

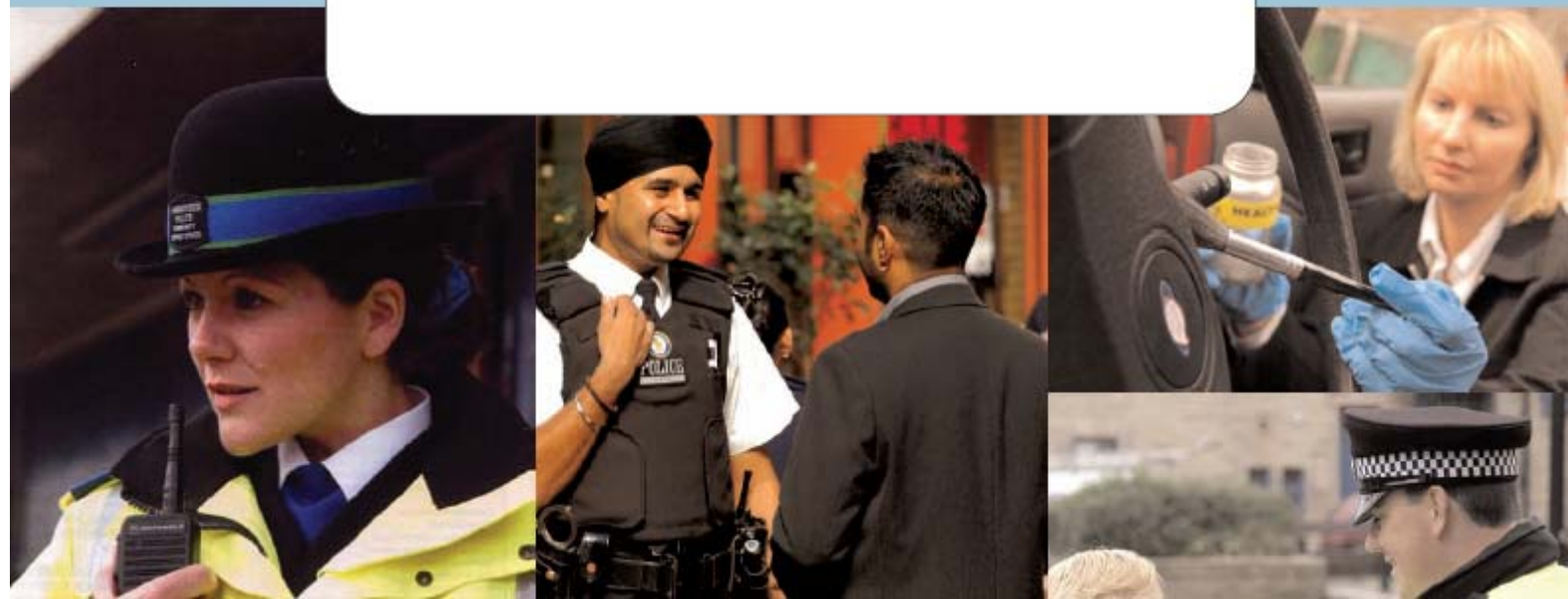
Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary



HMIC Inspection Report

Bedfordshire Police Major Crime

July 2008



Bedfordshire Police – HMIC Inspection Report

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Introduction to HMIC Inspections

For a century and a half, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) has been charged with examining and improving the efficiency of the police service in England and Wales, with the first HM Inspectors (HMIs) being appointed under the provisions of the County and Borough Police Act 1856. In 1962, the Royal Commission on the Police formally acknowledged HMIC's contribution to policing.

HMIs are appointed by the Crown on the recommendation of the Home Secretary and report to HM Chief Inspector of Constabulary, who is the Home Secretary's principal professional policing adviser and is independent of both the Home Office and the police service. HMIC's principal statutory duties are set out in the Police Act 1996. For more information, please visit HMIC's website at <http://inspectorates.homeoffice.gov.uk/hmic/>.

In 2006, HMIC conducted a broad assessment of all 43 Home Office police forces in England and Wales, examining 23 areas of activity. This baseline assessment had followed a similar process in 2005, and thus created a rich evidence base of strengths and weaknesses across the country. However, it is now necessary for HMIC to focus its inspection effort on those areas of policing that are not data-rich and where qualitative assessment is the only feasible way of judging both current performance and the prospects for improvement. This, together with the critical factor that HMIC should concentrate its scrutiny on high-risk areas of policing – in terms of risk both to the public and to the service's reputation – pointed inexorably to a focus on what are known collectively as 'protective services'. In addition, there is a need to apply professional judgement to some key aspects of leadership and governance, where some quantitative measures exist but a more rounded assessment is appropriate.

Having reached this view internally, HMIC consulted key stakeholders, including the Home Office, the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) and the Association of Police Authorities (APA). A consensus emerged that HMIC could add greater value by undertaking more probing inspections of fewer topics. Stakeholders concurred with the emphasis on protective services but requested that neighbourhood policing remain a priority for inspection until there is evidence that it has been embedded in everyday police work.

HMIC uses a rigorous and transparent methodology to conduct its inspections and reach conclusions and judgements. All evidence is gathered, verified and then assessed against specific grading criteria (SGC) drawn from an agreed set of national (ACPO-developed) standards. However, the main purpose of inspection is not to make judgements but to drive improvements in policing. Both professional and lay readers are urged, therefore, to focus not on the headline grades but on the opportunities for improvement identified within the text of this report.

HMIC Business Plan for 2008/09

HMIC's business plan (available at <http://inspectorates.homeoffice.gov.uk/hmic/our-work/business-plan/>) reflects our continued focus on:

- protective services – including the management of public order, civil contingencies and critical incidents phase 3 of the programme in autumn 2008/spring 2009;
- counter-terrorism – including all elements of the national CONTEST strategy;
- strategic services – such as information management and professional standards; and
- the embedding of neighbourhood policing.

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In addition, we are currently developing a scrutiny of strategic resource leverage, and are liaising with the Audit Commission on a methodology for the anticipated inspection of police authorities.

HMIC's priorities for the coming year are set in the context of the wide range of strategic challenges that face both the police service and HMIC, including the need to increase service delivery against a backdrop of reduced resources. With this in mind, the business plan for 2008/09 includes for the first time a 'value for money' plan that relates to the current Comprehensive Spending Review period (2008–11).

Our intention is to move to a default position where we do not routinely carry out all-force inspections, except in exceptional circumstances; we expect to use a greater degree of risk assessment to target activity on those issues and areas where the most severe vulnerabilities exist, where most improvement is required or where the greatest benefit to the service can be gained through the identification of best practice.

Programmed Frameworks

During phase 2 of HMIC's inspection programme, we examined force responses to major crime, serious and organised crime and neighbourhood policing in each of the 44 forces of England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

While this document includes the full graded report for the major crime inspection, the inspection relating to serious and organised crime is detailed in a separate thematic report.

Major Crime

This framework covers the force effectiveness and efficiency in dealing with homicide and other major crimes that will normally require a force to set up a major incident room. There is only one statutory performance indicator at present, although other indicators shown in the report facilitate appropriate comparisons of performance between forces; the indicators suggested give some context regarding the volume of such crimes, success in detections and trends over time, but they need to be interpreted with care. The assessment is primarily qualitative, with a judgement as to the extent to which the force predicts and prevents major crime as opposed to solely discovering and reacting to such crime. Major crime includes any investigation that requires the deployment of a senior investigating officer and specialist assets.

