

PEEL: Police effectiveness 2015

An inspection of Lincolnshire Police



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

Overall judgment¹



Requires improvement

Lincolnshire Police requires improvement in the way it keeps people safe and reduces crime. The force needs to improve the quality of its crime investigation and how it works with partners to stop re-offending. There is considerable commitment to put resources into the areas identified in HMIC's 2014 crime inspection but there has been very limited progress in some areas. The force works well with others and has an effective approach to crime prevention and tackling anti-social behaviour. The force can fulfil its national policing responsibilities and works with other regional forces to disrupt the activity of organised crime groups.

Summary

Overall Lincolnshire Police requires improvement at keeping people safe and reducing crime. The force is committed to preventing crime and anti-social behaviour. It has a clear approach to prevention that is generally well understood throughout the force. However, the force still does not systematically learn from experiences or have a way to retain and share effective practice.

The way the force is investigating crime is changing. It has improved the time taken to allocate crimes for investigation and it has plans in place to improve the quality of investigations. Where computers and phones need to be examined as part of an investigation there are significant backlogs which affect the time taken to bring offenders to justice.

The force uses restorative justice extensively and appropriately as a way of resolving selected investigations.²

However, there needs to be greater integration with partners, improved prioritisation of those causing most harm and evaluation to define what success looks for the integrated offender management (IOM) scheme.³

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

² Restorative justice brings together people harmed by crime or conflict with those responsible for the harm, to find a positive way forward.

³ 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.

Staff throughout the organisation show a positive attitude towards protecting those who are vulnerable⁴ from harm and safeguarding victims. However, there is no co-ordinated or consistently well-supervised way of responding to reports of children who are missing or absent. In addition, the force's understanding of the scale and nature of child sexual exploitation is not yet fully developed. Frontline staff do not yet have a good level of knowledge of the factors to identify cases and understand how to respond.

The force has an in-depth understanding of the threat posed by serious and organised crime, supported by highly skilled and experienced staff and a good relationship with the East Midlands Special Operations Unit, which provides specialist skills and resources. The force is good at disrupting the activity of organised crime groups.

The leadership has strong oversight of the force's ability to respond to national threats, such as terrorism, serious cyber-crime incidents and child sexual abuse. Its own arrangements for ensuring it can meet its national obligations in this regard (such as planning, testing and exercising) are good.

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



Good

Lincolnshire Police is good at preventing crime and anti-social behaviour and keeping people safe. This is consistent with HMIC's 2014 crime inspection where the force was judged to be good at reducing crime and preventing offending.

Force priorities reflect a commitment to crime prevention, supporting victims, partnership working and keeping people safe. This commitment is generally well understood throughout the force. There are systems and ways of working in place alongside a range of powers and tactics, to enable the force to work

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



Requires improvement

Lincolnshire Police's approach to investigating crime and managing offenders requires improvement. This is consistent with HMIC's crime inspection in 2014 when the force was judged as 'requires improvement' at investigating offending. Although there has been some improvement since 2014, the force still needs to improve the quality and consistency of its approaches to investigating crime and managing offenders.

Processes for the initial investigation of incidents are based on threat, risk and

⁴ A vulnerable person is someone who is in need of special care, support, or protection because of age, disability, or risk of abuse or neglect.

together with partner organisations to tackle anti-social behaviour and keep people safe. However, effective partnership working at a local level is sometimes hampered by the lack of availability of neighbourhood staff, although those actions which have been taken with partners generally lead to positive outcomes.

The force still does not systematically learn from experiences or have a way to retain and share effective practice. Neighbourhood practitioners are not brought together to share experiences to understand, evaluate and share 'what works'.

harm and the allocation of complex and non-complex crimes generally works well. Reported crime has continued to fall which compares favourably with most other forces. The approach taken to investigate crime is improving but there are still inconsistencies across the force. Similarly, there is an absence of well-documented reviews and consistent practices for assessing case workloads.

Progress in other areas, specifically the backlog in phone and computer examinations and an effective offender management scheme, remains under-developed. An additional concern is the backlog in the completion of assessments on sex offenders, which have been temporarily suspended on low-risk sex offenders while officers complete statutory visits on other registered sex offenders.

There are a number of effective activities to divert young and vulnerable offenders away from crime. However, greater integration with partners, improved prioritisation of those causing most harm and evaluation to define what success looks like for the integrated offender management scheme means that the ability to prevent re-offending is reduced.

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



Requires improvement

Lincolnshire Police generally provides a good service in identifying vulnerable people and responds well to them. However, there are several areas where improvement is needed.

The force generally investigates well crime committed against the most vulnerable victims. However, HMIC is concerned that the force does not always involve the right number of specialists and the right level of specialist expertise in complex cases involving domestic abuse and serious sexual offences.

The force also needs to improve its supervision and prioritisation of workloads.

Officers attending domestic abuse incidents have a good knowledge of how to assess risk and keep victims safe. HMIC found a robust system of recording domestic abuse offences in Lincolnshire.

The force does not have a co-ordinated or consistently well-supervised process for responding to reports that children are missing or absent. Although it has made a start in improving its response to how it investigates and safeguards missing and absent children, it still needs to do more.

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



Good

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

The force has a well-developed understanding of the threats it faces and there are mature, collaborative ways of working in place to manage this threat across a large area. The force effectively shares intelligence with partners to tackle serious and organised crime groups and continues to develop a multi-agency response.

There is access to an extensive range of specialist policing capabilities provided by the East Midlands Special Operations Unit. Although this unit is predominantly targeted at the highest harm groups, it also provides support to supplement the effective work of neighbourhood teams who are targeting lower priority criminal groups to disrupt their operations.

The force has robust arrangements in place to satisfy itself that it is fulfilling its national policing responsibilities.

Work between professionals, including those from partner organisations, in the safe team and the central referral unit helps keep children safe, providing effective responses to cases involving increased levels of risk. The force has made a fairly good start in ensuring it is well prepared to tackle child sexual exploitation but it must now build on this to ensure that this ambition translates into consistent operational practice.

Force in numbers



Calls for assistance

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

Lincolnshire Police

England and Wales

228

350



Crime

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

Lincolnshire Police

England and Wales

48.5

63.0

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

Lincolnshire Police

England and Wales

48.7

60.3

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

Lincolnshire Police

England and Wales

-0.5%

+4.5%

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

Lincolnshire Police

England and Wales

-20.5%

-12.6%



Charge rate

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

Lincolnshire Police

England and Wales

18.1%

16.0%



Anti-social behaviour

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

Lincolnshire Police

England and Wales

28.4

32.9

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

Lincolnshire Police

England and Wales

29.7

36.2



Domestic abuse

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

Lincolnshire Police

England and Wales

7.3%

10.0%

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

Lincolnshire Police

England and Wales

6.2%

8.5%



Organised crime groups

Organised crime groups per million population as at 30 June 2015

Lincolnshire Police

England and Wales

46.5

74.7



Victim satisfaction rate

Victim satisfaction rate 12 months to 31 March 2015

Lincolnshire Police

England and Wales

81.3%

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 understanding the financial challenges forces are facing. Reports on the efficiency and legitimacy of Lincolnshire Police are available from the HMIC website (www.justiceinspectors.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:⁵

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 those who are vulnerable from harm 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 Lincolnshire Police.

⁵ 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.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmic/publications/police-effectiveness-vulnerability-2015-lincolnshire/). In 2014, in preparation for the PEEL programme, forces were inspected to assess how effective they are at cutting crime (available from: www.justiceinspectors.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 Lincolnshire?

