

Strategic Policing Requirement

Sussex Police

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Introduction

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

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

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

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

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

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

*the **connectivity** arrangements by which resources from several police forces may effectively be co-ordinated or mobilised, together and with those of other agencies – such as the Security Service and, from 2013,*

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

the National Crime Agency. The combination of consistency and connectivity forms the basis for interoperability between police forces and with other partners.”

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

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

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

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

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

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

Capacity and contribution

Terrorism

The chief constable understands his role in tackling the threat of terrorism. The force, together with the counter-terrorism network, has the capacity it needs to contribute to the national counter-terrorism effort. Sussex Police collaborate with Surrey Police to provide special branch counter-terrorism capacity for both forces.

The force considers threats and risks from international terrorism and domestic extremism in its strategic threat and risk assessment. Other intelligence documents include information about national, regional and local threats and how they affect Sussex. Counter-terrorism is also included as a priority in the force's control strategy.²

A strategic committee, called the CONTEST board, co-ordinates the force's activity to support the government's counter-terrorism CONTEST strategy³. The head of special branch or the Director of Intelligence for Sussex Police also attends the regional CONTEST board that coordinates counter-terrorism activity by all forces in the South East region.

The force's counter-terrorism resources are aligned with the four strands of the CONTEST strategy. Proportions of resources aligned to each of the strands are adjusted in accordance with assessments of changes in threat and national arrangements.

Sussex Police has a counter-terrorism intelligence unit whose staff work with other organisations. The force also has strong links with the South East counter-terrorism unit, which is located in the Thames Valley Police area. Both units are part of the national network of dedicated counter-terrorism policing units providing functions such as the gathering of intelligence and evidence to help prevent, disrupt and prosecute terrorist activities. There have been a number of cases where the counter-terrorism network has assisted the force by deploying specialist resources.

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

³ CONTEST – the government's counter-terrorism strategy. The four strands are: pursue, prevent, protect and prepare.

Civil emergencies

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

The force did not provide a document to HMIC to demonstrate that it had assessed threats from civil emergencies. The Sussex local resilience forum website contains some information about its community risk register and generic threats. Documents on the website are not dated and there is no indication that these threats have been reviewed.

The deputy chief constable of Sussex Police chairs the Sussex local resilience forum executive group, which provides strategic leadership for the membership.

Sussex Police has a dedicated operations planning unit that includes a small emergency planning team, which makes sure that response and business continuity plans are effective. The head of the emergency planning team is also a member of the local resilience forum and chairs the working group that co-ordinates the exercising and testing of plans for the membership. Members in the local resilience forum have provided funding for a secretariat together.

There are plans for Sussex Police to collaborate with Surrey Police to train sufficient staff who will have the skills required to provide capabilities for both forces. Agreement has also been reached, between the forces, for major incident response and recovery arrangements, which will provide their joint capabilities to deal with civil emergencies. This should provide resilience and cost savings for both police forces.

The force has arrangements to request mutual aid – the provision of support between police forces – and any specialist skills required for dealing with civil emergencies. For the six police forces in the region, mobilisation of specialist resources is co-ordinated by the South East regional information and coordination centre, which is hosted by Kent Police. The centre also supports the national police co-ordination centre which mobilises resources across the country.

Sussex Police has sufficient numbers of trained staff to deliver chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear capabilities and is contributing to a review of the South East region's provision of this capability.

Serious organised crime

Sussex Police has appropriate capacity to meet threats from serious organised crime, either with its own trained staff, or through its regional organised crime unit.

Organised crime groups are considered in the force's strategic threat and risk assessment and feature as a priority in its control strategy. A South East region strategic assessment also included the recommendation that tackling organised crime groups causing significant harm to the region should be a priority for the regional organised crime unit.