The grading system has changed this year to allow for a single ACPO threshold standard against which forces will be assessed as compliant, not compliant or exceeding compliance. It is recognised that collaborative arrangements can be used where appropriate. At a high level, the ACPO lead summarises the threshold standard as set out below:

- Intelligence – Compliance with the 2005 ACPO National Intelligence Model guidance on the shared understanding of and response to the risks and demands of the major crime threat, with effective intelligence and data sharing internally, with neighbouring forces and with key partners.
- Prevention – Effective proactive partnerships to prevent major crime in compliance with the European Convention on Human Rights; this includes precursor offending and options such as Osman warnings.
- Enforcement – Compliance with the 2006 ACPO *Murder Investigation Manual* and guidance in the 2005 ACPO major incident room standardised administrative procedures, having sufficient resources to meet and manage the predicted demand and contingency to meet extraordinary demand from major crime investigation and review.

- Performance management and resilience – Efficiency through robust performance measures linking costs/resources, inputs and outputs to goals (ie the outcomes of reduction and prevention, detection and conviction work).

Future Programmed Inspections

Following these serious and organised crime and major crime assessments, HMIC plans work in the following areas:

Inspection area	Dates
Neighbourhood policing	April 2008 – September 2008
Developing citizen focus	April 2008 – September 2008
Civil contingencies	September 2008 – May 2009
Public order	September 2008 – May 2009
Critical incidents	September 2008 – May 2009
Professional standards	June 2009 – December 2009
Information management	June 2009 – December 2009
Leadership	June 2009 – December 2009

The Grading Process

HMIC has moved to a new grading system based on the national standards; forces will be deemed to meet the standard, exceed the standard or fail to meet the standard.

Meeting the standard

HMIC uses the ACPO agreed standards as the starting point for its SGC. The standards against which forces are measured are communicated to all forces and police authorities some time before the inspection starts. The standards are set at a level that ensures that risk to the public is identified, managed and mitigated as far as is feasible; all forces should find the standards achievable.

Exceeding the standard

Where a force can demonstrate capacity and capability that exceed the agreed national standards, it is expected that risk assessment and business cases justify the availability of 'additional' resources, and that they are deployed appropriately. For example, some forces require a higher level of capacity/capability to counter extraordinary threat levels or to discharge a regional or lead force remit. Without such a rationale, an over-investment would almost certainly represent poor value for money and thus attract criticism.

Failing to meet the standard

This assessment is appropriate when a force cannot provide evidence that it meets a number of significant criteria that correlate with the ACPO national standards. Where evidence is provided to confirm that the particular issue has been properly risk assessed and the risk is being managed, then the report may not necessarily draw an adverse conclusion. The assessment may also give some credit in situations where a force has the ability to remedy any deficiencies promptly, in terms of time and investment levels needed.

Developing Practice

In addition to assessing force performance, one of HMIC's key roles is to identify and share good practice across the police service. Much good practice is identified as HMIC conducts its assessments and is reflected (described as a 'strength') in the body of the report. In addition, each force is given the opportunity to submit more detailed examples of its good practice. HMIC has therefore, in some reports, selected suitable examples and included them in the report. The key criteria for each example are that the work has been evaluated by the force and the good practice is easily transferable to other forces; each force has provided a contact name and telephone number or email address, should further information be required. HMIC has not conducted any independent evaluation of the examples of good practice provided.

Force Overview and Context

Geographical description of force area

The area served by Bedfordshire Police covers the two-tier county of Bedfordshire and the Luton Unitary Authority, with a population of 573,800 comprising 236,974 households in 120 villages and towns. The force covers a diverse mix of urban and rural areas. The force area includes the urban areas of Bedford, Dunstable and Luton; smaller towns such as Ampthill, Biggleswade and Leighton Buzzard; and a large rural area.

Bedfordshire's transport infrastructure includes sections of the M1 and A1 trunk roads, some of the busiest roads in Europe, and Luton International Airport. In addition, both East and West Coast Mainlines pass through the county.

Local features and amenities include Woburn Abbey and Safari Park, Luton Town Football Club and Whipsnade Zoo. Two major developments are currently proceeding through planning processes: Centre Parcs is planning a new holiday village near Ampthill in Mid Bedfordshire; NIRAH, a proposed tourist/research centre that would be the largest freshwater aquarium in the world, is proposed for former clay pits south of Bedford.

The newly formed University of Bedfordshire has a major campus in Bedford in addition to its Luton base.

Demographic description of force area

There is a wide diversity of communities, particularly in Luton and Bedford, with Luton having a proportionally high number of black and minority ethnic (BME) residents. Projected developments under the Milton Keynes and South Midlands sub-regional strategy and the East of England plan identify Bedfordshire as an area for significant growth by 2021 (a 23% rise in the housing stock is projected). Future developments include major expansion of Luton International Airport and new tourist facilities (Centre Parcs and NIRAH).

In 2006, Bedfordshire County had an estimated 162,800 households (from population estimates and forecasts 2006, produced by Bedfordshire County Council and Luton Borough Council). Major housing developments planned for Bedfordshire under the Milton Keynes and South Midlands sub-regional strategy and the East of England plan are now starting. Between 2006 and 2021, some 41,600 new households are planned to be built (around a 25% increase on the current housing stock). Approximately 50% of this housing is due to be built in South Bedfordshire, adding considerably to the housing density, which is already greater than across the rest of the county. Accompanying these housing developments the population of Bedfordshire County is anticipated to rise by 15% over the same period.

Luton and Bedford have a significant night-time economy, with a large number of bars and clubs. Dunstable has a smaller night-time economy. Luton and Bedford are also large commercial centres, with a significant number of daytime commercial and retail visitors.

Structural Description of Force including Staff Changes at Chief Officer Level

Force headquarters is based in Kempston, with many of its support functions including the Call Handling Centre and Training and Development (TAD) department also located at HQ

The last major restructure within Bedfordshire took place in April 2006 when the number of BCUs (Basic Command Units, also known as divisions) was reduced from three to two.

In April 2007 a number of changes took place at HQ with the introduction of three new directorates: Protective Services, led by the deputy chief constable (DCC); Territorial

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Policing, led by the assistant chief constable (ACC (TP) and Corporate Services, led by the director of corporate services.

Following the retirement of the ACC in early 2007 a successor was appointed in May 2007. The chief constable, deputy chief constable and director of corporate services are well established in the force.

An additional ACC post was approved by the PA in 2008 and an appointment has recently been made. This will result in some adjustments to portfolios with the new ACC taking on Protective Services and the DCC concentrating on further opportunities for collaboration and performance management.

Bedfordshire County BCU is coterminous with the area covered by Bedfordshire County Council (the first-tier local authority) and Luton BCU is coterminous with Luton Unitary Authority. The proposed unitary status of Bedford Borough Council from 2009 and the uncertainty over the position with Mid and South Bedfordshire will be an influencing factor for the future.

There have been no major changes to the Police Authority (PA) and there remains a positive and professional relationship between the force and members.

In terms of resources, Bedfordshire net revenue expenditure on services for 2007/08 is estimated to be £89.8 million.

Bedfordshire has 1233 police officers, 812 police staff and 119 police community support officers. The force also has 131 special constables to support regular officers.

Strategic priorities

The police authority (PA) and force's vision is:

“Bedfordshire will be a place where the police engage with citizens and key partners to provide high levels of reassurance and public safety.”

Everyone who works for Bedfordshire Police has a part to play through a shared mission:

“Delivering a quality policing service in a customer-focused way.”

Bedfordshire Police's three-year local strategic plan shows the six principles in which it will develop new skills and new ways of working into the longer term:

- ***Maintaining a citizen focus in all that we do***
- ***Reducing crime***
- ***Investigating crime***
- ***Promoting public safety***
- ***Providing assistance***
- ***Managing our resources.***

The force's actions and activities for 2007/08 focus on two key strategic priorities:

- **Reassurance** – increasing community confidence, safety and satisfaction by improving visibility, neighbourhood policing, and care for victims and witnesses.