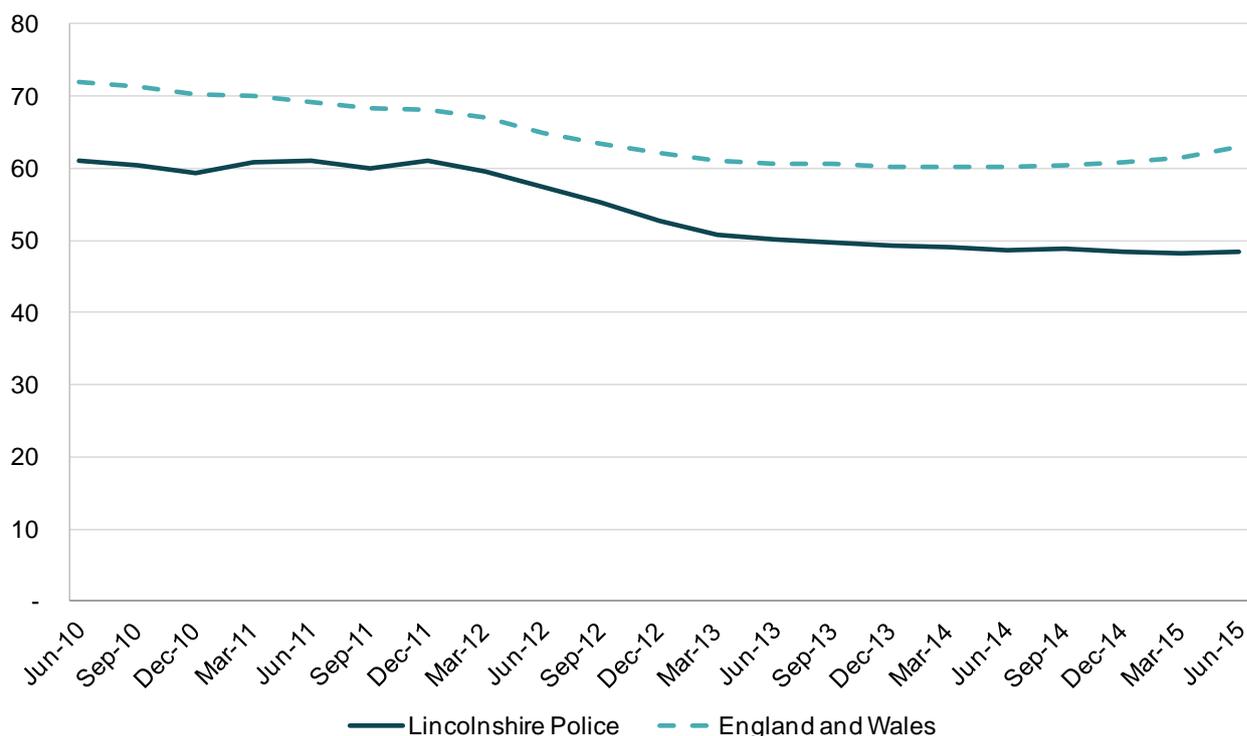
Although police recorded crime is by no means a complete measure of the totality of demand for calls on its service that a force faces, it does provide a comparable indication of performance across all forces. Crime rates are reported as a number of crimes per 1,000 population in each force area to enable 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) in the 12 months to 30 June 2015 fell by 21 percent in Lincolnshire 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 21 percent in Lincolnshire, compared with a reduction of 12 percent across England and Wales.

When compared with the previous year, police recorded crime (excluding fraud) in Lincolnshire showed no change 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 Lincolnshire (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	Lincolnshire Police	England and Wales
Recorded crime (excluding fraud)	48.5	63.0
Victim-based crime	43.1	56.0
Sexual offences	1.4	1.6
Assault with injury	4.2	6.3
Burglary in a dwelling*	5.8	8.4
Anti-social behaviour incidents*	28.4	32.9

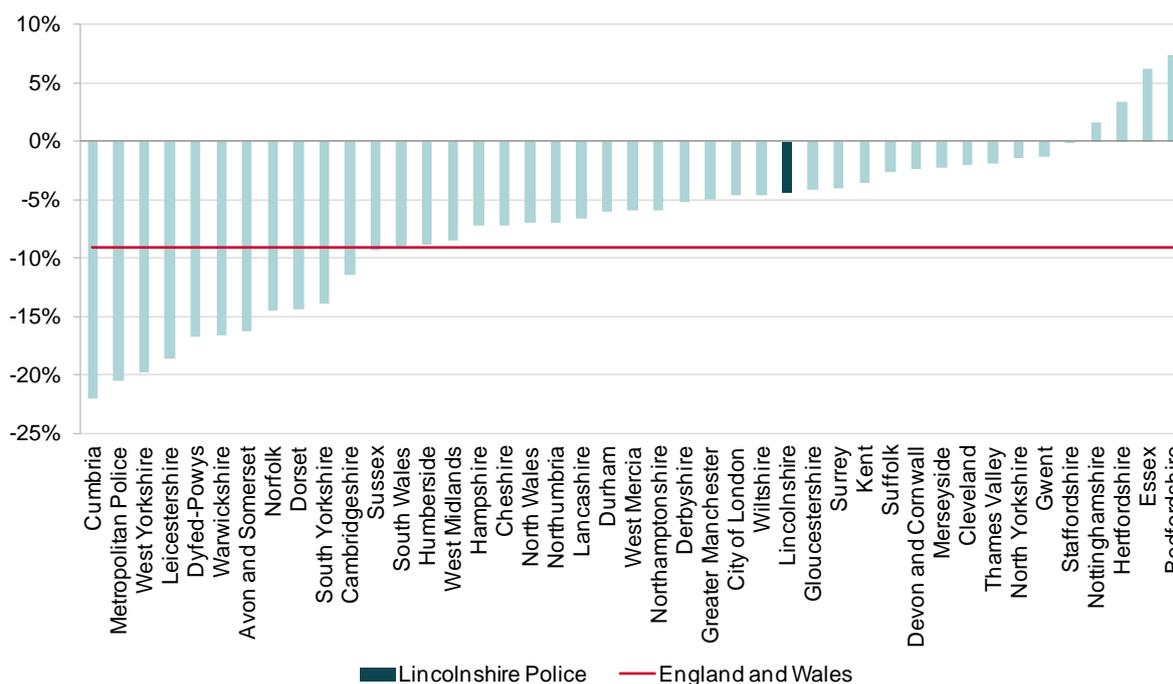
Source: Home Office data, HMIC data return

*Anti-social behaviour data is from the force'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 force area. We are not judging the effectiveness of the force on police recorded crime rates only.

In the 12 months to 30 June 2015, Lincolnshire Police recorded 20,748 incidents of anti-social behaviour. This is 4 percent fewer incidents than the force 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?

The force’s operational policing plan builds on: the objectives and expectations in the police and crime commissioner’s police and crime plan; the chief constable’s vision for 2018 and beyond; its responsibilities from the national Strategic Policing Requirement;⁶ and the county’s community safety plan.

⁶ *The Strategic Policing Requirement*, Home Office, March 2015. Available from: www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/417116/The_Strategic_Policing_Requirement.pdf. The Strategic Policing Requirement is issued annually by the Home Secretary, setting out the latest national threats and the appropriate national policing capabilities required to counter those threats. National threats require a coordinated or aggregated response from a number

Lincolnshire Police's plan for reducing crime demonstrates a commitment to crime and anti-social behaviour prevention and keeping people safe. This includes the emerging threat of cyber-crime, child sexual exploitation, organised crime, burglary and violence. The force is publishing a crime prevention strategy to continue to prevent and reduce crime and anti-social behaviour across the county.

Local organisations are involved in setting joint priorities with the police through an annual event. There is agreement to focus on the same priorities with a cross-cutting theme of improving data analysis and information sharing so that as budgets are cut, overlaps between services and opportunities to be more efficient are identified.

The importance of preventing crime and anti-social behaviour and keeping people safe is generally well understood throughout the whole force. This includes how important it is to intervene early to stop the escalation of anti-social behaviour. Operational activity reflects force level and local prevention priorities, although this activity tends to be seen as the responsibility of neighbourhood teams, rather than the whole force.

