives and other specialist police staff also needs to be well managed and resourced.

The constabulary does not have a documented crime allocation policy. Despite this, HMIC found that officers clearly understood the process for allocating and investigating crime and there were clear, simple processes for deciding who would lead investigations. HMIC found no evidence that the lack of a formal policy affected the response to reports of crime or initial investigation.

Cumbria Constabulary has a policy that where possible, officers attend all reports of crime and anti-social behaviour where there is a likelihood that they may gain useful evidence. Attendance is also important to identify an offender, to carry out an effective investigation and provide the necessary support for victims.

Cumbria Constabulary has recently re-introduced police officers into its communications centre to deal with callers at the first point of contact where possible. These officers conduct initial enquiries and assess the crime as to whether

¹⁰ A community resolution is an alternative to formal criminal prosecution. It is a way of dealing with less serious crimes, allowing officers to use their professional judgement when dealing with offenders. It can be used for offences such as low level public order, criminal damage, theft, and minor assaults. Community resolution will enable victims to have quick resolutions and closure to their crime, offenders will receive speedy justice.

¹¹ Restorative justice brings together people harmed by crime or conflict with those responsible for the harm, to find a positive way forward.

it is potentially solvable. If it is deemed not to be solvable, no officer deployment is made and an officer is not sent. The constabulary is revising its deployment arrangements through which specialist officers attend serious crimes from the outset. This means that detectives will be despatched to a residential burglary or a sexual offence as the first responder wherever possible. Officers spoken to were supportive of these new arrangements. However, the geography and the limited availability of specialist staff to respond in the first instance to serious incidents are restricting the ability of the constabulary to deploy in this way for all circumstances.

The constabulary's three custody investigation teams (CIT) deal with the majority of the initial enquiries concerning detained persons. HMIC found that these teams are struggling to cope with demand. Officers working in these teams are frequently taken away from their role to support other investigations. This has resulted in a high number of investigations that should be managed within the CIT being returned to other uniform staff to deal with.

The reduced levels of staffing have also resulted in cases concerning offenders in custody not being carried out as quickly as might be expected. Consequently, prisoners are being bailed to return to the police station at a later date. This is because there is a lack of officers available to complete enquiries while prisoners remain in custody. The impact on victims when offenders are bailed is high; and unnecessary delays result. The constabulary should, as soon as possible, review the structure, sustainability and establishment of these teams to ensure that cases involving detained people in custody are being dealt with appropriately.

How well does the force investigate different types of crime?

The quality of investigations for different types of crime by Cumbria Constabulary varies. Uniform staff investigate less complex crime, with more serious or complex cases being investigated by detectives. The constabulary has returned to a model where officers retain ownership of their own investigations from the outset. This gives a stronger element of personal responsibility, ownership and accountability for conducting investigations. HMIC found good evidence of the use of investigation plans being recorded on the case management system, with evidence of supervisory input into these.

Investigative opportunities are identified and carried out in a timely fashion. All of the crime cases reviewed by HMIC had clear investigation plans, although it was not always clear that there was meaningful and effective input by supervisors on less complex cases. However, the serious and complex crime cases reviewed by HMIC had evidence of thorough investigations and better supervisory oversight. The crime investigation files reviewed by HMIC prior to the inspection were found to be of good quality.

Cumbria Constabulary places a strong emphasis on monitoring and maintaining the number of trained specialist investigators that it has available to investigate crime.

Almost all (98 percent) of its detectives are currently PIP 2 or PIP 3 accredited¹² and HMIC found good evidence of continuous professional developments events for staff to maintain and refresh their knowledge. This was in contrast however to investigation training for uniform staff. HMIC found this only being done as part of the initial training by recruits. Other staff spoken to told us that they had received little training in this area. This may explain the differences in quality in investigation found during the inspection.

The forensic support to investigation is mainly focused around volume crime. Operational procedures are documented and call-handlers trigger any forensic activity. By careful questioning of 999 or 101 callers, call-handlers can identify forensic opportunities, such as the presence of blood, which mean that the attendance of a crime scene examiner is necessary.

All major crimes have a forensic strategy and are assessed for prioritisation. Forensic examinations of major crime are prioritised on the levels of harm and risk to which the victim is exposed.

Where suspects for crime are identified, the constabulary has effective processes in place to locate them and where appropriate make an arrest. HMIC saw clear evidence of direction at daily 'tasking' meetings to arrest suspects.

The detective sergeant in each CIT also performs the role of evidence review officer (ERO). This is effectively a gatekeeper or quality assurance role to assure the standards of prosecution files before they are submitted to the Crown Prosecution Service. Files reviewed by the ERO are supposed to be subject to initial supervisory oversight, this does take place but EROs return high numbers of files to officers to correct errors. This error level is unacceptable, it causes delays and may have a detrimental effect to the service provided to victims. There is scope for greater supervision to ensure that all files submitted by arresting officers are of an acceptable standard.

The constabulary makes use of victim contracts that comply with the *Code of Practice for Victims of Crime*.¹³ Checking the compliance with this is managed on the constabulary crime management system. This records contact with the victim of an offence and HMIC found good evidence of supervisory review of this. Victims in Cumbria can be assured that they will be kept up to date with the progress of investigations.

¹² The aim of the Professionalising Investigation Programme (PIP) is to ensure that staff are trained, skilled and accredited to conduct the highest quality investigations:

- PIP level 1 – priority and volume crime investigations
- PIP level 2 – serious and complex investigations
- PIP level 3 – major investigations
- PIP level 4 – strategic management of highly complex investigations.