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- **Crime management** – helping to drive down crime by improving investigation and end-to-end crime management processes.

Improved delivery of policing services will be managed through a series of actions under priorities of reassurance and crime management, and in the supporting themes of resource usage and strategic management.

Force Performance Overview

Force performance against targets set by the PA has been variable. For the strategic objective of reassurance, the force did not meet its targets for improving the satisfaction of the overall service provided to victims of domestic burglary, violent crime, vehicle crime and road traffic collisions. A gap also exists in satisfaction for the whole experience between white and minority ethnic service users of 9%.

However, Bedfordshire has seen an improving trend in terms of public confidence in the local police and public perceptions of the police for reliability, fairness, understanding community issues, dealing with minor crime and addressing community priorities. All of these measures are either above or in line with other forces in Bedfordshire's most similar force (MSF) group.

The parity of arrest rates for Stop and Search between white and minority ethnic people has been within 2% for the past 4 years. During 2007/08, this was 1.3% and is monitored closely.

The force exceeded its target for number of people killed or seriously injured in road traffic collisions.

Overall crime was down 10% on the previous year including a 15% reduction in violent crime. Domestic burglary saw an increase in 2007/08 compared to 2006/07 with this being set as a key priority for reduction in 2008/09.

During 2007/08, Bedfordshire focused efforts on improving investigative performance and increased the overall sanction detection rate from 19% at the start of the year to reach 25% in the final quarter of the year. The sanction detection rate outcome for 2007/08 was 22% which improved on the 2006/07 outcome of 20%. There is still more work to do in this area as the force ranked bottom when compared to its MSF.

During 2007/08, Bedfordshire achieved its target for asset recovery as a result of improved case tracking and more co-ordinated use of resources at practitioner and management level. Bedfordshire improved its national rank position from 32nd in 2006/07 to 16th in 2007/08.

For call handling, Bedfordshire achieved 94% of 999 calls answered within the target time of 10 seconds and 95% of non emergency calls answered within the target time of 30 seconds – both exceeding the target of 90%.

Progress in the delivery of Neighbourhood Policing (NP) across Bedford is much improved. Neighbourhood Policing Teams (NPTs) cover 88 neighbourhoods. Each NPT has either a PC or PCSO as a single point of contact with details fully accessible via the force website, central telephony system or through a variety of posters and newsletters. The recent inspection of NP (graded as Poor in the 2007 inspection) found there to be more effective engagement with communities, fewer abstractions of officers and PCSOs from neighbourhood teams and improved marketing and publicity around NP.

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Bedford has appointed 119 PCSOs to form part of NPTs and has achieved a proportionate share of the 16,000 PCSOs required to be in place nationally by the end of April 2007. In relation to the previous HMIC baseline assessment for 2005/6 areas for improvement have been monitored using a tracker system featuring within chief officer led performance meetings.

The force has been working on improving its service around domestic violence (graded Poor in 2007) and a revisit is planned by HMIC late July 2008 to assess progress.

With the active support of both police authorities, Bedfordshire Police and Hertfordshire Constabulary collaborated to establish a new joint major crime capability. The Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Major Crime Unit (BHMCU) commenced November 2007 and brought together 150 officers and police staff from across the two forces into a single and dedicated team serving both areas.

The unit has been very successful for both forces and has achieved Bedfordshire's primary objectives of increasing resilience and capacity in this area of protective services and, at the same time, negating abstractions from territorial policing and local CID efforts to tackle volume crime.

Strong leadership from chief officers from both forces has been instrumental in this groundbreaking initiative advancing to the state where teams are now regularly deployed in tackling major crime.

The creation of the Unit follows on from other similar collaborations with neighbouring forces such as the Chiltern Air Support consortium with Hertfordshire Constabulary and Thames Valley Police, and the Chiltern Transport Consortium with Thames Valley Police and, more recently, Hertfordshire Constabulary.

Bedfordshire Police and Hertfordshire Constabulary have committed to a further programme of work to examine and exploit other opportunities for collaboration.

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Major Crime

GRADE	Meets the standard
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Contextual factors

This element of the inspection report details Bedfordshire Police's capacity and capability to identify and assess the risks from major crime, as well as its response in preventing and investigating these crime types, prioritising those which pose the greatest threat to individuals or communities.

Of the offences in the major crime category, the force is under threat from a higher level of life-threatening and gun crime per 1,000 population in comparison with its MSF, noting a particular peak in 2005. The force is also under a potential threat from kidnapping offences per 10,000 population, as levels are above the MSF average.

	2006	2007	Change	MSF** group mean
Life-threatening and gun crime per 1,000 population	0.472	0.489	+3.60%	0.376
Number of abductions per 10,000 population	0.000	0.000	0.00%	0.002
% of abduction crimes detected/convicted	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable
Number of attempted murders per 10,000 population	0.137	0.086	-37.23%	0.083
% of attempted murder crimes detected/convicted	75.00%	140.00%	+65pp*	100.48%
Number of blackmail offences per 10,000 population	0.463	0.292	-36.93%	0.201
% of blackmail offences detected/convicted	7.41%	41.18%	+33.77pp*	28.05%
Number of kidnappings per 10,000 population	0.532	0.463	-12.97%	0.382
% of kidnapping crimes detected/convicted	22.58%	33.33%	+10.75pp*	40.81%
Number of manslaughter per 10,000 population	0.017	-0.017	-200.00%	0.008
% of manslaughter crimes detected/convicted	100.00%	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable
Number of murders per 10,000 population	0.172	0.172	0.00%	0.117
% of murders detected/convicted	90.00%	160.00%	+70pp*	104.97%

Number of rapes per 10,000 population	2.678	2.025	-24.38%	2.661
% of rapes detected/convicted	15.38%	21.19%	5.81pp*	21.63%

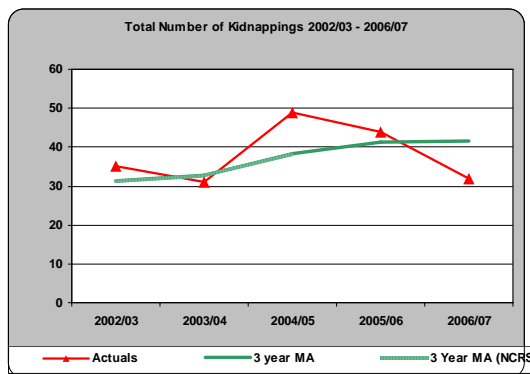
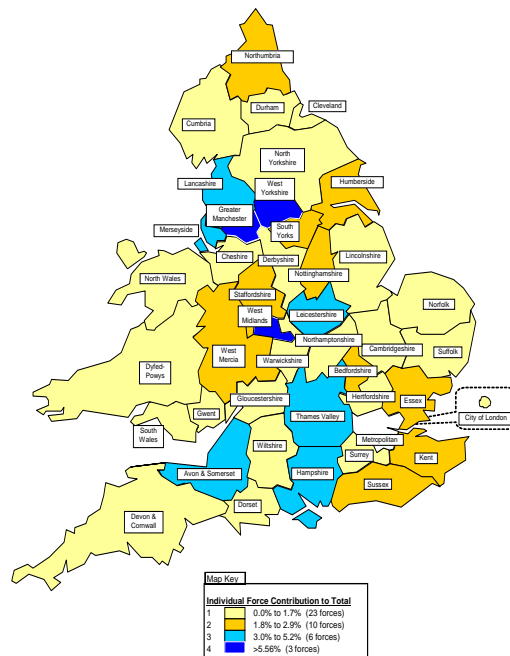
pp is percentage points.
 *MSFs for Bedfordshire are: Avon and Somerset; Hampshire; Kent; Leicestershire and Northamptonshire.