The force applies nationally approved methods to disrupt organised crime groups⁴. There is a clear way of making sure that appropriate measures are taken against organised crime groups in accordance with the force's assessment of the potential threats, risks, harm and demands that these organised crime groups pose. The force can respond to these threats using its own resources, or it can seek assistance from the South East region organised crime unit.

Sussex Police and Surrey Police are planning collaboration in their joint provision of specialist capabilities to tackle serious organised crime.

Public order

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

Sussex Police provided HMIC with a public order strategic threat and risk assessment that had been completed with Surrey Police, dated March 2013. Public order is considered in the force's strategic assessment and is included as a priority within the force's control strategy.

A public order and chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear, strategic board meeting, chaired by a chief superintendent, co-ordinates the force's provision of capabilities to deal with those threats. The regional public order

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

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

and public safety group co-ordinates public order capability for South East region police forces. The South East region information and coordination centre is responsible for mobilising public order resources for the six forces and supports the national police coordination centre. Sussex and Surrey Police have also agreed, as part of ongoing closer collaboration, the sharing of police support unit resources for pre-planned events.

For each force, HMIC compared the number of police support units they declared they had, with the number of police support units that they told us they needed to respond to local outbreaks of disorder. Sussex Police assessed that it needed 12 police support units to respond to local threats and had that number. The force can provide the nine police support units that it has assessed it requires to contribute towards national mobilisation. There are sufficient specialist public order staff⁶ and senior officers to command responses to major events and public disorder. The force has been dealing with a large policing operation to deal with protests linked to gas and oil exploratory drilling in Sussex. This has led the force to re-assess its capacity and it has trained additional senior officers to command public order responses and delayed the disposal of some old personnel carriers so that it has resilience to deal with ongoing operations. Plans are also underway to increase the number of PSUs the force maintains from the current level.

The use of mutual aid – the provision of support between police forces – is another indicator of the extent to which police forces either have or do not have sufficient trained public order resources. Data provided by forces on their provision and receipt of mutual aid for 2011/12 and 2012/13⁷ show that Sussex was one of 12 forces that were net recipients for public order policing mutual aid.

Large-scale cyber incident

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

Sussex Police has not completed a strategic threat and risk assessment linked to the likelihood of a large-scale cyber incident. The force has prepared a number of documents, and contributed to regional documents, that review existing capability to deal with cyber threats.

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

⁷ This analysis excluded three major policing operations – the 2011 widespread disorder experienced in England in August 2011, the London Olympics 2012 and the removal of the residents at Dale Farm, Essex in 2012 (Operation Cabinet) – as they were exceptional incidents that skewed the results.

These reviews have led the force to decide that Sussex Police does not have the available capacity or capability to deal with a significant cyber incident.

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

Sussex Police has assessed threats to its information technology systems, but had not undertaken a comprehensive review of their vulnerability, resilience and procedures for preventing denial of service attacks⁸. The force had prepared business continuity plans⁹ to enable the force to continue functioning in the event of disruptions to services.

⁸ A denial of service attack is an attempt to make a computer or network of computers unavailable to its users.

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

Capability

Terrorism

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

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

The counter-terrorism network provides most of the capability needed to undertake complex investigations, respond to critical incidents (including using command and control) and provide specialist equipment and training to national standards. Sussex Police counter-terrorism staff are trained to national standards within the South East counter-terrorism unit.

The force has sufficient trained staff locally to support all four strands of the counter-terrorism CONTEST¹⁰ strategy.

Civil emergencies

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

Potential events that could threaten human welfare recorded on the national risk register are assessed for their potential impact on Sussex. Emergency planning staff have developed local resilience forum plans for the provision of responses for those risks which affect Sussex. Members have agreed respective responsibilities to provide responses to civil emergencies

A Sussex Police inspector has received training to provide support to the local resilience forum to deliver its plans. There are arrangements to obtain the assistance of police and local resilience forum's emergency planners out of office hours.