¹³ *Code of Practice for Victims of Crime*, Ministry of Justice, October 2015. Available at: www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/470212/code-of-practice-for-victims-of-crime.PDF

To maintain the quality of its service to victims, the constabulary uses dedicated officers to call victims back after an offence and employs volunteers to produce letters to victims of crime at key points in investigations. In this way, the constabulary ensures that victims are fully informed about progress and have an opportunity to raise any concerns over how each investigation is progressing.

How well does the force gather digital evidence?

Increasingly, crime in England and Wales is committed online and through the use of digital devices such as tablets, computers or mobile phones. All forces have to retrieve data from these devices and examine them for evidence; staff, in what may be known as high tech crime units (HTCUs), carry out these examinations.

Within Cumbria, the majority of mobile phones are now examined locally on NPTs. The constabulary has purchased computer software which can scan devices to reveal whether unlawful material or other evidence is retained on them. By using this the constabulary has cleared a backlog in examinations, increased the timeliness of investigations and is giving a better service to victims and investigating officers. However, in some areas the equipment was faulty or in need of upgrading. The constabulary is purchasing new equipment to resolve this.

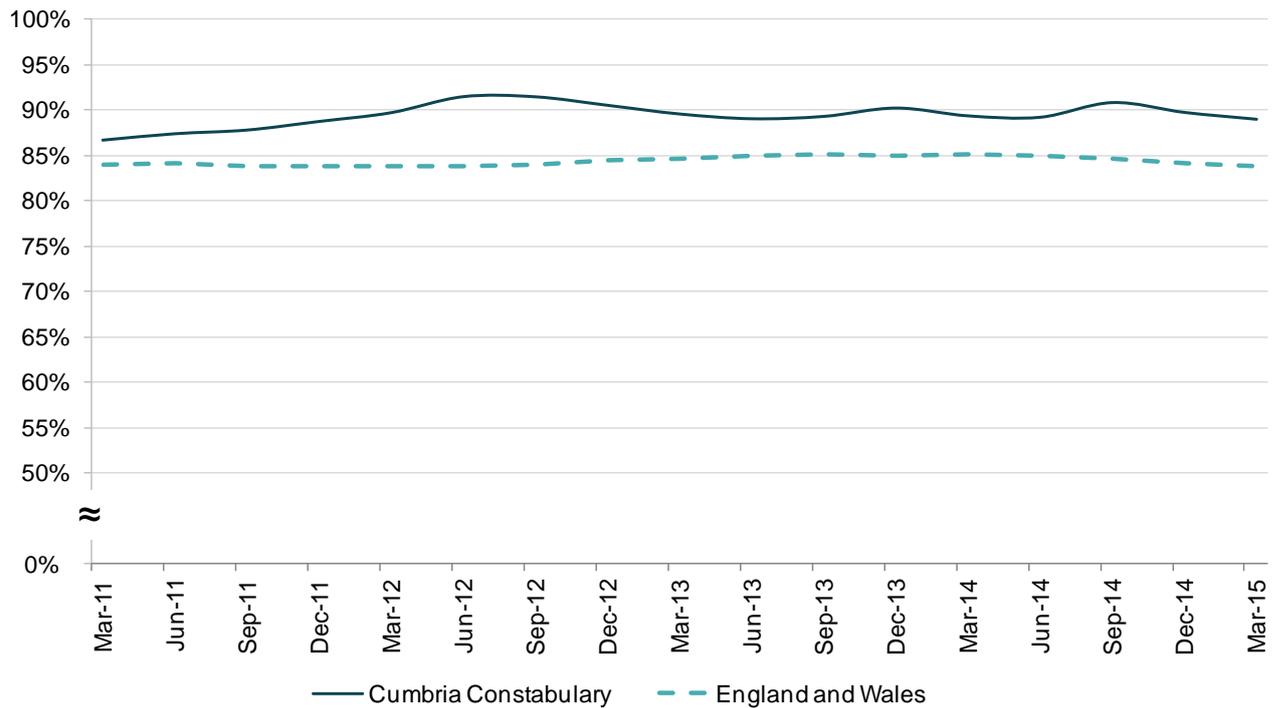
Within Cumbria, HTCUs deal with the examination of seized computers. A significant proportion of their work relates to sexual offending relating to children, and as such, is a high-risk area. HMIC found some evidence that there are effective prioritisation processes in place to deal with the most serious offences. However, there are delays in the examination of devices for those cases not assessed as high priority. For example, computer examinations of medium and low priority cases take an average of six to nine months to examine and retrieve evidence for the investigating officer. The constabulary has recognised this and the matter is subject to review. At present however, there is no clear plan in place to reduce these delays or to improve the service.

Cumbria Constabulary is about to expand its provision of body-worn video cameras (BWC) so that all staff on duty will be able to access them. HMIC found the current use of BWC to be extremely patchy with staff complaining of broken equipment and difficulties in downloading and retrieving material that they had recorded. This has led to a lack of confidence in the facility, which may affect adversely its future use. The technical and cultural issues need to be addressed by the constabulary before it makes a planned further significant investment in BWC.

How satisfied are victims of crime with the service provided by the force?

Of those who have been the victim of a crime in Cumbria in the 12 months to 31 March 2015, 89.0 percent were satisfied with their whole experience with the police. This is higher than the national victim satisfaction rate of 83.8 percent over the same time period. The victim satisfaction rate in Cumbria for the 12 months to 31 March 2015 is broadly in line with both the previous year's rate and the rate for the 12 months to 31 March 2011.

Figure 5: Percentage of victims satisfied with the overall service provided by the police, for the four year period to 31 March 2015



Source: Home Office data provided by forces

Cumbria Constabulary focuses activity on providing a good service to victims of crime and anti-social behaviour. Historically, the constabulary has placed an emphasis on keeping victims informed about progress and in ensuring that all relevant lines of enquiry are followed to an appropriate conclusion.