Major crime investigation in Bedfordshire is comparable with peers with detection and conviction rates being consistent with those of the MSF group average (although it should be noted that there are areas where Bedfordshire exceeded the MSF average ie percentage of murders detected).

The National Protective Services Analysis Tool (NPSAT), released on 25 September 2007, revealed that Bedfordshire faces a medium level of demand in respect of the policing response to kidnapping offences. The number of offences has fallen but remains above the average for MSF peer forces.

While the three-year trend is downward following a 2004/5 peak, the force remains above the MSF average.

Kidnap (2001/02 to 2006/07), Contribution to Total, Excl. MPS



Bedfordshire is bordered by one other force which also indicates raised demand for police response to this type of crime.

While OCG mapping is in its infancy as a technique nationally, Bedfordshire has sought to make progress by ensuring that analysis of major crime types are initially mapped. It is currently estimated that 31 OCGs impact the force area, across 3 major crime types.

The force strategic assessment (FSA) demonstrates an understanding of the historical, current, predicted and emerging trends in major crime and the interventions required to tackle these.

The force has identified robbery as a major crime priority within the force control strategy (FCS).

The force does not have a single document detailing strategic intelligence requirements; thus focus and follow-through are missing.

The force has invested suitable resources in interventions to maximise the return of harm reduction, to minimise risks to the public and inhibit major crime.

This inspection assessment reveals that the force demonstrates a developing process in its approach to managing major crime. In making this judgement, significant collaborative agreements with Hertfordshire Police in the form of the joint staffed and co-located Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire major crime unit (BHM CU) have been recognised.

Intelligence

Summary – The force has sufficient dedicated analytical resources to meet the identified demands from major crime to supply dynamic intelligence products that drive the energies of the force. The force has conditionally committed to its major crime investigations with the requisite staff, accommodation, equipment and funding.

Strengths

- The BHMCU has an establishment of four analysts dedicated to major crime work. Each analyst sits within a small intelligence unit aligned to each of the four investigative teams.
- Prior to the formation of the combined unit Bedfordshire had one analyst within its major investigation team and the same applied for Hertfordshire. An immediate benefit of the combined unit has been the introduction of resilience to this critical function (see work in progress below).
- Bedfordshire Force Intelligence (FIB) analysts produce and provide analysis for the FSA, multi-agency public protection arrangements (MAPPA) and the violent crime strategy, with BHMCU analysts providing direct support for major crime.
- Open source intelligence scanning assists in shaping and developing analytical products. Bedfordshire has 15 officers who have received open source training provided by an external supplier.

Work in progress

- The process of recruiting two additional analysts for the BHMCU is well under way; the first position is expected to be filled in March 2008 with the second by May. However, the combined effectiveness of analysts within the unit will be dependent on the experience of the new persons recruited. Although the analyst establishment is currently under strength, the analytical demand within the BHMCU is also below predicted levels.
- A central intelligence bureau (CIB) has recently been introduced in Bedfordshire to centrally manage intelligence reports. Current operating hours are Sunday to Wednesday 7am–midnight and Thursday to Saturday 7am–2am.

Area(s) for improvement

- There is a need to ensure analysts are introduced into all major enquiries at an early enough stage.
- Not all investigators within the BHMCU are entirely clear on what products analysts can provide.
- Although analysts within the BHMCU are provided with advice and guidance from the Hertfordshire principal analyst, Bedfordshire does not have a dedicated post for a principal.

Summary – The force seeks (and shares) intelligence about level 2 and level 3 major crime types through partnerships. This work is assessed to be effective. The force assessments of community impact to evaluate risk following major crime are extensive.

Strengths

- The BHMCU uses the specialist assets of both Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire, with requests for access to these services being directed to the lead of the relevant department for the crime. The structure of the intelligence team is a standard set-up within major incident teams (see Ares for improvement below).
- Information-sharing protocols are in place with key partners including probation, prison, drug action teams (DATs) local safeguarding children's boards (LCSBs), the Borders and Immigration Agency (BIA), Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HRMC) and the Serious Organised Crime Agency (SOCA). One example of effective information-sharing was the identification by the probation service of a key witness, subsequently registered as a covert human intelligence source (CHIS), in connection with a murder. Information obtained led to the arrest of the offender; other information on level 2 has also been obtained from the same source (see work in progress below)
- Bedfordshire make full use of community impact assessments (CIAs) and implement well-developed and nationally-recognised processes within each of the two divisional community cohesion teams (DCCTs), based in Luton and at County division.
- Examples were provided of comprehensive CIAs with good evidence of consultation and assessments to assist in the evaluation of risk following the commission of major crime.
- The drivers of homicide are understood through the production of problem, target, victim and geographic profiles. Bedfordshire experiences between 8–10 homicides a year, with no one clear causation. A homicide reduction working group was set up in July 2007, chaired by the DCC, with the remit to consider the demand profile. The force homicide reduction strategy is focused on domestic abuse, knife-carrying culture, alcohol-related incidents and organised criminal gangs.

Work in progress

- Of the 80 protocols in place between the force and local and national agencies ,30 relate to informal sharing agreements (ISAs). As part of the force Management of Police Information (MoPI) project the ISAs are to be reviewed over a period of 10 months, aiming for completion by January 2009.

Area(s) for improvement

- Each force has its own memoranda of understanding (MOUs) in place with partners such as health. This needs to be reviewed to ensure that harmonisation of processes leads to effective intelligence sharing.
- The BHMCU requires common processes and templates for CIAs.

Summary – The FSA has analysed the trends in relation to major crime sufficiently. Consequently, the FCS is found to be adequate. Problem profiles are satisfactory, with links to force and BCU level plans. There is sufficient evidence that the force understands the threat posed by other life-threatening issues.

Strengths

- Major crime features within the Bedfordshire FSA under offences against the person; homicide is identified and the force position summarised. References are made to domestic abuse and woundings within BCU strategic assessments (SAs) and intelligence requirements (see Areas for improvement below).
- The force fully understands the threat posed by other life-threatening risks such as paedophile offenders and dangerous offenders. An example is Operation Wey, where the force has demonstrated well co-ordinated activity under a designated senior investigating officer (SIO) to apprehend a potentially dangerous sex offender.
- National intelligence model (NIM) profiles reliably assess organised criminality.
- Information is sought from MAPPA arrangements with partner agencies, eg probation, and examples exist of intelligence activity and enforcement around gun crime, eg Operation Caprice.
- A review was carried out by the National Police Improvement Agency (NPIA) in March 2007, with the force judged to be NIM compliant. All recommendations from the review have been implemented. The force has since co-ordinated NIM processes, eg the production of the force strategic assessment and reviews with the force business planning cycle.

Work in progress

- Neighbourhood profiles have been written for every neighbourhood, primarily using MOSAIC data. The force recognises that these profiles are rudimentary and that processes are required to ensure the full integration of information from neighbourhood profiles into NIM products such as the FSA. This work is being led by the director of intelligence in conjunction with the neighbourhood policing project team.

Area(s) for improvement

- Homicide intelligence requirements within the FSA are limited to two activities: more reliable recording of victims' and offenders' country of origin and research to identify why persons use excessive force. These are basic and are not appropriate as intelligence requirements.
- Although some reference is made in the FCS to intelligence requirements, the overall force strategic intelligence requirement (FSIR) is not contained within a single document with actions and identified owners; therefore the follow-through and ownership on activity to fill gaps cannot be readily identified. Requirements are listed at the end of analysis summaries of every crime type in the FSA.
- Although the weekly community impact assessment (CIA) update system is considered to be a strength for the force and a single point of contact exists within the FIB to receive the assessments, vulnerable communities and locations are not profiled within the FSA.