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

The force has identified the skills, and the numbers of staff with those skills, required to respond to civil emergencies and has sufficient numbers to meet anticipated threats and risks. Staff are trained to national standards. The force also provides training to supervisors who are likely to be the first responders to any incidents. The force can meet its expectations as a category 1 responder¹¹ and has the capabilities to respond to civil emergencies, including those involving chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear hazards.

Serious organised crime

Sussex Police has the capabilities required, either internally or through officers provided by the regional organised crime unit, to meet threats from serious organised crime. The force collaborates with Surrey Police to tackle organised crime.

HMIC found that, in the South East region, chief constables have agreed their detailed plans for the further development of the regional organised crime unit in accordance with nationally issued guidance on regional organised crime unit development. The force holds a monthly Force Tasking and Coordination Meeting to agree actions on tasking from the National Crime Agency chaired by the ACC Specialist Crime Command for Surrey & Sussex.

Regional task-allocation meetings, chaired by the assistant chief constable for organised crime, decide on the allocation of resources to investigate, disrupt and prosecute organised crime groups. All cases that require resources beyond the capabilities of individual police forces, and require regional or national assistance, are considered as part of regional task-allocation.

Staff are trained to national standards and have appropriate equipment to fulfil their roles. Guidance has been issued to all staff to assist them in dealing with organised crime groups within their areas.

Public order

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

The force did not submit a completed self-assessment of its public order capability using the College of Policing's capability framework to HMIC for this inspection.

The force's operations planning manager uses the force's strategic assessment to understand the threats and risks that the force has to deal with. This information is used to review plans and decide on the public order resources that the force needs.

¹¹ Category 1 responders are described by the Cabinet Office as organisations at the core of the response to most emergencies (the emergency services, local authorities, NHS) (defined by the Civil Contingencies Act 2004) – www.gov.uk

Sussex Police trains its staff in accordance with national standards, including the use of tactics to end incidents of disorder before they become worse. Force public order officers train police support units, officers commanding public order events and some public order specialists. Police officers attend other forces' public order training units for specialist skills that the force is not accredited to train.

Police officers maintain their own records of public order training that they have been provided with. Local supervisors are expected to monitor their officers' training records and verify whether training is up to date. The force has plans to introduce a new software package, which will improve the ability to identify staff with the right skills.

Public order trainers from the force have attended events in other force areas to which the force's staff have been deployed and have assessed learning points. The force has a structured debriefing protocol that provides a framework within which information drawn from debriefing can be organised. Learning from events outside and within the force is used to develop public order training.

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

Sussex Police has significant recent experience dealing with public order events through protests linked to oil and gas exploratory drilling operations within the county. We found that there were plans to establish command, control and communications support to respond to incidents. Control room staff had access to information about the police officers on duty with public order skills and senior officers who were available to co-ordinate longer-term responses. Sussex Police is committed to mobilising one police support unit within an hour. The force's operational planning department would be called upon to seek assistance from other police forces. Contingency plans were available to control room staff within the force's command and control system. There are arrangements for the joint control of incidents with the ambulance and fire and rescue services.

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

Large-scale cyber incident

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

At the time of the inspection visit, the force was working to improve its understanding of cyber issues and its response to a cyber attack. Force senior leaders have provided additional funding for training and equipment to improve the force's capabilities to tackle cyber threats.