How well does the force identify and manage offenders to prevent re-offending?

How well does the force divert offenders away from crime?

Cumbria Constabulary has effective schemes to divert offenders and potential offenders away from committing crime and anti-social behaviour. The ‘prevent and deter’ and ‘it’s your choice’ schemes are aimed at providing early interventions with young people to discourage further involvement in crime and anti-social behaviour. These schemes are effective at preventing poor behaviour becoming something more serious.

A restorative justice approach is being used to dissuade adults from further offending. The constabulary has introduced ‘virtual’ restorative justice hubs that allow officers to implement restorative justice solutions as an alternative to prosecution for suitable first time adult offenders. These can include letters of apology and other restorative justice outcomes, such as mediation and making reparation to victims.

For simple offences, the constabulary has trained a large number of staff in restorative justice pathways and empowered them to take this approach. The

success of this approach is underlined by the above national average levels of offences resolved in this way.

The constabulary is attempting to widen its approach to diversionary schemes to include violent offences. As part of this initiative, it is involved in a pilot scheme in the south of the county that targets domestic abuse offenders. The scheme aims to provide support and diversionary activity to prevent violent offenders committing domestic abuse; it also provides support to the victims of such abuse in order to empower them to seek support as another preventative mechanism. The good intentions of this pilot are however currently being frustrated by the inability of the scheme to mandate attendance by offenders. The inability to use the conditional cautioning mechanism for such offences has resulted in only a relatively low take-up of the scheme so far. This has meant that fewer offenders than originally anticipated have completed the programme. The constabulary should review this scheme and identify an appropriate solution to ensure the original aims of the scheme are fully realised.

How well does the force deal with repeat offenders?

Cumbria Constabulary has an integrated offender management (IOM)¹⁴ scheme that focuses predominantly on the monitoring of prolific acquisitive crime¹⁵ offenders.

The IOM programme relies on one officer in each of the three local policing areas to manage all the offenders in their area. Although these officers are dedicated solely to this role, they have received little or no training and there has been only limited provision made to cover their absence for times when they are on leave or used for other duties.

The IOM managers are not co-located with probation colleagues and split their time between the police station and UNITY (drug and alcohol intervention). There is no information-sharing platform for agencies involved in IOM. However, information is shared at local joint action meetings on a month- to- month basis, where offenders are discussed and a course of action is agreed in relation to managing them. Although this is positive, there is little evidence of any formal medium or long-term management plans for offenders and any meaningful analysis to evaluate the effectiveness of the IOM approach across the county.

NPT and response officers have little knowledge of the various diversionary pathways available to support offenders away from committing crime in their area. Their focus is on apprehending offenders once they commit a crime. There was limited evidence of information sharing between the IOM and neighbourhood teams, although we were told that the IOM manager would seek the assistance of

¹⁴ Integrated offender management (IOM) brings a multi-agency response to the crime and reoffending threats faced by local communities. The most persistent and problematic offenders are identified and managed jointly by partner agencies working together.

¹⁵ Serious acquisitive crime is defined as domestic burglary, car crime (theft of a vehicle and theft from a vehicle), and robbery.

colleagues to arrest offenders when it was necessary. The lack of involvement of the wider constabulary front line staff in the management of offenders within the IOM scheme is a concern. HMIC found that in practice, the IOM approach in each area is reliant on key individuals. The constabulary should extend the involvement of other front line staff to monitor these offenders to ensure the public is adequately protected.

HMIC found only limited strategic involvement and direction of IOM across the constabulary. The constabulary lead for IOM is a divisional detective chief inspector, with responsibility for the countywide IOM approach alongside their daily responsibility to manage CID staff and provide oversight of serious investigations on one of the TPAs. The officer is able to engage with senior representatives from partner agencies involved in IOM at a bi-monthly reducing re-offending board.

HMIC remains unconvinced that IOM has the appropriate focus and attention for the future, given that the constabulary is likely to be managing offenders in partnership with other agencies, with fewer police officers, in future.

To underline this position, HMIC found limited evidence that Cumbria Constabulary is reviewing its IOM programme to ensure it is tackling current constabulary priorities. Those priorities are focused on threat, risk and harm. HMIC found no evidence that the offenders on the IOM programme had been assessed against these criteria, as all of the offenders on the cohort were individuals who had committed acquisitive crime.

Instead, HMIC found that the constabulary is not able to demonstrate that the IOM programme is providing long-term reductions in the criminal activity of those managed under the scheme. Scoring on the IOM offender management toolkit starts when an individual is charged with an offence or named as a suspect. The current assessment is based on 104 individuals across the county, who were assessed six months prior to adoption and six months after. The constabulary figures show a 46 percent reduction in the criminal activity of the 104 individuals in those 12 months. It is unclear what the long-term effect might be as there is no formula or practice that looks at the IOM cohort to understand the most beneficial approach to curbing their criminal behaviour

The IOM scheme in Cumbria was the subject of criticism in HMIC's 2014 crime inspection.¹⁶ It is disappointing that the same failings have been found and that the constabulary has not improved its performance in this area.

The constabulary should review current arrangements in place for integrated offender management across the county to ensure that;

- there is adequate resilience in place to monitor offenders;

¹⁶ *Crime inspection 2014 - Cumbria Constabulary*, HMIC, November 2014. Available from: www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/publications/crime-inspection-force-reports/

- that offenders within the programme reflect the constabulary focus to reduce threat, risk and harm;
- that more front line officers are involved in routine monitoring of offenders; and
- that there is adequate strategic oversight of integrated offender management to ensure all partners continue to support integrated working arrangements.