Recommendation 1

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends action is taken to ensure the strategic intelligence requirement has clearly identified owners and that follow up activity is regularly monitored.

Summary – Trend analysis and problem profiles are routinely shared with partners and basic command units (BCUs). There is an emerging trigger plan for 'hot briefing' whenever a significant change emerges in the major crime threat, or when the nature of the analysis demands a fast-time response. Information-sharing protocols with key partners such as SOCA and crime and disorder reduction partnerships (CDRPs) exist. The force can demonstrate that it is on track to reach full MoPI compliance by 2010.

Strengths

- Operation Wey is a good example of where potential threats and target profiles have been shared with partners to prevent a potential major crime. This covert investigation was adopted by Bedfordshire on a suspected sex offender following an investigation by the Hertfordshire major investigation team on a series of indecent exposures towards juveniles and a serious sexual assault on a young girl. Although the original investigation by Hertfordshire fell short of the evidential standard required by the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), Bedfordshire considered the continued threat of the suspect living in their county to be high enough to warrant a proactive investigation. Intelligence was shared with Hertfordshire and other agencies such as the child exploitation and online prevention centre (CEOP) and the serious crime analysis system (SCAS) were informed of activity and consulted. Specialist advice was sought concerning the psychological profile of the suspect and the likelihood of further offending, including the escalation of violence used. A range of covert techniques were considered and following risk assessment (which included recognition of the increasing risk to children), an undercover officer was deployed, leading to the arrest and charging of the suspect.
- The force reported details of 37 offences to SCAS between 31 March 2007 and 1 February 2008. SCAS has been referred to during linked stranger rapes and paedophile offences.
- The national kidnap and extortion database has been used for blackmail offences during operations Bart, Leven and Fervent.
- No evidence was found of where the force had sought expertise from the skills and diversity web, although the force had sought advice from influential members of emerging communities and has strong contacts with emerging communities, eg Polish priests.
- Routine use is made of GENESIS.
- Specialist advisers are regularly consulted; examples are the Operation Vehement rape investigation, which consulted a behavioural investigative adviser. In the Operation Gramme murder investigation, forensic experts advised following the discovery of a dismembered torso and in Operation Maroon, which began as a missing person enquiry and then turned into a murder investigation, alternative options provided by NPIA Wyboston were considered by the SIO.

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Work in progress

- The force is on target to achieve MoPI compliance by the national target date of 2010 and has a nominated business lead, IT project manager and two corporate development staff dedicated to this work, which is carried out under the strategic lead of the DCC. A peer review was conducted on the project in December 2007; the review acknowledged that progress was being made according to the force project plan.

Area(s) for improvement

None.

Summary – In respect of major crime, the force profiling of vulnerable locations and communities is incomplete, with evidence that the impact of OCG activity is not fully understood. As a result, potential future risks and threats across the force area are not identified sufficiently early.

Strengths

- The force has well-established processes for the completion of CIAs. BCU-based divisional DCCTs are required to complete weekly CIAs for their territorial area, with additional CIAs being completed when appropriate, eg following events such as policing operations and critical incidents. Assessments are then forwarded to the region and national community tension team.
- Emerging risk is identified through the DCCT, with the involvement of around 25 community contacts within each division representing a cross-section of the community. Recent examples of DCCT awareness and contact with communities include response to the Polish elections, internal conflict in Kenya and the death of Benazir Bhutto.
- The force has invested additional resources within the public protection unit (PPU), including more staff for the management of sex offenders as well as domestic abuse investigators and liaison officers. MAPPA arrangements are considered to be adequate with evidence of proactive work carried out in close co-operation with probation.

Work in progress

None.

Area(s) for improvement

- Although the force is incrementally improving and developing its understanding of vulnerable communities, they do not explicitly feature within the FSA.

Summary – The force strategic risk register (FSRR) is reviewed every quarter by the director of corporate services, who chairs the risk management board (RMB). Each identified risk for major crime has a current and effective action plan; these are robustly monitored and controlled.

Strengths

- The FSRR is owned by the director of corporate services. The RMB is chaired by the director and meets quarterly to monitor existing risks and consider whether to accept new risks.
- Oversight of the RMB is provided for by the force management board (FMB), chaired by the chief constable and scrutinised by the PA audit committee, which receives quarterly reports.

For clarity of identification, registering and management, risks within the force are listed under force strategic objective headings of:

- citizen focus;
- investigating and reducing crime;
- managing resources;
- promoting public safety;
- and providing assistance.
- As part of the overall BHMCU project, external consultants were employed to identify risks to the initiative on behalf of both forces. Overall progress including the management of risks was formally reported on a monthly basis to the project board.
- This particular board has now ceased to function, having been replaced by the major crime board (MCB) now that the unit is operational. The MCB will continue to manage residual risks.
- The highest ten collective risks to the force are put through a methodology to ensure they are rated and controlled effectively.
- MoPI and collaboration on the BHMCU, as well as potential loss of skilled staff to other forces, are identified as risks in the FSRR. Controls are in place with lead chief officers appointed. The DCS (protective services) is a member of the RMB.

Work in progress

None.

Area(s) for improvement

- The force needs to develop clarity around the relationship between risks which can be managed within the governance arrangements of the BHMCU, and those that should be tracked on one or both force risk registers.
- Not all senior managers or relevant post holders have had appropriate training in the identification and management of strategic risks.

Summary – The force is fully collaborating with some other forces in its region to provide the same level of access to and interrogation of intelligence systems across the region.

Strengths

- The Bedfordshire Open Research Information System (BORIS) provides single password access to ten operational systems including OIS (command and control), CMS2 (crime recording), Memex (intelligence), custody, firearms, COMPACT (missing persons), CATs and the force general occurrence book.
- Intelligence can be easily drawn from BORIS to aid investigations and assist with the identification of trends and patterns. The force dedicated source handling unit (DSHU) and scientific support also provide valuable intelligence for the investigation of major crime.
- At the commencement of each enquiry there is a process requirement for the establishment for an intelligence record created for each nominal within the relevant force intelligence system. This is managed by the enquiries intelligence cell (see Areas for improvement below).
- A technical solution (CITRIX) has been established to enable staff from BHMCU to access a number of critical databases in either force. Staff can also access HOLMES from any point within the two forces.
- The force utilises automatic number plate recognition (ANPR). The road safety team sits within protective services command and comprises one sergeant and eight constables. The team is predominantly tasked on ANPR activity. ANPR coverage is provided by just two fixed sites, one at Luton airport and one at the M1 services at Toddington (see Areas for improvement below).
- Mobile ANPR coverage is provided in the force by the use of seven marked vehicles and two covert (unmarked) vehicles. Most are contained within the roads policing unit but both County and Luton BCUs have a dedicated vehicle.
- ANPR has been used successfully in a number of operations including the investigation of fatal road collisions and murder investigations eg Operation Stratos, which used a taxi to trace witnesses.
- National and regional ANPR searches and intelligence-led research are used as a matter of routine during major crime operations.
- Partner agencies such as other forces, SOCA, HMRC, probation and the BIA are a frequent supplier of intelligence to the force.
- The monitoring of data protection compliance falls within the remit of the professional standards department (PSD) with any known breaches dealt with accordingly.
- Work on Bichard recommendations forms part of the overall force MoPI project with progress monitored at the project board.
- There are MOUs with partners, except for the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS), covering information-sharing (see Areas for improvement below).