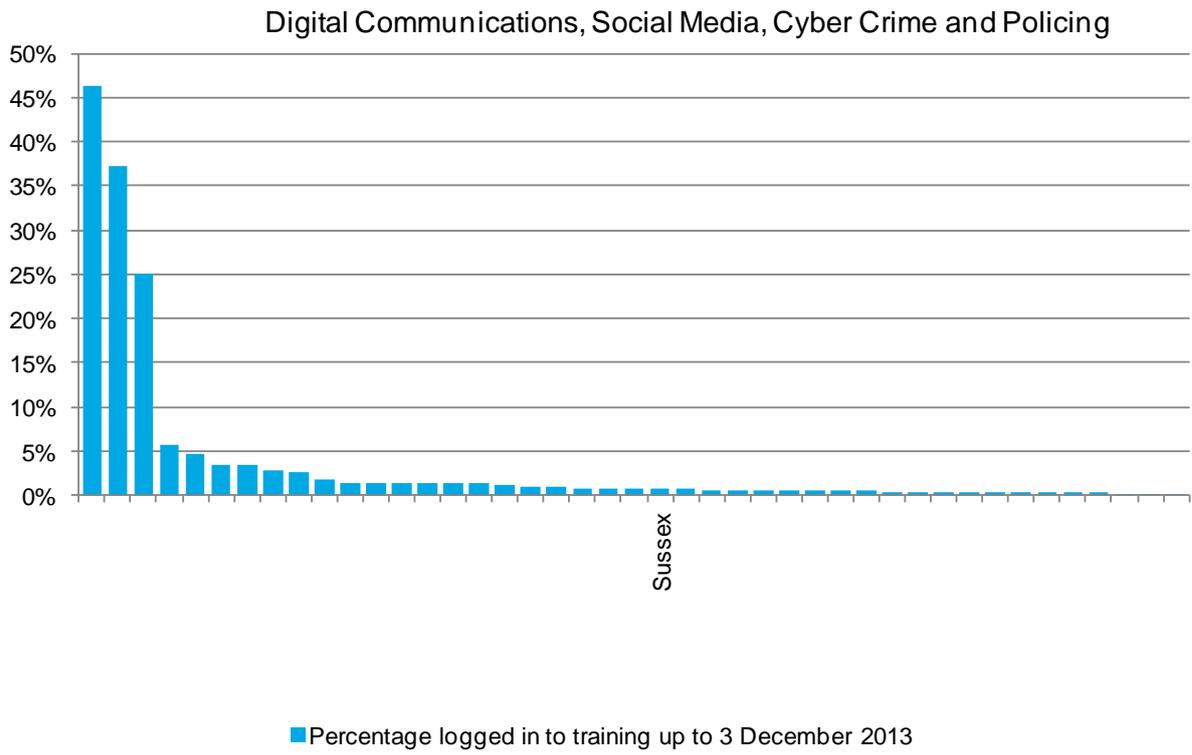
Sussex Police's hi-tech crime investigators – staff who investigate cybercrime – have been trained to nationally agreed standards. There is no capability to deal with a large cyber attack but force senior leaders would seek the assistance of regional resources. There are plans for the South East region to develop a regional cybercrime unit.

The force has also recruited a special constable with specialist information technology skills, into its hi-tech crime unit. There are arrangements to secure specialist assistance out of office hours.

The College of Policing has developed eight computer-based training courses to improve the police service's knowledge and skills to deal with cybercrime. Data have been provided and analysed to understand the proportion of workforce who have sought the training up to the beginning of December 2013.¹² Tables that show the proportion of staff, for each force, who have signed in for the training are included in our national report on the police service's response to cyber threats. The following charts demonstrate how many of Sussex Police's workforce enrolled for three of the eight e-learning courses designed to improve awareness. The courses were selected to be representative of the force's commitment to this aim for both general front-line policing (Digital Communications, Social Media, Cybercrime and Policing introduced in April 2013 and Cybercrime and Digital Policing – Introduction introduced in August 2013) and for investigators (Introduction to Communications Data and Cybercrime introduced in July 2011).