How well does the force deal with sexual and other dangerous offenders?

Cumbria Constabulary has clear processes for identifying and monitoring sexual and other dangerous offenders. Dedicated accredited staff are in place to carry this out. The staff in the unit manage both sexual and dangerous offenders, and attend MAPPA¹⁷ meetings relating to the offenders they manage. This allows a consistent level of management.

Clear supervision and governance arrangements are in place for those staff monitoring and engaging with registered sexual offenders, with plans in place to reduce the risk of re-offending. The number of registered sexual offenders is increasing. HMIC found this was causing pressure on the completion of timely risk assessment processes and the visits regime.

The intention of the visits regime is to carry out unannounced visits but time pressures and the requirement to check sex offenders to ensure that they are at home, together with the geography of the constabulary, means that this is not always done. Staff numbers have been increased recently to manage this issue and to reduce the number of offenders per officer. The number of supervisors has increased by two to manage and support the officers who are monitoring registered sex offenders.

The constabulary has adopted a structured active risk management system to assess the risk of sex offenders. The level of assessed risk determines the levels of active management and visits regime. The use of this scheme has allowed some risk levels to be reduced which increases capacity to manage the riskiest offenders but staff involved with managing these offenders reported some issues with the length of time taken to complete the assessments.

Many registered sexual offenders are resident within communities. HMIC identified that neighbourhood staff had limited knowledge of registered sexual offenders resident in their area, despite the constabulary providing information on such offenders on the constabulary intelligence system. It was clear that this information was not part of the day to day briefing of staff and few tasks were given to staff to gather intelligence on sex offenders. In addition, neighbourhood policing team (NPT)

¹⁷ Multi-agency public protection arrangements (MAPPA) are in place to ensure the successful management of violent and sexual offenders. Agencies involved include as responsible bodies the police, probation trusts and prison service. Other agencies may become involved, for example the Youth Justice Board will be responsible for the care of young offenders.

staff do not expect to be asked to acquire intelligence or to be given a task to monitor registered sex offenders within their area in support of colleagues who were dedicated to this role.

The constabulary has recognised the risk from a growing number of dangerous offenders who are suitable for the MAPPA process. MAPPA are used by the constabulary and partner organisations including prisons and probation to monitor those offenders assessed as presenting a high risk to the public, and to stop them re-offending. HMIC found good management of these offenders within the constabulary and in conjunction with the national offender management service. There was a good level of knowledge amongst local policing teams of the very few offenders within this category. Senior officers from local policing teams attend MAPPA meetings in relation to dangerous offenders where appropriate and take responsibility for managing the risk.

Foreign nationals being brought into custody are being checked on occasions against the ACRO¹⁸ database while they are detained to determine whether they had a criminal record abroad. However, this was only being done in about 50 percent of cases for the time period we reviewed (June to October 2015). The constabulary needs to ensure that checks are being undertaken routinely to understand properly the risks presented by foreign nationals coming into police custody.

Summary of findings



Requires improvement

The standards of investigation of crime in Cumbria are mixed.

The best examples are in the investigation of complex crime which is undertaken by specialist teams. Enquiries are comprehensive and lines of enquiry are systematically followed to bring about prosecutions or other positive outcomes.

However the investigation of less complex crime has shortcomings; prosecution case files are sub-standard, workloads are unmanageable and the retrieval of digital evidence from computers is causing unnecessary delays.

The constabulary's arrangements for managing persistent offenders have a number of shortcomings. The integrated offender management (IOM) scheme is understaffed, the commitment from partner organisations could be stronger and offender management plans are unstructured.

The IOM scheme in Cumbria was the subject of criticism in HMIC's crime inspection in 2014. More should have been done to address these areas for improvement.

¹⁸ ACRO Criminal Records Office manages criminal record information and is able to receive/share information with foreign countries in relation to foreign offenders arrested within the United Kingdom.

The constabulary should also improve its use of criminal records background checks for foreign nationals who are arrested. Knowledge of offences they have committed in other countries is important in determining how investigations are best managed.

Good schemes are in place to divert young offenders away from crime through the 'prevent and deter' panels and the 'It's your choice' programme.

Areas for improvement

- The constabulary should ensure that all investigations are completed to a consistently good standard.
- The constabulary should ensure that there is regular and active supervision of investigations to check quality and progress.
- The constabulary should improve its ability to retrieve digital evidence from mobile phones, computers and other electronic devices quickly enough to ensure that investigations are not delayed.
- The constabulary should work with partner organisations to develop its approach to integrated offender management in line with the Home Office integrated offender management principles.
- The constabulary should ensure that the risks posed by registered sex offenders are managed effectively.
- The constabulary should ensure that checks are routinely conducted to verify the identity, nationality and overseas convictions of arrested foreign nationals.

How effective is the force at protecting from harm those who are vulnerable, and supporting victims?

This question was inspected between June and August 2015, and the full report was published in December 2015.¹⁹ The following is a summary of the findings.

Summary of findings



Requires improvement

Cumbria Constabulary meets the requirements of some vulnerable groups better than others. The constabulary responds well to the needs of people who are vulnerable because of domestic abuse but it needs to improve its understanding of the risks presented to young people when they go missing and through child sexual exploitation. There are several areas where improvement is needed to ensure the service is consistent and that vulnerable people, particularly children, are kept safe. Given the scale of the challenge and the risk that is posed to some of the most vulnerable people overall, HMIC judges that the constabulary requires improvement.