Overall, the force effectively prevents crime and anti-social behaviour and it is working to further develop better use of social media and volunteers to inform the public on how they can enhance their own community safety. Local officers and police community support officers (PCSOs) are knowledgeable about their communities and access to specific groups – including those regarded as being 'hard to reach' and 'hard to hear' – is being achieved through local agencies, schools and police organised surgeries. Where relevant, PCSOs maintain links with various faith communities; these include Jewish and Muslim groups. For example, there is considerable work being undertaken in the Boston area to understand emerging communities, especially those with an eastern European heritage. The force's 'understanding and safeguarding emerging communities' team has a key role in this and there is an impressive depth of understanding and effective activity to tackle issues affecting these communities.

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

The force has strong governance structures in place to ensure resources are deployed in line with its priorities. The way in which the force prioritises and adjusts its plans means it can work in an agile way to meet changing demands. There are daily and weekly meetings where tasks are assigned against immediate threats of harm and risk. Monthly and six-weekly meetings look at longer term trends and monitor performance.

Resources are allocated effectively to communities to prevent crime, anti-social behaviour and keep people safe. Call-takers in the control room use the THRIVE⁷

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.

⁷ An approach to responding to calls for assistance based on threat, harm, risk, investigation, vulnerability and engagement.

model which considers the threat, harm and risk posed to the victim. Calls assessed as a high priority are dealt with immediately by response officers. How the force responds to other victims of crime has changed and there is a dedicated team, called the incident resolution team, who work alongside control room staff to help resolve and investigate crimes and incidents at the first point of contact.

Allocation of officers and staff to neighbourhoods to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour and keep people safe ensures that every local area has a visible and accessible safer neighbourhood team. Neighbourhood activity is generally determined by an officer's local knowledge, feedback from communities and some analysis to identify and solve short and longer term problems relating to a range of issues. For example, preventing those who are vulnerable from being a repeat victim of crime or where a premises or area is being targeted and suffers from reports of anti-social behaviour.

However, neighbourhood officers are regularly being taken away from prevention and problem-solving activity to undertake more reactive duties at least for 50 percent of their time. When considered against the size of the areas covered by some community beat managers, this undermines the focus on prevention and the ability of neighbourhood staff to work effectively with partners.

The force is still committed to neighbourhood policing and those staff that remain are placed in those areas where demand is highest. Neighbourhood teams share boundaries with local authorities, and this helps to address local community safety issues; leadership is provided by district-based chief inspectors. A new policing model is being implemented and neighbourhood teams will further reduce in size.

It is intended that the new model will mean officers should not be taken away from neighbourhood policing to bolster shortfalls in response teams.

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

Lincolnshire Police uses a broad range of tactics to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour and keep people safe, including the use of new anti-social behaviour powers, disruptive tactics such as targeted patrol and checking offenders curfews. It also communicates crime prevention advice using LincsAlert as well as a number of popular 'watch' schemes such as Farm Watch, and uses Facebook and Twitter to update communities on policing operations. There are successful campaigns, for example those aimed at reducing metal theft and tackling violence, as well as restorative interventions, to tackle offending behaviour, reduce opportunities for crime, and improve victim satisfaction.

The force promotes an approach of considering the threat, harm and risk posed to the community at the first point of call. The THRIVE model, implemented in February 2015, is currently being reviewed to ensure that resources are assigned to incidents according to the threat and risk of harm that is present. For example, response

officers regularly carry out activities that reduce their capacity to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour and keep people safe.

Neighbourhood teams are trained in the changes to legislation relating to powers to tackle anti-social behaviour and these powers are being used locally to good effect. A small number of crime reduction tactical advisors are proactive and provide advice and support for several prevention schemes, however, other than initial training, officers and staff are not formally provided with ongoing awareness or development in the prevention of crime or anti-social behaviour.

In HMIC's 2014 crime inspection, we made a recommendation to make sure the force had methods in place to review and evaluate the benefits of current and new tactics and initiatives, and capture and share learning and good practice. Very limited progress has been made. While learning is shared informally within local teams the force does not have mechanisms in place to share this more widely. This also means that an understanding of what works is not retained centrally to enable officers to continually learn from and improve the tactics and approaches used. There is also no forum for practitioners to share what has and hasn't worked in the tactics that have been used.

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?

The force understands that prevention activity can be more effective when undertaken jointly with partner organisations, and it invests substantial time and energy in doing so.

The assistant chief constable attends the county community safety partnership meetings, which provide a clear governance structure for tackling joint prevention priorities. These include anti-social behaviour and hate crime, domestic abuse, reducing offending, serious and organised crime, substance misuse and sexual violence. This work is further strengthened through a senior officer who has been seconded to work in the county council as an assistant director. This secondment is helping bring together resources to focus on prevention work, for example, by providing extra support and help to families and a co-located multi-agency team which works to prevent and investigate child sexual exploitation.

Feedback from local partners reflects strong professional relationships between local police teams and partner organisations, and a commitment to resolve community issues together. However, it is reported by local partners that this work is impeded, at times, by the availability of neighbourhood officers.

There are many local projects to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour and also to keep people safe. A good example is the collective work undertaken to tackle a premises supplying 'legal high' drugs in Lincoln using new legislation, together with a reassurance and prevention communication plan to permanently reassure and help

resolve the problem. Another example in Boston found neighbourhood teams working with partners such as Women's Aid and community safety partners to provide reassurance and reduce the fear of crime.

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

Overall, information is shared appropriately with statutory and voluntary partners and there are agreed information-sharing protocols. There are also a number of partnership meetings in place across a range of policing areas that are attended by different statutory partners, for example, community safety officers from the local authority, who will share appropriate information in accordance with that protocol.

As well as information-sharing agreements, a number of police teams are co-located with partners across the county area in local authority or police buildings. This helps ensure decisions are made with partners and enables closer working relationships towards providing a more victim-focused service. For example, there is a 'safe team', which is an established co-located, multi-agency team consisting of child sexual exploitation professionals.

Here there are joint strategy discussions and meetings where information is shared so that a joint assessment of risk is agreed which means more rapid actions are put in place to safeguard the victim.

In addition, the force and partner organisations collectively use an online case management system to share information, carry out joint risk assessments, and record subsequent partnership activity for tackling anti-social behaviour. This is described as effective when used in combination with the anti-social behaviour risk assessment conferences.

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

The force works with partner organisations to promote resolutions that protect communities and victims when crime and anti-social behaviour have occurred. Neighbourhood officers have the discretion to resolve anti-social behaviour and low-level criminality by explaining options and referring offenders to a range of educational and diversionary schemes, and officers take the victim's view into account when deciding how to resolve cases. Officers can make referrals to a voluntary organisation which provides restorative justice services across the force area. These services are designed to help the offender face up to the consequences of their actions by communicating with the victim, and allowing the victim to have a say in how the offender is punished.

There is good engagement and innovative activity with partners and HMIC saw other good examples of joint working to prevent crime, tackle anti-social behaviour and keep people safe, including:

- officers supporting the most vulnerable: for example, 'operation repeat' where over 900 care professionals, for example Age UK, have been trained in crime

prevention tactics to help support vulnerable people. The force is now launching 'operation revive', where it has recruited volunteers to "befriend, support, advise and liaise" with elderly vulnerable people, who have been victims of crime and try to prevent repeat crimes;

- use of street pastor schemes: for example the Skegness street pastor scheme, where members of different faith groups patrol the night-time economy areas on a Thursday and Friday night to provide advice and guidance to those out for the night, provide a calming influence and support those who are under the influence of alcohol;
- preventing crime: for example, recognising the potential for a rise in cycle theft when the national cycling championships were held in Lincoln, the force used more innovative methods of crime prevention by providing bike locks and raising awareness rather than traditional security bike marking;
- working with Lincoln University: for example, there is an internship programme which employs two interns to carry out evaluation of recent operations. Interns will also review the volunteer PCSOs scheme, which is the only scheme of its type in the country; and
- tackling anti-social behaviour: for example, established monthly anti-social behaviour risk conferences (ASBRACs) supplemented with weekly practitioner meetings between neighbourhood teams and key partners, including the local authority and housing associations.