Work in progress

- Work is under way to provide a live link between ANPR databases and BORIS.
- The force's contribution to the interoperability of intelligence systems is being progressed through the MoPI project.

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- Hertfordshire is in negotiation with the MPS to access Memex Plus through the force IT system. This will ultimately provide access to MPS, City of London and the British Transport Police (BTP) intelligence systems. The joint BHMCU will also benefit from this arrangement.

Area(s) for improvement

- Although there is a technical process in Bedfordshire to transfer intelligence from HOLMES onto the force intelligence system, there is a lack of confidence by staff that all relevant intelligence is captured. The default position of SIOs, as a result of custom and practice, is to deny access to intelligence on HOLMES to protect operational security.
- Intelligence from other force databases other than between Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire cannot be electronically accessed; any interrogation has to be addressed through a single point of contact within each force.
- The force does not have a MOU or information-sharing protocol with the MPS, although there is evidence that information is shared both ways at an operational level.

Summary – The force has a case review policy that is generally applied, ensuring that current major crime cases are reviewed in accordance with ACPO guidance; the policy is efficient.

Strengths

- A comprehensive review policy was published in November 2007 for rape and homicide investigations carried out by the BHMCU. Essentially, the policy describes an incremental process of reviews to be carried out at 48 hours, 7 and 21 days (ahead of an ACPO commissioned review). The 48-hour review should be carried out by the BHMCU detective superintendent, or in that person's absence the team 5 'review team' detective chief inspector (DCI).
- HOLMES account reviews are required at 7 days and thereafter every 3 months.
- The team 5 DCI is responsible for ensuring that policy is complied with in respect of frequency and timeliness of reviews. Investigative reviews follow a template format. In recent history, no homicide has reached the 28-day stage.
- Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire fully utilise expertise from NPJA and have for some years held joint SIO development days. The most recent was held in 2007 and a number of speakers with specialist knowledge covered areas such as decision logs and detail around technical support. The next training day will be held in June 2008, with speakers delivering updates on honour-based violence.
- The force fully complies with data returns to the National Centre for Policing Excellence (NCPE) against NCRE in crime categories, eg rape.
- National best practice guides are circulated to SIOs and in a number of cases gap analysis has taken place to reduce and manage risk in the organisation, eg post publication of recommendations from the Soham enquiry.
- The force sends representatives to the national SIOs conference to capture good practice and understand latest investigative techniques.

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Work in progress

None.

Area(s) for improvement

- The seven-day HOLMES review for Operation Monitor (a murder that had been detected within seven days) commenced on 5/1/08 but did not report on findings until some seven weeks later. Competing demands on the HOLMES reviewer and time taken to understand Bedfordshire HOLMES room processes were cited as reasons for this unacceptable delay. The review itself was thorough in that many issues were identified that need resolving, the majority of which surround the difference in processes used by each force within the major crime field.

Summary – The force tasking and co-ordination process functions satisfactorily to deliver suitable responses to managing major crime threats. Documentation examined reveals a sound understanding of historical, current and predicted demand.

Strengths

- Detailed analytical work was carried out by both forces during the scoping phase of the BHMCI; consequently the level of threat is particularly well understood.
- The force central NIM capability sits under the control of the director of intelligence within the protective services directorate. The director of intelligence chairs the fortnightly operational review meeting (ORM), which considers OCGs and the tasking of specialist assets against them. The results of taskings and deployment of specialist resources are fed into the force tactical, tasking and co-ordination group (TTCG) which is held monthly and chaired by the ACC (TP) (see Areas for improvement below).
- The resourcing of major crime routinely sits outside the TTCG process for reasons of expediency and immediate deployment, with TTCG meetings being notified after the event.

Work in progress

None.

Area(s) for improvement

- The force-level TTCG is chaired by the ACC (territorial policing) (ACC (TP)) not the DCC (who has responsibility for protective services). This arrangement was, however, described by the force as working without any problems. The meeting cycle of the force TTCG is monthly, not fortnightly, with urgent taskings take place outside force TTCG. The force TTCG meeting held every four weeks does not allow for regular formal monitoring of force activity at level 2.
- The ORM regularly considers operational issues that present the greatest risks to the force and county eg OCGs, and deploys specialist assets, yet it is chaired by the director of intelligence, not the ACC (TP).
- Although force-level meetings record the outcome of specialist policing activity, results analysis and recording for non-OCG work needs developing, eg more detail is required as to assets deployed and results obtained as a consequence.

Summary – Due to inadequate training, the force’s awareness of diverse community needs during major crime investigations is limited.

Strengths

- All officers and staff within Bedfordshire have completed computer-based diversity training; this includes officers posted to the BHMCU.
- AA1/AA2 assessor training is being delivered across the force. Chief officers and divisional commanders and the temporary head of protective services have already been accredited. All SIOs are completing AA1/AA2 in conjunction with level 3 professionalising the investigative process (PIP) training.

Work in progress

- Work is under way between coroner’s officers, communities and the force to increase understanding of issues surrounding the handling of bodies from different faiths.
- A two-hour training session is planned to be delivered to BHMCU officers and staff in May 2008 to raise their awareness in dealing with witnesses who are hard of hearing.

Area(s) for improvement

- Staff were unable to identify particular examples of how their own diversity learning had been applied during the course of major crime investigations.
- Staff other than SIOs within the BHMCU have not received any diversity training specifically tailored to major crime investigations.

Recommendation 2

Her Majesty’s Inspector recommends the force introduces bespoke diversity training for officers and staff working within the BHMCU.

Prevention

Summary – The force has an independent advisory group (IAG) but this is rarely used by SIOs to maximise the contribution of partners in the management of major crime investigations.

Strengths

- Bedfordshire was the first force outside the MPS to form an IAG in 2001. The force has one IAG which meets six times a year. Membership includes representatives from the Muslim community, travellers and Afro-Caribbean, Serbian, Irish, Bangladeshi, disabled and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) groups.
- Two IAG members attend the force equality and diversity board, chaired by the chief constable, while others contribute to force-led groups such as training, the PSD and stop and search.

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Work in progress

- None of the IAG members have received any recent presentations on challenges faced by the force or on processes around the investigation of major crime or serious and organised crime. Plans are in place to brief the respective IAGs on the work of the BHMCU; this will raise the level of awareness and understanding of members.
- The force recognises the need to ensure that the IAG reflects emerging as well as established communities and that its structure is suitable for the geographical spread within the county. A review of the force IAG is currently under way.

Area(s) for improvement

- Both forces can demonstrate the involvement of IAGs and other community contacts in developing CIAs; however there is little evidence of SIOs actively consulting IAGs in the management of investigations. There is no formal process for recording tabled questions to IAGs or their response except for save CIAs.
- The IAG has not been provided with its own budget and is dependent on support, including administrative support, provided by the force.

Summary – Effective contingency plans are in place to minimise the impact of any escalation of a major crime incident. The inspection teams found that ‘golden hour’ principles were sufficiently understood by call management staff and first responders.

Strengths

- Written procedures provide clear guidance on when specialist resources are to be contacted for advice and deployment in the event of major crime.
- Terms of reference have been agreed as part of the BHMCU for the deployment of teams.
- Comprehensive criteria, bespoke for Bedfordshire, for the contacting of SIOs and the setting up of major incident rooms have been set.
- The force relies on calling out specialist staff such as gold/silver commanders, SIOs, scientific support, negotiators and advisers from the child abuse investigation unit outside core daytime hours.
- The force control room provides 24-hour silver cover for firearms incidents and each BCU has a duty inspector 24 hours a day.
- Call-handling staff have immediate access to drop down menus and aide memoires have been provided to patrol officers regarding scene preservation.

Work in progress

None.