In general, the constabulary identifies and responds to vulnerable victims well. However, we saw a few cases when vulnerability appeared not to have been adequately considered by call handlers and by officers responding to incidents. This was particularly so for victims of more serious assaults. The constabulary needs to ensure that all officers and staff have fully understood the training which they have previously been given to enable them to respond sensitively to the needs of vulnerable people requiring their service.

The constabulary investigates well crime committed against the most vulnerable victims. The right level of expertise is involved according to the complexity of each investigation. Work between professionals in the children's safeguarding hub is good and the safety of children is prioritised. However, the capacity to assess and manage referrals as quickly as they should be is limited. The constabulary needs to ensure that it deals with existing backlogs and manages future submissions better.

The constabulary works well with a number of different organisations in order to protect those who are vulnerable and support victims. However, some of the arrangements are not yet fully effective, particularly in relation to sharing and management of information, which could be improved.

Structured and well-supervised processes are in place for responding when children are reported missing. However, the collection and management of intelligence from

¹⁹ PEEL: Police effectiveness 2015 (Vulnerability) Cumbria Constabulary, HMIC, December 2015. Available from: www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/publications/police-effectiveness-vulnerability-2015-cumbria/

vulnerable missing people can be improved as it is not being recorded on the constabulary's computer systems. The constabulary is well prepared to respond to child sexual exploitation on an individual, case-by-case basis, once a victim has been identified, but needs to do much more to understand the nature and context of child sexual exploitation across the county. This inspection only considered how well-prepared the constabulary is to tackle child sexual exploitation.

We found that those officers attending domestic abuse incidents had a sound knowledge of how to assess risk and take steps to keep victims safe. While frontline staff and supervisors are not always aware of the immediate options available to keep the victim safe and where they can obtain specialist advice, longer-term safeguarding issues and specialist support are good.

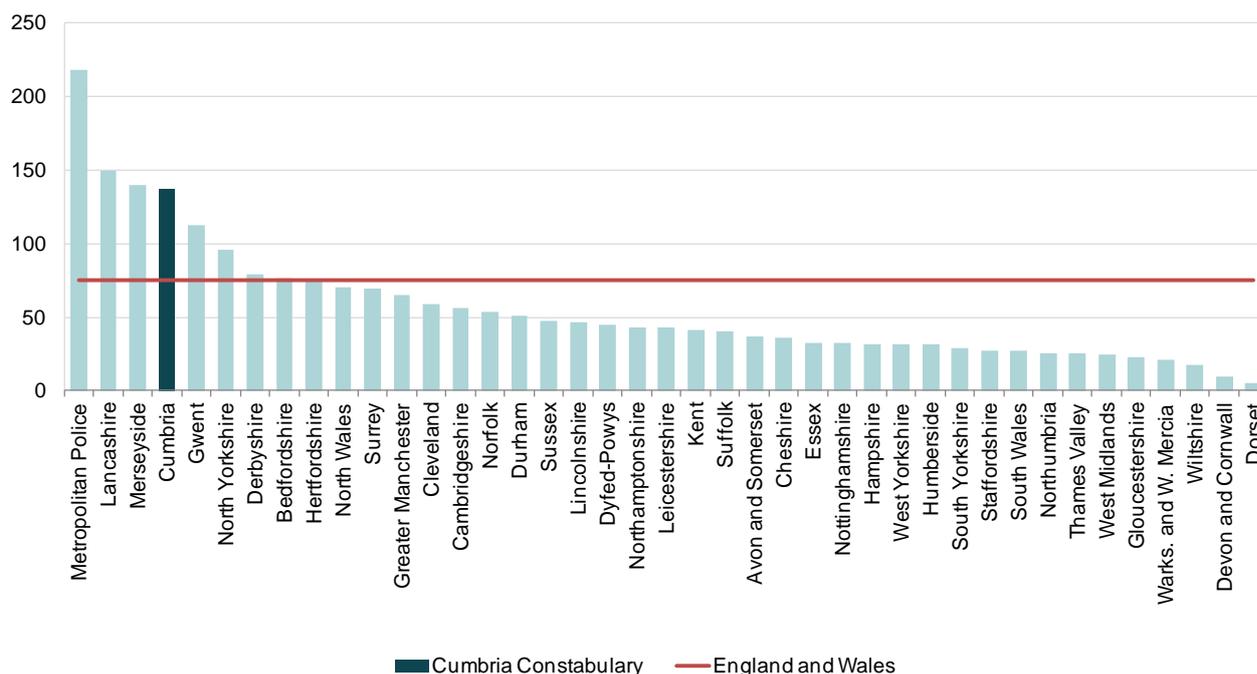
How effective is the force at tackling serious and organised crime, including its arrangements for fulfilling its national policing responsibilities?

Serious and organised crime poses a threat to the public across the whole of the UK and beyond. Individuals, communities and businesses feel its damaging effects. Police forces play a critical role in tackling serious and organised crime alongside regional organised crime units (ROCU), the National Crime Agency (NCA) and other partner organisations.

Police forces that are effective tackle serious and organised crime not just by prosecuting offenders, but by disrupting and preventing organised criminality at a local level. They also use specialist capabilities (for example surveillance and undercover policing) where appropriate in order to protect the public from highly sophisticated and rapidly changing organised criminal threats. A number of forces within a regional area often share specialist capabilities as this provides better value for money and is a more efficient way of working.

As at 30 June 2015, Cumbria Constabulary was actively disrupting, investigating or monitoring 68 organised crime groups (OCGs). This represents 137 OCGs per one million of the population, which is high compared with other forces in England and Wales.