Summary of findings



Good

Lincolnshire Police is good at preventing crime and anti-social behaviour and keeping people safe. This is consistent with HMIC's 2014 crime inspection where the force was judged to be good at reducing crime and preventing offending.

Force priorities reflect a commitment to crime prevention, supporting victims, partnership working and keeping people safe. This commitment is generally well understood throughout the force. There are systems and ways of working in place alongside a range of powers and tactics, to enable the force to work together with partner organisations to tackle anti-social behaviour and keep people safe. However, effective partnership working at a local level is sometimes hampered by the lack of availability of neighbourhood staff, although those actions which have been taken with partners generally lead to positive outcomes.

The force still does not systematically learn from experiences or have a way to retain and share effective practice. Neighbourhood practitioners are not brought together to share experiences to understand, evaluate and share 'what works'.

Areas for improvement

- The force should ensure that its focus on crime prevention is not undermined by the redeployment of neighbourhood officers and staff to undertake reactive duties. The force should use evidence of 'what works' drawn from other forces, academics and partners to continually improve its approach to the prevention of crime and anti-social behaviour. There should be routine evaluation of tactics and sharing of effective practice.

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, including 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. Lincolnshire Police, however, has been providing the Home Office with full data since April 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)^{8 9 10}

Outcome type/group	Lincolnshire Police Number of outcomes	Rate	England and Wales Number of outcomes	Rate
Charged/Summoned	6,434	18.1	577,678	16.0
Taken into consideration	295	0.8	21,318	0.6
Out-of-court (formal)	1,962	5.5	165,384	4.6
Caution - youths	308	0.9	19,703	0.5
Caution - adults	1,242	3.5	115,000	3.2
Penalty Notices for Disorder	412	1.2	30,681	0.8
Out-of-court (informal)	1,816	5.1	159,915	4.4
Cannabis/Khat warning	492	1.4	41,964	1.2
Community resolution	1,324	3.7	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/khat¹¹ 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. When considering all crimes recorded (excluding fraud), outcome rates for Lincolnshire Police are broadly in line with most other forces in England and Wales.

⁸ 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.

⁹ 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

¹⁰ 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.

¹¹ 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.

There is a renewed focus on improving the quality of investigations and the force is working collaboratively with the East Midlands Criminal Justice Service to standardise and improve case file preparation as well as services for victims and witnesses.

The force has a successful community resolution process in place with volunteer staff briefed and trained by restorative solutions specialists. Referrals are made by police and partners, for example the probation service, with regular audits conducted and an out-of-court scrutiny panel provides additional independent oversight. Offenders are effectively diverted out of the criminal justice system; for example, the 'restore project' is a programme that deals with youth shoplifting offenders and is a two-hour session attended by the young person and their parents, the youth offending service, local police officers and retail staff. The force reported that evaluation figures from November 2014 to July 2015 show that out of the 31 young people on the programme, only two had re-offended.

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 force uses a risk assessment model to assess and prioritise its response. Call-takers in the control room make this initial assessment, weighing up the threat and risk to the victim and their vulnerability. This ensures that the response to the victim is based on their needs rather than the type of crime, which is good practice. For those calls assessed as an emergency or priority they will assign a response officer. This means not all incidents of crime are attended and in appropriate cases the incident is passed to the incident resolution team to carry out a desktop investigation. Sometimes it is still necessary to attend some of these incidents and an appointment is made over the next 24 to 48 hours to see the victim. This new way of working, introduced in February 2015, is being evaluated by the force and up to 30 percent of incidents are now dealt with in this way.

All officers attending incidents are trained in initial investigation techniques and evidence gathering. They are victim-focused and all are aware of the importance of completing initial enquiries promptly at crime scenes. However, there is a high demand placed on them and sometimes they may not complete all their evidence gathering as they are sometimes called away to deal with other priority incidents.

Officers are not yet equipped with body-worn video devices, which can be used to record the scene as well as the behaviour and demeanour of victims, witnesses and suspects present. This first-hand evidence is used to support prosecutions and can be important when a victim is reluctant to attend court. The force plans to introduce these devices from February 2016 onwards after it completes the distribution of mobile data terminals. Overall, HMIC found that the officers and staff allocated to investigate and gather evidence at the scene of crimes have the skills and abilities to carry this out effectively and that action is prioritised according to the seriousness and level of complexity of the crime.

After the initial attendance and initial investigation there are clear processes to allocate and investigate the crime further. Categorisation, recording and onward allocation of crimes for further investigation are carried out by the crime management bureau who quality assure immediate actions and ensure national crime recording standards are met. Generally, HMIC found that crimes are being allocated to staff with appropriate skills; they know what they are expected to investigate, and have the skills and training to do this effectively.

However, crimes are sometimes allocated to officers by their type rather than the threat, harm and risks posed, which means the most appropriately skilled person is not necessarily investigating the crime. The force recognises this and is reviewing its allocation procedures to ensure those cases involving vulnerable or repeat victims and named offenders are allocated to the right person with the right skills to investigate.

In our 2014 crime inspection we made a recommendation to improve the timeliness of allocating crimes which have not been initially attended, and ensure appropriate monitoring and oversight of the process. The force has improved its performance in this area, delays have been reduced to no more than two to three days and there is the right level of oversight. Any delays reported by frontline supervisors are against less complex crimes where enquiries are not as urgent. This good progress now needs to be maintained to ensure all victims receive a good service.

How well does the force investigate different types of crime?

Once allocated, some less complex crimes (for example, assaults, criminal damage or motoring offences) are investigated by response and neighbourhood officers. Other less complex crimes are allocated to investigation teams that contain uniformed constables with a mixture of skills and experience. Detectives investigate more complex or serious crimes and specialist departments tackle crimes such as child abuse or serious sexual offences cases. These units contain officers with the specialist skills and training required to conduct complex investigations. Good outcomes are achieved and generally high quality investigations are being carried out by dedicated staff.

In the 2014 crime inspection, HMIC made a recommendation about improving the quality of investigations; officers having the necessary professional skills and expertise; supervisors needing to drive up standards; and appropriate monitoring and oversight of investigations. Again the force has made some improvements, however, investigations dealt with by both detectives and response officers still had some inconsistencies. There are still some staff and supervisors not completing investigation plans and supervisory reviews not always being done.

The force recognises it does not have a common approach to investigation standards across the county and although it has in place checks on case file quality, it has recently introduced a manual of guidance for investigators which includes the minimum standards for an investigation. It is also developing a plan to provide continuous professional development for supervisors. It is too soon to evaluate the effects of the newly introduced manual but, despite this, the charge or summons rate is higher than the England and Wales average and more victims are willing to support prosecutions.

There is a good understanding of those foreign national offenders who enter the criminal justice system. Checks are done to see if they have criminal convictions abroad or are wanted in their own or other countries. Staff in Lincolnshire are currently completing some of the highest proportion of these checks in the country. However, the force does not fully understand the number of suspects who have not been arrested or are wanted in connection with offences and this extends to those who have been identified through their fingerprints and DNA at crime scenes. However, officers do understand the importance of making early arrests and tackling offenders when they are briefed to do so.

Lincolnshire Police works collaboratively at a regional level with other East Midlands forces for the joint provision of crime scene investigators (CSIs); there is a common approach for attendance, although discretion can be used by CSIs where it is justified. There is an effective, appropriate and consistent use of forensic specialists to support investigations and the full range of forensic opportunities are considered.

There is a clear demarcation of regional and force responsibilities in relation to serious and complex crime investigation. All serious crimes such as murder or kidnap are investigated by the East Midlands Special Operations Unit (EMSOU), a regional unit made up of officers from across the region, while specialist teams within the force investigate serious sexual offences, high-risk cases of domestic abuse and other complex crimes. A local crime manager oversees all serious offences and this is an effective division of responsibility, ensuring that appropriately trained officers undertake the most complex investigations. However, one drawback for Lincolnshire Police is the loss of some officers with specialist skills, which means that identifying staff with the necessary skills to lead serious and complex cases not adopted by the EMSOU is becoming increasingly difficult.