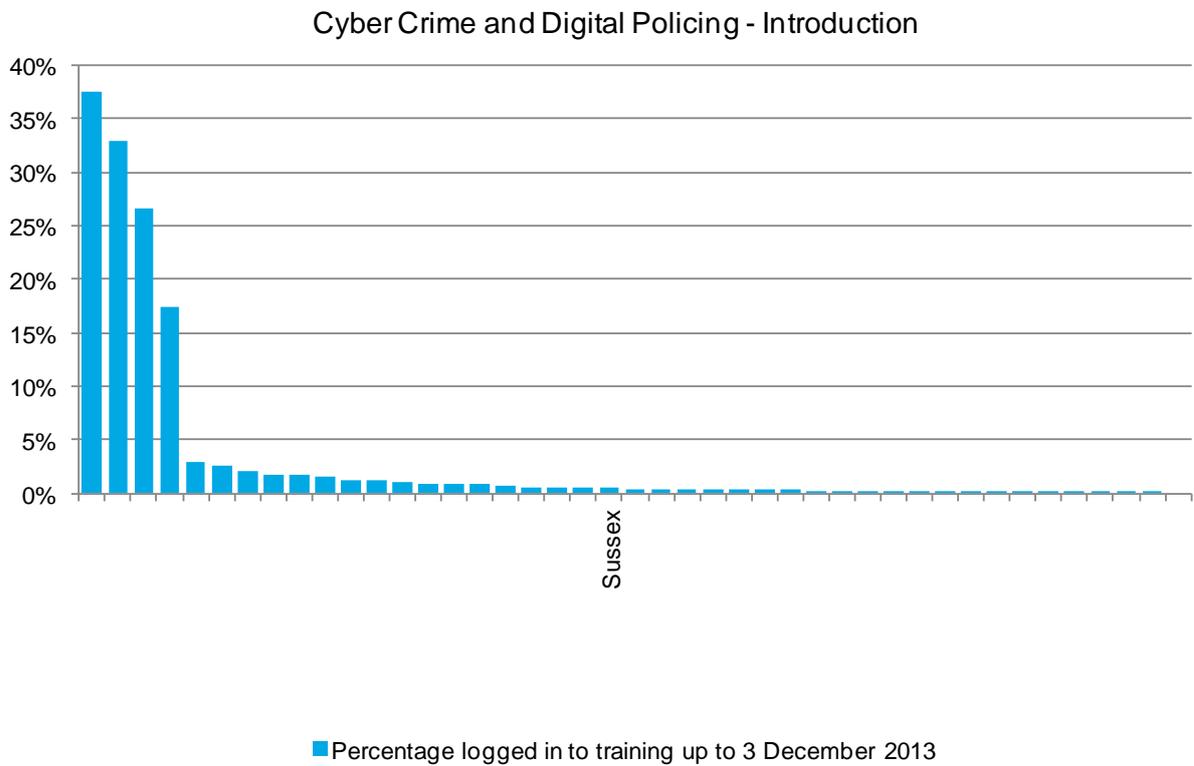
¹² Information provided by the College of Policing dated February 2014 - Completion figures for communication data and cybercrime modules (period ending January 2014).