Figure 6: Organised crime groups per one million population, by force, as at 30 June 2015^{20 21}



Source: HMIC data collection

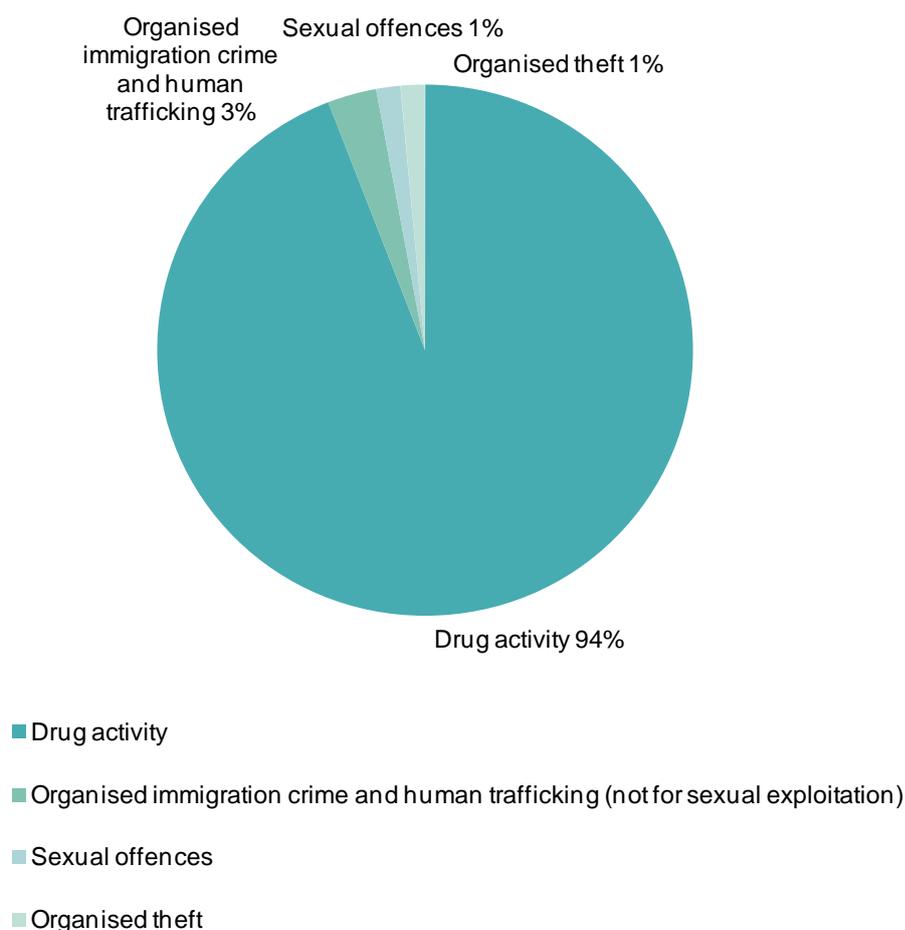
Forces categorise OCGs by the predominant form of criminal activity in which the group is involved. Although OCGs are likely to be involved in multiple forms of criminality, this indicates their most common characteristic. 'Drug activity' was the predominant crime type (94 percent) of the OCGs managed by Cumbria Constabulary as at 30 June 2015. 'Drug activity' was also the most common predominant crime type recorded by all forces in England and Wales,²² with 64 percent of all OCGs classified in this way.

²⁰ City of London Police data has been removed from the chart as its OCG data is not comparable with other forces due to size and its wider national remit.

²¹ The number of OCGs in the Warwickshire Police and West Mercia Police force areas is a combined total of OCGs for the two force areas. The OCGs per one million population rate is based upon their areas' combined population figures.

²² The Metropolitan Police Service is not included in the England and Wales figure because it does not categorise in the same way as other forces; by the predominant form of criminal activity.

Figure 7: Force organised crime groups by the predominant crime type, as at 30 June 2015²³



Source: HMIC data collection

Serious and organised crime is one of six national threats specified within *The Strategic Policing Requirement*.²⁴ These are terrorism, serious and organised crime, national cyber-crime incidents, threats to public order or public safety, civil emergencies, and child sexual abuse. These are complex threats which means that forces must work together to respond to them effectively. It is beyond the scope of this inspection to assess in detail whether forces are capable of responding to these national threats. Instead, HMIC has checked whether forces have the necessary arrangements in place to test their own preparedness for dealing with these threats, should they materialise.

²³ Figures may not sum to 100 percent, due to rounding.

²⁴ *The Strategic Policing Requirement*, Home Office, March 2015, available at: www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/417116/The_Strategic_Policing_Requirement.pdf

The Home Secretary issues the SPR annually, setting out the latest national threats and the appropriate national policing capabilities required to counter those threats. National threats require a co-ordinated or aggregated response from a number of police forces. Forces often need to work collaboratively, and with other partners, national agencies or national arrangements, to ensure such threats are tackled effectively.

How well does the force understand the threat and risk posed by serious and organised crime?

The assistant chief constable (ACC) has *The Strategic Policing Requirement* within his portfolio of responsibilities and has oversight of the strategic threat and risk assessment for each area, which includes serious and organised crime. There is a monthly meeting to consider serious and organised crime and the threat presented by OCGs in particular. The ACC also meets each month with the police and crime commissioner to discuss emerging issues of concern.

The constabulary has recently produced a serious and organised crime local profile,²⁵ which includes partnership information. Currently, though, there is no oversight arrangement with partners to assess the constabulary's progress on tackling serious and organised crime across the county. However, significant OCG issues are highlighted at the Safer Cumbria Board, and local issues are discussed and actioned at district level.

Staff working in the constabulary's serious and organised crime unit (SOCU) and drug units have a good understanding of the threat and risk posed by organised crime. Through analysis of police and partner information, the constabulary is expanding its understanding of child sexual exploitation and is building its knowledge on the threat from cyber-crime.