Area(s) for improvement

- The force has only one detective constable (DC) on duty overnight. This is not adequate given the size of force and threats faced.
- Although uniformed officers and police community support officers (PCSOs) have been issued with guidance booklets, formal training on scene preservation is limited.

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Summary – The threats from precursors to major crime offending are analysed adequately.

Strengths

- There is a good understanding of dangerous and sex offenders resident in communities, town centre violence, gun crime and risks posed by drugs markets. These are listed in the FSA and force tactical assessment.
- Some highly effective preventative work has been undertaken at Milton Park hospital regarding patients with a broad range of mental health issues. This has been achieved by staff from the PPU developing close links with management and the carrying out of risk assessments as well as dealing with aspects of disclosure and human rights.
- The force has recently participated in a multi-agency study, led by the London School of Economics, on near miss attacks.
- Prevention strategies are catered for in the multi-agency Protection of Vulnerable Adults (POVA) strategy; the majority of referrals have related to care homes for the elderly.
- In 2007 the force were graded as Poor for its response to domestic violence. Since the inspection progress has been made in minimising risk through more effective recording and investigation of domestic violence. The force uses the separation/pregnancy/escalation/cultural/sexual assault/stalking (SPECSS) risk model to assess risk.

Work in progress

None.

Area(s) for improvement

None.

Summary – The policy covering threats to life is fully accessible to staff and reasonably understood and implemented. Examples of regional operations exist.

Strengths

- The force threat to life policy was reviewed in November 2007 and updated to take into account issues around Van Colle and the protection of witnesses. The policy is readily accessible via the force intranet.
- The policy is detailed and provides clarity around identification, risk assessment, investigation and ownership of threat to life warnings. Also included is reference to chief officer oversight of cases identified as high risk.
- A number of examples were provided to the inspection team of the considered and effective use of Osman warnings. One such incident was the co-ordination by Bedfordshire of the issuing of a warning to an inmate at Bedford prison, based on intelligence obtained from Avon and Somerset Police with suspects residing in Hertfordshire. This required proactive action on the part of Bedfordshire to successfully minimise the threat.
- The witness protection unit are consulted when a threat to life scenario is identified.

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- During 2007/8 the force issued 81 Osman warnings; of these around 78 were medium or low risk. All warnings are recorded on the force intelligence system Memex along with the rationale.
- There is evidence of activity by the force against gun crime, notably Operation Caprice and the seizing of firearms and ammunition that undoubtedly would have been used in the commission of offences.

Work in progress

None.

Area(s) for improvement

- The force provides input on Osman to the majority of courses within the crime arena, ie the initial crime investigator's development programme (ICIDP) and human rights.
- Training for non-detective BCU command team members has been minimal (although these officers had an adequate awareness of policy). Training for CIB intelligence staff also needs to be improved.

Summary – The force has a witness protection capability that is supported by on-demand covert resources. The force operates a policy that is promulgated to and understood by dedicated staff only. The force is collaborating with other forces and partners in this area.

Strengths

- The force witness protection unit comprises two DCs and serves category 1 and 2 witnesses, with each BCU having a dedicated witness care officer to manage category 3. Immediate line management is provided by a DI who also has other responsibilities (see Areas for improvement below). The identities of officers involved in witness protection are protected and include legend building.
- Potential witness protection cases are risk assessed using the MPS model. The DCC decides on category 1 witnesses and head of crime on category 2.
- The force has two current cases and ten dormant cases. Bedfordshire has ten placements from other forces but this does not impact on the witness protection team as these placements are managed by the originating force.

Work in progress

- Collaborative opportunities are being explored with Hertfordshire and Essex and a draft agreement has been produced. Financial implications have yet to be determined.

Area(s) for improvement

- The size of the witness protection team is small and force has to call on others in the region for support; so far all requests have been met although there are no formal MOUs.
- Among uniformed officers there was a lack of general awareness of policy and procedure regarding the identification and risk assessment of vulnerable witnesses potentially suitable for the scheme. Equally, call-handling and despatch staff were

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not familiar with the policy or procedures, although force control room inspectors interviewed had some knowledge.

- Witness protection cases are managed using only a paper based system.

Summary – The force has an adequate system to monitor the impact of preventative and enforcement activity. There is evidence that the broad range of community policing assets are partially used to help understand levels of harm in the community.

Strengths

- Results analysis is used to monitor the impact of policing activity.
- The force uses a range of harm indicators from the overall crime target to the measurement of life-threatening and gun crime (see Areas for improvement below).
- Graded Poor for neighbourhood policing in 2007, the force has developed processes around the profiling of neighbourhoods and engaging with communities. More work needs to be done around obtaining intelligence from communities against all crime types (see work in progress below).

Work in progress

- From 1 May 2008 Luton will have a community intelligence desk based within the divisional intelligence unit with two dedicated officers, one police officer and one police staff member to process and action community intelligence and assess the incidence of signal crimes. If successful, this will also be replicated by the County BCU.

Area(s) for improvement

- Although high-level harm indicators are included within the 2008/9 FSA, eg murder, rape, kidnap, blackmail, serious woundings, gun crime and the number of registered sex offenders in the county, the force needs to increase the level of sophistication around the use of harm indicators and supporting processes. It is waiting for ACPO guidance to be published to assist with development of this work.

Summary – The inspection found evidence that the force always considers relevant professional standards issues in the operational planning for major crime work. There is a comprehensive security policy in use to ensure that staff are appropriately vetted commensurate with exposure.

Strengths

- The force has comprehensive security policies and protocols in place; all are accessible via the force intranet.
- The HQ vetting unit ensures the security and protection of force operational, financial and intelligence, and performs a co-ordinating role between divisions and departments requesting checks and the CIB, the team that carries out the checks.
- The HQ unit deal with 200 case files per month, many of which have up to 4 or 5 persons on each file requiring checks. The unit is fully up to date with checks.

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- A total of 16 police officers and staff are cleared at developed vetting level; this includes chief officers.
- Around 165 officers and staff are security cleared and management vetted, 100 are management vetted and all 1,874 staff within the force have been subjected to CTC checks. DIs on the serious and organised crime unit (SOCU) have all been management vetted and security cleared (see Areas for improvement below).
- The force has also introduced an intelligence-led drugs testing policy for staff.
- Links between the management of major crime and the PSD are predominantly informal, although as with serious and organised crime, the PSD will be consulted, briefed or tasked should there be a requirement.

Work in progress

- The force last conducted IT penetration testing in March 2006. The latest phase of IT engineering is taking place and will be complete by May 2008, when the next penetration test will take place.

Area(s) for improvement

- The overall security management of major crime investigations within the combined unit is totally dependant on the robustness of vetting and operational security applied by each force. Weaknesses in vetting have been identified in Hertfordshire; consequently this raises issues over the potential integrity of the combined unit.
- Both forces have limited capacity to undertake proactive anti-corruption initiatives.
- In Bedfordshire proactive anti-corruption activity is limited within the force and extends mainly to marketing and publicity as opposed to pure proactive operations; this leaves the force exposed to a level of risk as the true extent of corruption is unknown.
- The HQ team are not always notified of staff movements; therefore vetting levels can either be at the incorrect level or out of date.

Enforcement

Summary – Governance arrangements for major crime investigations are effective, but limited use is made of IAGs.

Strengths

- The DCC is the ACPO lead for major crime. Until the formation of the BHMCU, performance was monitored by the DCC through ORMs and quarterly review meetings with head of crime (see Work in progress below).
- For the BHMCU two performance meetings have been established. The first is an ORM held bi-monthly, attended by the respective ACPO leads and the head of unit. The second is a management group meeting held bi-monthly, chaired by the head of unit and attended by the chief superintendents responsible for major crime from each force. The ACPO-led meeting receives a document outlining every operation being managed by the unit and by exception, both chief officers probe progress against current investigations.