Figure 1: Digital Communications, Social Media, Cybercrime and Policing¹³



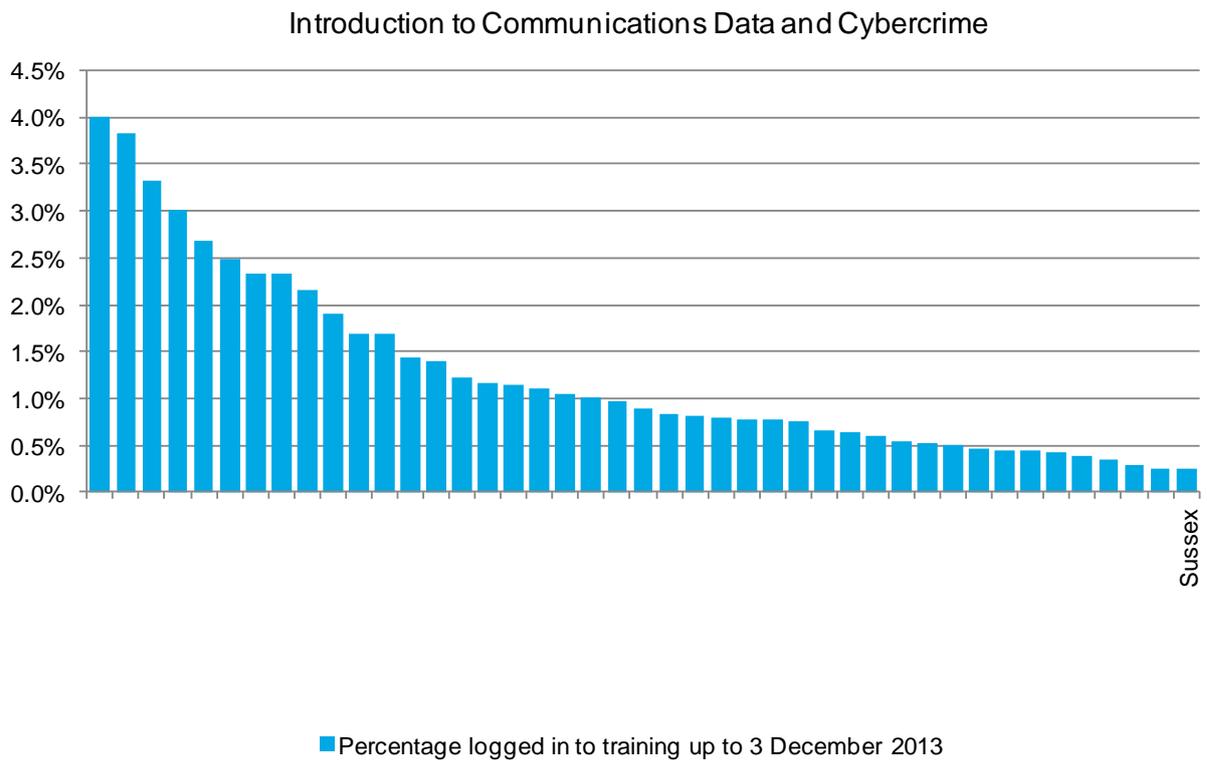
¹³ This course, designed for all staff, aims to develop awareness of digital communications technology and how it affects different areas of cybercrime, social media, law enforcement and policing.

Figure 2: Cybercrime and Digital Policing – Introduction¹⁴



¹⁴ This course is designed for all police officers, special constables and other individuals in a law enforcement community. It is aimed at helping them develop a general awareness of the types of emerging threats and risks from criminals exploiting technology. The training is linked to relevant legislation and also covers cybercrime prevention.

Figure 3: Introduction to Communications Data and Cybercrime¹⁵



¹⁵ This course is aimed at investigators and demonstrates the skills needed for a basic level of understanding of the uses of communications data in law enforcement, including guidance on cybercrime prevention.

Consistency

Public order

Sussex Police's arrangements to train public order officers and procure public order equipment are consistent across all forces in the South East region.

Sussex Police has established joint procurement arrangements with Surrey Police and the two forces have a manager who is responsible for purchasing equipment. The forces also comply with a procurement framework agreement that has been developed with the other four South East region police forces. Personal protective equipment purchased by the force within the framework is consistent with that used by other forces within the region. Consistency will improve as older equipment is replaced. The force uses nationally agreed procurement standards for its public order protective shields. Sussex police officers are able to operate effectively with other forces' public order staff and participate in an annual regional exercise to test interoperability.

Responding to chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear incidents

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

Sussex Police has not recently procured equipment to enable its staff to operate in areas contaminated by chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear material. Force leaders understand that there is a national review being undertaken of arrangements for emergency services to operate in contaminated areas. The force has taken part in joint exercises with neighbouring forces and emergency services that tested these capabilities. In the event of the force being faced with incidents requiring specialist capabilities that it does not have, it would ask for assistance from other forces and agencies.