Through the SOCU, the constabulary understands the threat and risk posed to its communities from its own OCGs together with those residing in neighbouring forces. The constabulary has its own capability to manage and develop the most sensitive intelligence and this information is reviewed every four weeks to inform the approach to tackling serious and organised crime. This assessment includes information gathered from working with partners at the regional organised crime unit (ROCU) and the national crime agency (NCA).

This knowledge and understanding was not as comprehensive in other departments across the constabulary, particularly amongst those staff in frontline roles. Organised crime groups are correctly mapped to understand the risks they present and information on OCGs is available on the constabulary's intelligence system. However, this intelligence is not presented in a format that allows staff to understand the status or standing of different members of OCGs or the level of threat that they present.

When a police force identifies a group of individuals whom it suspects may be involved in organised crime, it goes through a nationally standardised 'mapping' procedure. This involves entering details of the group's known and suspected activity, associates and capability into a computer system, which assigns a numerical

²⁵ A local profile is a report that outlines the threat from serious and organised crime within a specific local area:

www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/371602/Serious_and_Organised_Crime_local_profiles.pdf

score to each OCG. It also places each OCG into one of several 'bands' which reflect the range and severity of crime in which a group is involved as well as its level of capability and sophistication. Police forces, ROCUs, the NCA and a number of non-police organisations such as Border Force, use OCG mapping.

Despite the use of standard software and methods, forces carry out OCG mapping inconsistently and there is significant variation in the number of mapped OCGs per head of population across England and Wales. This inconsistency is partly due to the unavoidably subjective nature of some aspects of the mapping procedure, which relies on human judgment as well as computer algorithms. Sometimes, groups exhibiting similar characteristics are scored in different ways, and forces do not always use the full range of information available to generate OCG scores, which can compromise their accuracy and usefulness. For these reasons, HMIC has recommended that ROCUs assume responsibility for OCG mapping on behalf of their constituent forces.²⁶

How effectively does the force respond to serious and organised crime?

The constabulary deals with the top tiers of OCGs through the serious organised crime unit (SOCU) and the territorial policing area (TPA) based drugs units. Information from the constabulary and the ROCU is used to prioritise activity and reassess the OCGs. The SOCU is utilised to manage those OCGs presenting the greatest threat to the constabulary, using experienced investigators. The TPA drugs teams conduct enquiries into the activity of those lower tiered OCGs within their own policing areas and are able to call on the support of other departments to support them in carrying out enforcement action when required. Assistance is also provided through the ROCU, which has provided specialist support to investigations on occasions and through the regional asset recovery team (RART).

There is also evidence of work within cyber-crime that supports national initiatives, with dedicated officers carrying out internet-based investigations to identify offenders who present a serious risk to children.

Consideration is given to escalating organised crime group investigations to the regional tasking group, although the level of offending in Cumbria rarely meets the criteria for acceptance. However, through its specialist departments, the constabulary remains competent to deal with higher levels of crime affecting the county. There is evaluation of policing operations using an approved methodology; however, these reviews were not detailed owing to the limitations presented by the constabulary's current intelligence system. This is due for renewal in 2016.

²⁶ *Regional Organised Crime Units: A Review of Capability and Effectiveness*, HMIC, December 2015, www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/wp-content/uploads/regional-organised-crime-units.pdf

With the exception of the drugs teams and the SOCU, other officers based on TPAs within the CID and response teams showed minimal understanding of local OCGs. Although officers would be assigned tasks to look out for priority targets as part of their day-to-day patrolling, they were rarely tasked to gather intelligence or take part in disruptive activity against OCGs beyond taking opportunities to stop and check members during routine patrolling. The routine use of all officers and PCSOs to target OCG members and gather intelligence to disrupt activity is not happening; this is a missed opportunity.

The countywide approach to tackling serious and organised crime is very firmly police-led, with little involvement of other partners beyond the ROCU. The constabulary is likely to be missing opportunities to involve their whole workforce and the knowledge and expertise of partner agencies. While we found that the constabulary assesses the effectiveness of its response to tackling serious and organised crime through a nationally recognised and approved disruption model, it is still using a traditional enforcement approach with insufficient regard given to a broader strategy to reduce the risk from serious and organised crime. We found that there was minimal evidence to show the constabulary is following an approach that complied with the government's *Serious and Organised Crime Strategy* to prepare, prevent and protect from the recognised four Ps approach.²⁷

Officers from the SOCU and the constabulary's intelligence department meet each month to review new intelligence in relation to OCGs and update progress in relation to any activity taken against them. An intelligence review is done on all of the constabulary's OCGs and the meeting places an emphasis on the small number of OCGs, which are currently subject of ongoing operations.

The constabulary has an expectation that each OCG will have an investigation plan and a nominated lead investigator with responsibility for devising and implementing the plan to manage OCGs and restrict their criminality. However, we did not find that TPAs were using plans to disrupt and undermine OCGs systematically. The constabulary cannot measure the affect that its activity is having on OCGs, other than by arrests, seizures and through intelligence gathered following police operations against specific groups.

²⁷ *Serious and Organised Crime Strategy*, HM Government, October 2013, Cmnd 8715. Available at: www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/248645/Serious_and_Organised_Crime_Strategy.pdf

The four P approach: prosecuting and disrupting people engaged in serious and organised crime (Pursue), preventing people from engaging in this activity (Prevent), increasing protection against serious and organised crime (Protect), and reducing the impact of criminality when it takes place (Prepare).

How effectively is the force working with partners to prevent serious and organised crime?