The force, with regional leads, is reviewing how it ensures it provides appropriately trained personnel by implementing career pathways for detectives in its force structure.

There is a review progressions board, chaired by the deputy chief constable, where learning from serious case and domestic homicide reviews, missing person cases and other critical incidents are discussed. Recommendations are considered and if the learning concerns something that can be immediately implemented it goes on to the 'learning zone' page on the force intranet. Other longer term recommendations, such as those from domestic homicides, go to a regional review meeting. This leads to changes to policy and improvements in practice.

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 (HTCU), carry out these examinations.

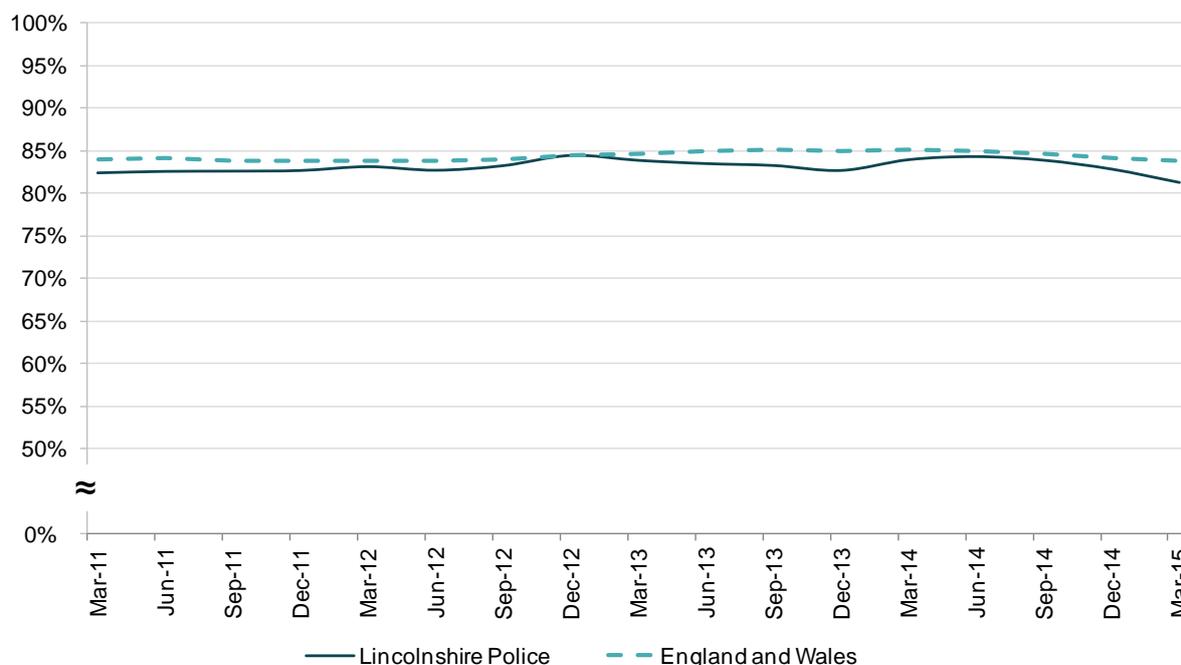
In the 2014 crime inspection, HMIC recommended that the force review its resourcing and the way it prioritises the examination of digital evidence contained by phones and computers seized as part of criminal investigations. Despite the force putting in place a triage process for dealing with the most serious offences first, for example, in child abuse or safeguarding cases, HMIC found that smartphones likely to contain important evidence in other cases are held in queues and are not being examined for long periods. Similarly, there are significant delays in examining computers. If the force does not act quickly to improve this position it is at risk of falling further behind as the demand for these type of examinations increase. This is having an adverse impact on the time investigations take to complete, with victims and witnesses' resilience to support prosecutions tested and some suspects spending more time on bail than is necessary. The force has completed a review and is developing a cyber-crime unit which brings together three units to provide more resilience and is introducing a new triage process. Four more staff are being recruited and it is purchasing more machines capable of examining CCTV and mobile phone downloads to enable officers to conduct initial immediate interrogations. However, despite the identification of service delivery problems during an HMIC inspection in 2014 there has been no meaningful improvement in waiting times for examinations. Continued focus in this area is required with the establishment of a more effective triage and prioritisation process if further additional costs for outsourcing work are to be avoided.

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

Of those who have been the victim of a crime in Lincolnshire in the 12 months to 31 March 2015, 81.3 percent were satisfied with their whole experience with the police. This is lower than the national victim satisfaction rate of 83.8 percent over the same time period. The victim satisfaction rate in Lincolnshire 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

Victims are generally kept informed as investigations progress and it is clear that officers care about victims and their cases. The force's newly established team called 'Victim Lincs' also co-ordinates a dip-sampling process of 300 crimes per month where each inspector in the force independently grades 10 crime reports from officers from other teams, to check that victims have been kept informed and that there is compliance with the *Code of Practice for Victims of Crime*.¹² Results will be provided to the force's user satisfaction group to identify trends and improve compliance with updating and keeping victims informed.

¹² All police forces have a statutory duty to comply with the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime, which sets out the service victims of crime can expect from all parts of the criminal justice system. The code states that all victims of crime should be able to make a personal statement, which they can use to explain how the crime has affected them. Victims should also be kept updated about the progress of their case. *Code of Practice for Victims of Crime*, Ministry of Justice, 2015. Available from: www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/254459/code-of-practice-victims-of-crime.pdf

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

How well does the force divert offenders away from crime?

Where appropriate, vulnerable offenders are effectively identified and diverted out of the criminal justice system to prevent further offending. With partners like the youth offending service, the force provides diversionary activities ranging from providing advice and guidance to running workshops and awareness programmes in schools. The force recognises that one of the areas where it can reduce reoffending is through an effective strategy to deal with those vulnerable offenders with mental health issues. A current scheme involves mental health professionals and the police working together to respond to incidents, engage with vulnerable offenders, and provide advice to officers. The long-term adoption of this good practice will reduce the likelihood of individuals with mental health issues facing long periods of detention in police stations.

Other activities are underpinned by close partnership working. Restorative justice is being widely and appropriately used and data indicates the force is using this method of diverting offenders out of the criminal justice system more than most other forces. Officers have received training and are able to refer offenders into the scheme. One scheme addresses the issue of high levels of retail theft with partners, restorative solutions officers, and community support officers all involved in running workshops with offenders. There are a number of trained officers and a high proportion of trained volunteers who are able to provide services to deal with offenders outside of the court process and they also raise the awareness of frontline staff of the benefits of using out-of-court disposals. The effective use of restorative justice allows more people harmed by crime or conflict to meet with those responsible for the harm, to find a positive way forward. The force's own evaluation demonstrates a high proportion of victims would recommend this nationally agreed method of case disposal.

Local officers engage extensively in schools with 'stay safe' projects that raise awareness of emerging threats like child sexual exploitation, cyber-crime and the use of 'legal highs' and this approach to catch people at a young age extends to the 'families working together' programme. Police community support officers are seconded to this multi-agency project team that works together to break cycles of offending and explore ways of intervening with children from families identified to be at high risk of becoming involved in crime.

How well does the force deal with repeat offenders?

In HMIC's 2014 crime inspection we identified that the force could improve the way offenders were managed. During this inspection we re-examined arrangements and found them still to be underdeveloped and the ability to correctly identify and manage prolific offenders to prevent re-offending is limited. The force has also not yet demonstrated its commitment to the government's key principles of partners working

together to manage offenders, to provide a local response to local problems, with all offenders potentially in scope, to achieve long-term desistance from crime.

A voluntary tagging scheme is used, however, there has been no evaluation of this scheme or on the overall effectiveness of the offender management team.