Connectivity

Terrorism

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

Arrangements for responding to an incident of terrorism, or to intelligence about terrorist activity, are recorded in a force incident response contingency plan. The ability of operational units, including specialist firearms teams and surveillance teams to work together, has been tested and information from these tests used to improve effectiveness.

Sussex Police participates in daily national counter-terrorism network meetings at which threats are discussed and the police service's response is determined. The force has clear arrangements to ask for assistance from the counter-terrorism network.

The force uses the Airwave radio system to communicate effectively with police and partner agencies' units deployed on proactive operations. There is also the capability, within a fully equipped control room, to communicate securely, share intelligence and transfer electronic images with other forces and security and intelligence agencies. Senior leaders are engaged in national discussions to implement a new secure information and technology system that will improve the sharing of intelligence across the counter-terrorism network.

Civil emergencies

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

The force has agreed arrangements, with other South East region forces, for the mobilisation of specialist resources to respond to civil emergencies. These arrangements have been tested on a number of occasions including responses to incidents involving chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear hazards. A multi-agency exercise took place in May 2014 to test arrangements for command and control at scenes, within the centre that co-ordinates the tactical response, and at strategic co-ordination level.

There are effective joint working arrangements between Sussex Police and the local resilience forum. Joint working is taken forward through weekly conference calls when partners discuss current threats and issues (for example developments in the national joint emergency services interoperability programme and flu pandemic planning).

The force's emergency planning lead officer facilitates these arrangements and also ensures that decisions and information from the national lead police officer for civil emergencies and the Cabinet Office civil contingencies secretariat are incorporated into local plans.

'Resilience Direct' is an IT system, supported by the Cabinet Office, that enables partners to share electronically information and documents when responding to emergencies. While the force has made use of the system and it was found to be useful during the Olympic Games, it was unclear how regularly it has been used since the event, or what plans the force had to use other systems in the future.

Force emergency planning staff are engaged in the national joint emergency services interoperability programme and have linked with the fire and rescue service to organise training. Sussex Police has committed to providing staff to deliver training in support of the programme. A joint emergency service working group and a strategic group have been established by the local resilience forum to implement the 22 recommendations arising from the national programme.

Serious and organised crime

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

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

The interoperability that enables specialist resources to work together effectively in dealing with terrorist threats also supports the force's activity against serious organised crime threats. Sussex Police has a fully equipped control room that supports senior leaders in co-ordinating operations, communicating with resources that have been deployed and transferring information securely. A system was introduced for the Olympic Games which enables the operations room to track the locations of all vehicles and assets.

Sussex Police used the police national database to share intelligence with other forces and is now able to share information using a newly introduced information technology system. Force staff recognise that there are still opportunities to improve information sharing with other law enforcement and regulatory agencies. The force is able to share intelligence securely with the regional organised crime unit.

Public order

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

The South East regional information and coordination centre co-ordinates the regional mobilisation of public order resources. The interoperability of police forces' public order capabilities is regularly tested in deployments to deal with the oil and gas exploratory drilling protests and the policing of party political conferences in Sussex.

In the past two years, the force has received assistance from other forces in the form of 53¹⁶ police support units. The force, in turn, has provided six police support units to others.

Large-scale cyber incident

Sussex Police has not been faced with a large-scale cyber incident that would require a joint response. Staff in the force were aware, however, of where they could get help if it was needed.

The force has not had to investigate or deal with the consequences of a serious cyber attack. Senior management in the force recognise that, if they were faced with such a challenge, they would ask for national expertise from the National Cyber Crime Unit of the National Crime Agency.

Sussex Police has tested how it would respond to a large-scale cyber incident with Surrey Police, Kent Police and Thames Valley Police.

¹⁶ This analysis excluded three major policing operations – the 2011 widespread disorder experienced in England in August 2011, the London Olympics 2012 and the removal of the residents at Dale Farm, Essex in 2012 (Operation Cabinet) – as they were exceptional incidents that skewed the results.