The constabulary has good relationships with ROCU, the NCA and neighbouring forces and regularly shares information and works with them. The constabulary has no regular meetings with partner agencies to discuss and tackle OCGs together, which is a missed opportunity to gather additional intelligence and harness additional resources, in particular around prevention.

At the time of our inspection, the constabulary had no current high-priority significant serious and organised criminals subject to additional restrictions through the courts to prevent them from re-offending. However, there had been instances previously where some criminals had been made subject of a serious crime prevention order (SCPO).²⁸

The constabulary does consult and involve partners as and when necessary, but mostly in an enforcement capacity. One example of this is the constabulary working with the Insurance Fraud Bureau on a 'cash for crash' investigation, which involved the fraudulent staging of car accidents in order to obtain money dishonestly from insurance companies.

The constabulary does not use prevention or diversionary tactics in relation to serious and organised crime as a matter of course and works in isolation in many cases. There is an acceptance that partners could be involved more in meetings and the wider approach to tackling organised crime in the future.

Beyond PCSOs delivering messages on subjects such as child sexual exploitation and the harmful effect of drugs and legal highs in schools, the constabulary has restricted levels of communicating serious and organised crime messages to the community. The constabulary uses a number of different media platforms to promote and market successful outcomes to cases, including that work undertaken in partnership with regional assets.

Operation Rodeo in West Cumbria is a good example of effective multi-agency working which involved taking action against two urban street gangs who were responsible for a significant number of crimes. Local NPT officers worked closely with the local authority, housing, and a charitable organisation to tackle and disrupt the gangs. Initially this was through enforcement activity but they then took a safeguarding approach to protect young people at risk of becoming more involved in criminality before embarking on preventative work with partners. This approach is positive and may provide a blueprint for how more organised criminality may be tackled in future.

²⁸ A serious crime prevention order is a court order that is used to protect the public by preventing, restricting or disrupting a person's involvement in serious crime; for example, restricting who he or she can associate with, restricting his or her travel, or placing an obligation to report his or her financial affairs to the police.

How effective are the arrangements in place to ensure that the force can fulfil its national policing responsibilities?

It is beyond the scope of this inspection to assess in detail whether forces are capable of responding to the six national threats. Instead, HMIC has checked whether forces have the necessary arrangements in place to test their own preparedness for dealing with these threats, should they materialise.

The constabulary is meeting its responsibilities in respect of *The Strategic Policing Requirement* (SPR) and has good arrangements in place for public order and civil contingencies.

Cumbria Constabulary has tested its public order capability and supports other forces, including the Police Service of Northern Ireland, with mutual aid and regional forces in operations and exercises.

In September 2015, the constabulary participated in an exercise with Greater Manchester Police in order to test procedures and technology in the event of an incident where there would be significant numbers of casualties. This also presented an opportunity to train staff in a simulated environment to operate a casualty bureau. The constabulary is building on this experience by developing a mass fatality air crash disaster exercise, which will be held in March 2016. This will be a multi-agency three-day exercise. It aims to test the preparedness of a number of the main local and regional agencies in dealing with an event that would require a significant police and partner response.

The constabulary has conducted analysis to establish the extent of child sexual exploitation across the county; it continues to develop intelligence in this area of policing. It has recently invested in its ability to monitor offenders who present a risk to children online and has introduced the mainstreaming of cyber-crime training across the county to all officers. There is sufficient capacity and capability to respond to a cyber-attack and organised crime. Effective relationships with regional and national law enforcement agencies mean that additional specialist support is necessary if it is required.

Summary of findings



Requires improvement

Staff working in the serious and organised crime unit and on drugs units have a good understanding of the threat posed by serious and organised crime.

Knowledge and awareness of organised crime groups was not as comprehensive amongst front line staff. There was no routine use of officers and police and community support officers to gather intelligence and disrupt organised crime groups as part of an orchestrated, longer term plan to dismantle them.

While there are regular meetings within the constabulary to discuss how organised crime groups will be managed, there is no meaningful non-police partnership involvement. However, the constabulary has effective relationships with other law enforcement agencies such as the regional organised crime unit and the national crime agency.

The constabulary is fulfilling its commitment to national policing responsibilities and has recently conducted an exercise with other regional services to test preparedness for a major incident. Further similar exercises are planned in the future to enhance the constabulary's capability in this area.

This is the first year HMIC has graded forces on their effectiveness at tackling serious and organised crime, including a force's arrangements for ensuring that it can fulfil its national policing responsibilities, so no year-on-year comparison is possible.

Areas for improvement

- The force should add relevant data from partner agencies to its serious and organised crime local profile, and ensure that it has a local partnership structure in place with responsibility for tackling serious and organised crime.
- The constabulary needs to improve the awareness of organised crime groups among neighbourhood teams to ensure that they can reliably identify these groups, collect intelligence and disrupt their activity.
- The constabulary should engage routinely with partner organisations in order to increase its ability to disrupt and investigate serious and organised crime.
- The constabulary should take steps to identify those at risk of being drawn into serious and organised crime, and ensure that preventative initiatives are put in place with partner organisations to deter them from offending.

Annex A – HMIC judgments

Our judgments

The judgment categories are:

- outstanding;
- good;
- requires improvement; and
- inadequate.

Judgment is made against how effective the force is at keeping people safe and reducing crime; it is not an assessment of the overall effectiveness of policing. In applying the categories HMIC considers whether:

- the effectiveness the force is achieving is good, or exceeds this standard sufficiently to be judged as outstanding;
- the effectiveness of the force requires improvement, and/or there are some weaknesses; or
- the effectiveness of the force is inadequate because it is considerably lower than is expected.