Reoffending rates are not considered against the costs incurred and the force is not using the Home Office IT tools developed to assist in measuring the effect of the management of offenders; as a consequence, the force is unable to state how success for individuals on the scheme is defined.

HMIC is encouraged to find strong evidence that staff in the offender management team, engage directly and regularly with local neighbourhood officers ensuring intelligence bulletins are regularly circulated to provide up-to-date information on the highest risk offenders. Neighbourhood officers are also aware of the most prolific offenders that are being managed and all carry out enforcement action when offenders fail to engage with their conditions of release.

There is a good understanding of the importance of engaging with prolific offenders through partnership working, however, there needs to be increased focus on improving ways to prevent re-offending through diversionary schemes. Steps are well underway to improve the current position with plans to work more closely with partners, move to new premises, and make better use of existing organisations that have the skills and experience to minimise re-offending.

As part of this re-organisation there has been a review to see if the scope of offenders under management can be widened. However, these new proposals are not aligned to the force priorities of responding to risk and keeping people safe. HMIC considers these proposals are likely to have an adverse impact on opportunities to reduce the offending of persons who present greater risks such as perpetrators of domestic abuse, other violent offences, those engaged in sexual exploitation and those involved in serious and organised crime. Although offenders are identified by police and partners for acceptance onto the scheme through an agreed referral process, the scheme still focuses exclusively on acquisitive crime offenders, such as those who commit theft and burglary, and while some of the offenders under management are capable of having a significant impact they cannot always be considered to be causing the greatest threat or risk of harm to individuals. HMIC is concerned that progress has been slow but is encouraged by the plans to reinvigorate the scheme and there is an opportunity to ensure those offenders who are the greatest threat and cause the most harm are on the scheme.

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

Sexual offenders are identified and now managed by the management of sexual offenders and violence offender team. This is a very recent change from the previously named 'dangerous person management unit'. The force recognises the risks posed by a growing number of identified dangerous offenders who are suitable

for the multi-agency public protection arrangements (MAPPAs) process.¹³ These arrangements are used by the force 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. Offenders assessed as presenting the highest level of risk require co-ordinated action with partner organisations to reduce these risks.

The number of specialists in the team has recently increased. Appropriate training is provided to those staff that are required to conduct visits and complete detailed assessments to understand and reduce the risks posed by registered sex offenders. The force has adopted an appropriate, structured risk assessment process to evaluate actual and perceived risk and this is beginning to give a clearer picture of the threats posed by offenders, taking into account changes in an offender's life as they happen. This helps officers understand and remove the triggers for offending and also regulate the number of visits that are necessary. However, the correct completion of these assessments is time-consuming, which means that there are significant delays to visits and the completion of assessments has been temporarily suspended for lower risk categories to allow officers to reduce backlogs. In addition, while the risks posed by violent and dangerous offenders should also be managed the referral process is being refreshed and currently officers do not make the unit aware of any suitable offenders as the guidance for officers only refers to registered sex offenders.

In common with many other forces, Lincolnshire has seen increases in the numbers of sex offenders it has to manage, and this demand is likely to grow as forces become more effective at tackling online sexual offenders. Offender managers work well with partners, share intelligence and carry out some visits with probation officers and there is regular communication with housing providers about suitable accommodation and geographical placement. Offenders are referred to a group called 'Circles' who are able to provide a mentoring and counselling service. Providing these opportunities and signposting offenders to a variety of agencies means that risks of reoffending may be reduced over time.

Frontline officers are provided with briefings in relation to sex offenders and are able to access information on offenders living in the areas they police. There is good awareness by staff and they are making use of the tasking and briefing tools to ensure offenders are managed and new information is acted on quickly.

¹³ MAPPAs 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.

Summary of findings



Requires improvement

Lincolnshire Police's approach to investigating crime and managing offenders requires improvement. This is consistent with HMIC's crime inspection in 2014 when the force was judged as 'requires improvement' at investigating offending. Although there has been some improvement since 2014, the force still needs to improve the quality and consistency of its approaches to investigating crime and managing offenders.

Processes for the initial investigation of incidents are based on threat, risk and harm and the allocation of complex and non-complex crimes generally works well. Reported crime has continued to fall which compares favourably with most other forces. The approach taken to investigate crime is improving but there are still inconsistencies across the force. Similarly, there is an absence of well-documented reviews and consistent practices for assessing case workloads.

Progress in other areas, specifically the backlog in phone and computer examinations and an effective offender management scheme, remains under-developed. An additional concern is the backlog in the completion of assessments on sex offenders, which have been temporarily suspended on low-risk sex offenders while officers complete statutory visits on other registered sex offenders.

There are a number of effective activities to divert young and vulnerable offenders away from crime. However, greater integration with partners, improved prioritisation of those causing most harm and evaluation to define what success looks like for the integrated offender management scheme means that the ability to prevent re-offending is reduced.

Areas for improvement

- The force should take steps to ensure that all available evidence is recorded at scenes of crime, and that there is regular and active supervision of investigations to check quality and progress.
- The force should introduce a clear process to ensure that those who are circulated as wanted on the police national computer, those who fail to appear on police bail and named suspects identified through forensic evidence are swiftly arrested, and that the risks posed by registered sex offenders are managed effectively.
- The force 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 force should work with partner organisations to develop its approach to integrated offender management (IOM) in line with the Home Office IOM principles.

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 2015.¹⁴ The following is a summary of the findings.

Summary of findings



Requires improvement

Lincolnshire Police is generally good at identifying vulnerable people and often responds well to meet the needs of victims who are vulnerable. However, there are important areas where improvement is needed to ensure the service is consistent and vulnerable people, particularly children, are kept safe. Given the scale of the challenge in this area and risk that is posed to some of the most vulnerable people overall, the force requires improvement.

HMIC acknowledges that the force has committed significant effort and resources to offer a high-quality service to the public in this area and it is committed to enhancing even more those teams who investigate and work with partners to keep vulnerable people safe. Protecting the most vulnerable is clearly a priority for force senior leaders and the police and crime commissioner. The force needs to prioritise resources appropriately if it is to give further confidence to the public that the force identifies early the risk of harm to vulnerable people, and that the service it provides is of a consistently high quality service.

The force generally identifies repeat and vulnerable victims and responds well to them. It also investigates crime committed against the most vulnerable victims well, with generally the right level of expertise involved in the right complexity of investigation. However, HMIC is concerned that the right level of specialist expertise is not always involved in complex cases involving domestic abuse and children.

Those attending domestic abuse incidents have a good knowledge of how to assess risk and to keep victims safe. They can refer to a helpful booklet and checklist to ensure they carry out these processes properly and are well supervised doing so.

Work between professionals, including those from partner organisations, in the safe team and the central referral unit helps keep children safe, providing effective attention towards increased levels of risk. Staff throughout the force show a positive attitude towards protecting those who are vulnerable from harm and supporting victims.

¹⁴ *PEEL: Police effectiveness 2015 (Vulnerability) – Lincolnshire Police*, HMIC, December 2015. Available from: www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/publications/police-effectiveness-vulnerability-2015-lincolnshire/.

However, the force does not have a co-ordinated or consistently well-supervised process for responding to reports that children are missing or absent.¹⁵

Understanding of the scale and nature of the issue is under-developed, which means the response to missing children is inconsistent and frontline staff and supervisors do not always identify risk factors associated with missing children and the potential links to child sexual exploitation. Systems designed to support the management of cases are not well used and this means that investigating and safeguarding opportunities may be missed and, for example, in persistent cases ensuring information is used from previous missing episodes to develop a co-ordinated and prioritised response.

This inspection considered how well prepared the force is to tackle child sexual exploitation. Lincolnshire Police has made a fairly good start in ensuring it is well prepared to tackle child sexual exploitation but it must now build on this to ensure that this ambition translates into consistent operational practice.

¹⁵ A person is classified as absent if they are not where they are expected to be but they are not considered at risk. Whereas, if they are classified as missing the police are obliged to take steps to locate them, as the level of perceived risk is higher. In Lincolnshire, force policy is that no child 12 years old or under will be treated as 'absent'.

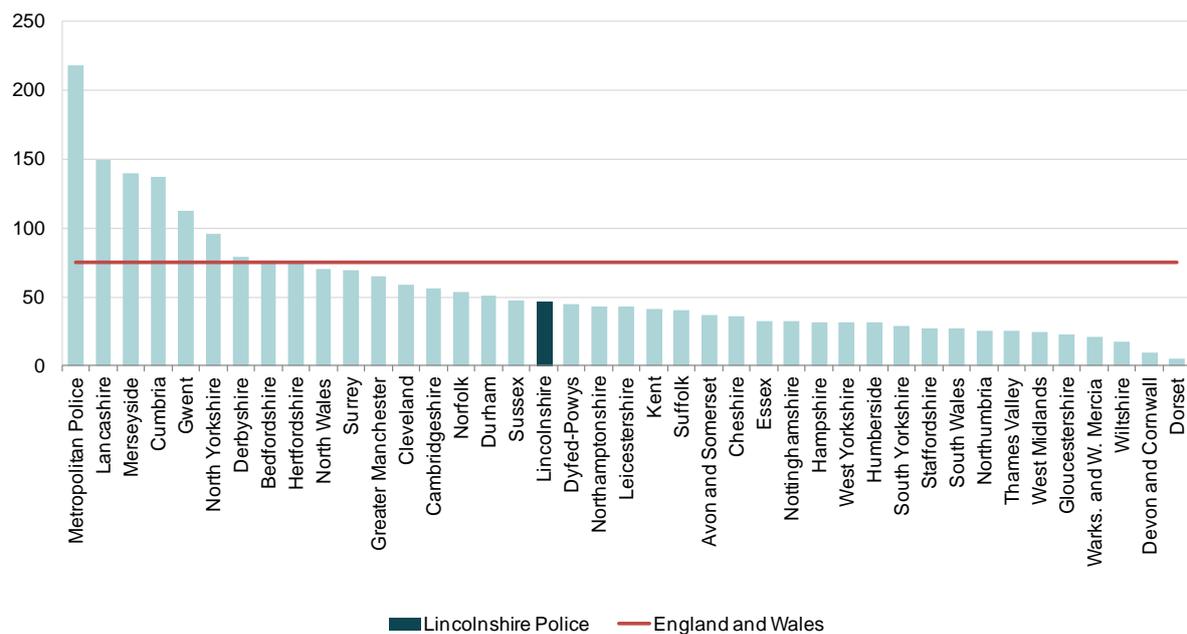
How effective is the force at tackling serious and organised crime, including its arrangements for fulfilling its national policing responsibilities?

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 covert 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, Lincolnshire Police was actively disrupting, investigating or monitoring 34 organised crime groups (OCGs). This represents 46 OCGs per one million of the population.

Figure 6: Organised crime groups per one million population, by force, as at 30 June 2015^{16 17}



Source: HMIC data collection

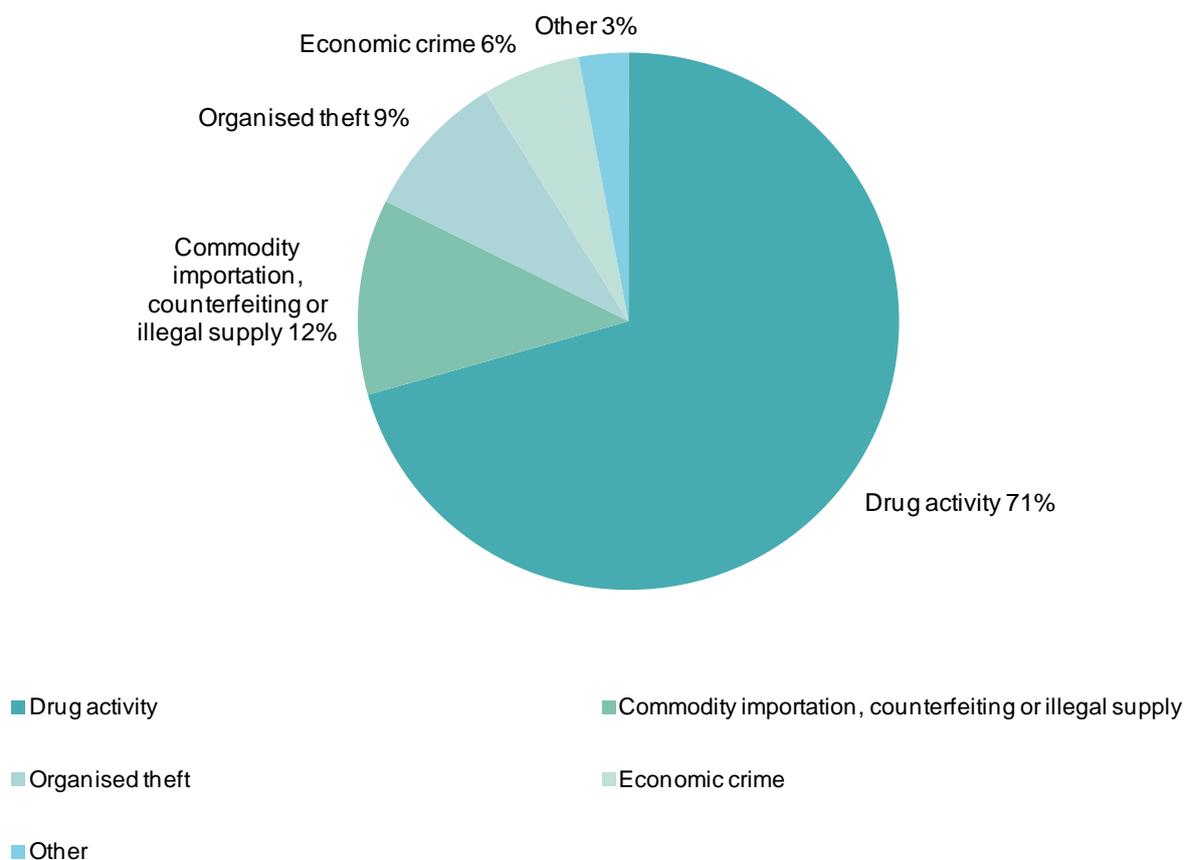
Forces categorise OCGs by the predominant form of criminal activity in which the group is involved. Although OCGs are likely to be involved in multiple forms of criminality, this indicates their most common characteristic. 'Drug activity' was the predominant crime type (71 percent) of the OCGs managed by Lincolnshire Police as at 30 June 2015. 'Drug activity' was also the most common predominant crime type recorded by all forces in England and Wales,¹⁸ with 64 percent of all OCGs classified in this way.

¹⁶ 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.

¹⁷ 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.

¹⁸ 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 2015¹⁹



Source: HMIC data collection

Serious and organised crime is one of six national threats specified within *The Strategic Policing Requirement*. 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.

¹⁹ Figures may not sum to 100 percent, due to rounding.

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

There is an effective assessment from the threats posed by serious and organised crime in the Lincolnshire Police area. This assessment looks at emerging crimes, draws on information from partner organisations and is aligned with regional priorities. As a result there is a better understanding of the threats the force faces across a wider area with an increased emphasis on understanding emerging crimes like modern slavery, cyber-crime and child sexual exploitation.

Dedicated staff gather and analyse intelligence about OCGs operating in the force area. This intelligence function is complemented by a regional intelligence team, which is part of the EMSOU. This regional team can add further intelligence to that held by the force, perhaps from other forces and partner organisations. This also helps the force produce a more accurate and detailed picture of serious and organised criminality and means that threats can be identified, assessed and acted on at the earliest opportunity.

There is a clear understanding of where the most harmful OCGs are concentrated, how they are evolving and the activity required to effectively disrupt these groups. To further enhance understanding of newer crime types an 'understanding emerging communities team' enriches the intelligence picture and makes effective use of foreign national offender checks to identify and remove active OCG members from the country. The force also reviews reports it receives from financial institutions in relation to suspicious activity. However, although it prioritises those involving OCGs and vulnerable members of the community, it is currently lacking the resources to act on the majority of reports in a meaningful way.

Organised crime group members are flagged on force systems and regular intelligence bulletins are provided to all staff, which means they will know if a person they encounter or have stopped in the street is involved in organised crime and this improves their understanding of how a group or individual is operating. By adopting a 'whole force' approach to disrupt criminal activity, staff not only have a better understanding of emerging threats in the areas they police but this encourages local ownership. Senior officers lead and oversee activity within investigation departments and at neighbourhood level.

This 'whole force' approach ensures intelligence about OCGs is being recorded, analysed and acted on. HMIC observed an organised crime group meeting and found the problem-solving approach and the provision of tactical options to tackle active OCGs is aligned to the government organised crime strategy of pursue, prevent, prepare and protect (4Ps).²⁰

²⁰ 4Ps Structure is the framework cited to tackle serious and organised crime, namely pursue, prevent, protect and prepare, see HM Government Serious Organised Crime Strategy (October 2013)

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 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.

Most forces carry out OCG mapping independently and despite the use of standard software and methods, this has led to inconsistency with 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.²¹

Encouragingly Lincolnshire is one of five forces within the East Midlands that already gathers and submits intelligence to the East Midlands Special Operations Unit who assume responsibility for their OCG mapping. This affords a good degree of consistency, enhanced intelligence sharing, and a better understanding of the threats across the region. However, although the mapping process is carried out thoroughly by the regional team, it is sometimes unnecessarily lengthy. Force-level OCG investigations would be better informed by the mapping process if it were completed more quickly.

In line with national guidance, the force has prepared a ‘local profile’ for serious and organised crime. The document identifies which crime groups and the type of criminality that are operating in specific geographical locations within the force boundary. This has been shared with local partners, for example trading standards, environmental health and revenue and custom, to develop a better understanding of serious and organised crime in Lincolnshire. The serious and organised partnership board meets regularly to share intelligence and consider disruption opportunities. In addition to this the force has a local Government Agency Intelligence Network

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/248645/Serious_and_Organised_Crime_Strategy.pdf

²¹ *Regional Organised Crime Units: A Review of Capability and Effectiveness*, HMIC, December 2015. Available from: www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/wp-content/uploads/regional-organised-crime-units.pdf

(GAIN)²² that complements the partnership board and the work of the regional GAIN network.

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

Governance and oversight of serious and organised crime is at a senior officer level. Tasks are assigned and progress is monitored effectively at regular meetings and there is a clear and consistently applied method for prioritising OCGs for intervention with resources aligned to identified threats. The force contributes resources to the EMSOU and readily accesses these regionally held capabilities such as surveillance, covert policing and asset recovery on a regular basis in order to disrupt OCGs. Those groups identified as causing the most harm are subject to a specialist policing response.

The limited specialist capability within the force to deal with less harmful groups has led to the development of a partnership approach to tackling serious and organised crime. It is recognised that it is increasingly difficult to carry out investigations in isolation from other agencies. The force has 'lead responsible officers' (LROs) to oversee the activity of staff who tackle those groups that pose a lower or less well understood threat. Intelligence is developed and disruptive activity is carried out with partners with the range of tactics considered documented on management plans. The LROs provide regular updates to the senior officer lead and can seek advice from a regional disruption team on all the tactical options available to them.

There is a good understanding of the government's pursue, prevent, protect and prepare organised crime strategy and the benefits of an integrated approach with partners. The force recognises the benefits of working with partners to disrupt organised crime and has made efforts to identify organisations who can collaborate on a problem-solving approach such as those represented on the serious and organised crime partnership board. This is a recent development to improve joint problem solving aligned to the current identified threats. This approach, allied with increased understanding, and use of the GAIN makes it easier to gather intelligence and ultimately dismantle OCGs. A recent example of an anti-slavery operation involved a wide range of partners including the NHS, gang masters licensing authority, HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC), the local authority and environmental agency to investigate and ultimately rescue several vulnerable adults who were being exploited.

The force is having a positive effect on serious and organised crime through its collaboration and strong relationship with the specialist regional team. The numbers of OCGs operating in the county are low as is their overall threat to local

²² Government intelligence agency network (GAIN): primary role is to act as a channel for the effective sharing of intelligence, within legislative boundaries, across a large network of partners including all police forces in England and Wales.

communities. Clear objectives are being pursued and national guidance is adopted by using an assessment framework to measure the effectiveness of disruption activity. However, there is currently no shared database to identify which approaches have had the most impact or how these can improve subsequent operations.

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

A key strand of the government's strategy to tackle serious and organised crime is how agencies can work together to prevent and deter people from becoming involved. It is increasingly important that the management of serious criminals extends beyond a successful prosecution and the force is developing this approach.

A team based in the EMSOU monitors organised criminals in prison on behalf of Lincolnshire Police and other forces in the East Midlands region. This enables specialist officers to gather intelligence from offenders, prevent them from developing or maintaining criminal networks while they are in prison and deter re-offending after they are released.

There are a number of effective partnership projects in Lincolnshire to prevent people from being drawn into serious and organised crime, including:

- activities to educate school-age children about the risks of child sexual exploitation;
- work with partners to close shops selling psychoactive drugs; and
- the use of civil orders to close premises and ban people from public spaces being used for criminal activity.

In addition, the 'families first' partnership work identifies those at risk of becoming career criminals at an early stage so they receive additional support with a focus on turning them away from a life of crime.

The force publicises the tangible improvements and preventive steps it is taking with local communities by using a range of traditional and social media platforms. Neighbourhood staff reassure residents and inform them of meaningful activity once it has taken place and encourage the sharing of information. During a recent anti-slavery campaign, local staff spoke to businesses susceptible to influence from organised criminal activity to raise awareness and ensure the safety of those present. The advantages of the force adopting this broader approach and focusing targeted messages on those most at risk prevents businesses and individuals from becoming victims of crime.

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 these 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.

Lincolnshire Police has the necessary arrangements in place to ensure that it can fulfil its national policing responsibilities. Extensive exercising takes place to test its preparedness and senior officers take responsibility for threats specified within the Strategic Policing Requirement at both force and regional level.

The deputy chief constable chairs a regular meeting where business leads in the relevant areas, which include serious and organised crime, cyber-crime, child sexual exploitation and civil contingencies, provide an update on activity that has taken place. This provides reassurance that the force is well prepared to tackle these threats.

There are valid and informative business continuity plans in place, which include detailed roles and responsibilities for the force and its strategic private sector partner. These plans ensure clarity in the event of an incident or crisis that impacts on the resilience of the force and its ability to continue to deliver policing services. These plans are tested which ensures staff and partners are sufficiently prepared to respond effectively to incidents and issues. Regular exercises also mean that there are appropriately trained and experienced commanders, and learning accrued from such exercises is acted upon locally.

The EMSOU has a good understanding of regional threats, and is rigorous and inclusive in its approach to assessing these by drawing on intelligence held by partner organisations, other forces and the regional organised crime unit. There is good alignment of activity with national and regional priorities. The force has conducted appropriate assessments of national policing threats and there are good procedures in place which enable Lincolnshire Police to test its own preparedness for responding to national threats specified within the Strategic Policing Requirement.

Summary of findings



Good

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

The force has a well-developed understanding of the threats it faces and there are mature, collaborative ways of working in place to manage this threat across a large area. The force effectively shares intelligence with partners to tackle serious and organised crime groups and continues to develop a multi-agency response.

There is access to an extensive range of specialist policing capabilities provided by the East Midlands Special Operations Unit. Although this unit is predominantly targeted at the highest harm groups, it also provides support to supplement the effective work of neighbourhood teams who are targeting lower priority criminal groups to disrupt their operations.

The force has robust arrangements in place to satisfy itself that it is fulfilling its national policing responsibilities.

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.