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- PA governance is provided through the performance committee and meetings of the full authority (see Work in progress below).
- Gold groups are set up when required. Examples are Operations Walkham, Brede and Teme, the force response to the attempted London bombings. Gold groups are predominantly comprised of police officers, staff and statutory partners, with IAGs being the forum for engaging communities on matters of major crime.

Work in progress

- Work has just started to identify an overall performance management framework for the unit that will be suitable for the needs of both forces. This will include a reporting mechanism to dovetail with the differing types of governance arrangements for both forces.
- PA major crime and serious and organised crime lead members are currently undergoing vetting to special constable (SC) level. This should be complete by April 2008.

Area(s) for improvement

- More effective use could be made of IAGs by inviting them to attend and contribute to more Gold group meetings.

Summary – The ACPO lead is not yet trained and competent in the management of linked and series crime. This officer is supported by staff who have undergone adequate training and testing in critical incident command, CIAs and policing in partnership.

Strengths

- Bedfordshire has two detective chief superintendents (DCSs) and Hertfordshire one chief superintendent trained in the management of linked and series crimes.
- As mentioned earlier in this report, both forces follow the principles of major incident room standard administrative procedures (MIRSAP) guidance which includes the appointment of an officer in overall charge (OIOC) in the event of a multi-force investigation.
- The force has adequate numbers of gold and silver trained senior officers who have received accredited training for critical incident command.
- As mentioned earlier in this report, the force is well versed in the compiling and completion of meaningful CIAs.

Work in progress

- Although ACPO roles and the linking of crime is understood by chief officers, neither force has an ACPO officer trained in the management of linked and series crimes. The DCC in Bedfordshire is scheduled to attend a course on the management of linked and series crime in April 2008 and the detective superintendent head of BHMCU will attend one in September 2008.
- The head of the BHMCU is also attending an accredited national course on the review of major investigations in May 2008.

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Area(s) for improvement

- A gap currently exists in the provision of adequately trained ACPO officers in the management of linked and series crime (see Work in progress above).

Summary – The force’s performance in the investigation of major crime is monitored through a basic process that reviews each operation in terms of outcomes, cost, inputs and outputs.

Strengths

- Policy dictates that a series of reviews should be conducted at 48 hours, 7, 21 and 28 days. These will include management reviews, HOLMES reviews and in the case of a category A+ investigation, external review (see Areas for improvement below).
- Evidence was found of where the force had learnt lessons from major investigations, leading to changes in processes. Examples are Yarls Wood (how to manage the receiving and reading document role more effectively when throughput is too much for one individual), and the need for earlier engagement of pathologist and geriatric care experts to assist with lines of enquiry and viability of prosecution (deaths in care home).
- A cordon officer’s guide was developed and published following a review of major crime scene management.
- All homicide investigations are costed with a financial package applied to all HOLMES-based enquiries (see Areas for improvement below).

Work in progress

- Software has recently been purchased to capture debrief points from major incidents anonymously; this will be used for the first time on 3 March 2008 during the debrief of Operation Straight.

Area(s) for improvement

- Although debriefs are encouraged at the conclusion of BHMCU enquiries, there is no guidance or structure on processes to be followed. As a result, learning on major crime is not fully captured or shared across the two forces.
- There is a shared web page aimed at informing major crime staff of learning arising from debriefs and reviews. The site contains four entries which are limited and categorised by operational name. The consequence of this is learning being searched by theme.
- The monitoring of costs for homicide and major investigations can only be described as basic. Since the inception of the BHMCU records have been kept of overtime and forensic costs.

Performance management and resilience

Summary – The inspection teams found a sufficient investigative capability in force to meet the predictable major crime investigation demands; however, collaborative agreements with SOCA and Hertfordshire exist and are deployed as appropriate. These are considered adequate to counter normal and extraordinary levels of need. Force procedures to manage succession planning for critical posts ie SIOs need developing.

Strengths

- Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire have introduced a ground-breaking piece of work in the creation of the jointly staffed and co located major crime unit. The BHMCU has already been deployed on three investigations since its inception in November 2007.
- The force has policies and procedures to respond to unexplained deaths; this includes informing the duty SIO of any unexplained death.
- Records of unexplained and sudden deaths are maintained by HM Coroner, with those involving vulnerable adults notified through the POVA protocol; this requires notification to the police and social services (see Areas for improvement below). The POVA protocol also covers deaths in care homes.
- All unexplained child deaths are dealt with via the child abuse investigation unit and numbers and activity are monitored by the Bedfordshire and Luton Child Death Overview Panel.
- Crime scene investigators and scientists/pathologists are appropriately tasked during homicide and major crime investigations.
- Control room staff receive adequate training on major crime-related topics, including critical incident recognition and management, during their seven-week initial training. The level of supervision within the control room is good. The awareness also extends to front-line staff (including supervisors).
- Contingency plans are easily accessible through the force intranet and call-handling staff have access to drop down menus covering a wide range of incidents from major incidents through to domestic abuse. Call-out systems are effective with the BHMCU providing improved resilience. One team will always be available to be called out (see Areas for improvement below).
- First response to incidents is appropriate. The force maintains a two-tier SIO rota, with each officer performing on call duties once every 5–10 weeks.
- There is an appropriate number of PIP-trained and accredited staff within the BHMCU and SIOs within the force.
- The resources dedicated to major crime investigation are sufficient for predictable demand. The introduction of a dedicated MIT in Bedfordshire in April 2007 improved the position for the force in terms of its ability to cope with demand. The MIT was absorbed into the BHMCU in November 2007 and this has improved the position further.

Work in progress

None.

Area(s) for improvement

- Records are not kept by the force of the percentage of unexplained/sudden deaths undertaken as an inquiry or investigation.
- The force does not have a formal process in place to quality assure the outcome of investigations into unexplained/sudden deaths.
- There are no formal arrangements for regional collaboration in times of exceptional demand. The BHMCU has negated this risk in the main.
- Although in practice specialists such as analysts have returned to work when called out, there is no formal requirement or arrangement for them or for other specialist officers (with the exception of the BHMCU) to be on call.
- Succession plans need to be developed for SIOs on the BHMCU and for other SIO roles within the force.

Summary – Specialist and covert investigations are resourced through a robust infrastructure that is proven to be effective. Significant elements of major crime are delivered through written and verbal collaborative agreements, which are sound. The inspection found evidence of proactive and reactive use of these assets across a wide range of offences.

Strengths

- The BHMCU is led by a DS (currently a Hertfordshire officer) and comprises four investigation teams along with one review team. Each team is headed by a DCI.
- Below this level investigation teams are led by a DI and supported by a major incident room (MIR) team, intelligence team and outside enquiry team. Numbering 30 in total, these individuals are a mix of police officers and police staff.
- The review team provides the facility for operational reviews and cold case reviews and comprises 14 staff.
- The total number of staff for the BHMCU is 145 (50 from Bedfordshire and 95 from Hertfordshire).
- On receipt of information identifying an incident requiring an MIT, both forces work to their own procedures (through the duty senior detective) which in turn leads to the call out of the on-call BHMCU SIO.
- Owing to the agreed differing levels of investment the remit of the BHCMU varies for each force. The unit will investigate:
- **Bedfordshire:** Murder and manslaughter and other serious enquiries (no more than two at a time)
- **Hertfordshire:** murder/manslaughter/other serious enquiries (no more than two at a time), stranger rape/fail to stop fatal collisions/work related death/product contamination/ kidnap and extortion.
- Crimes fitting the above criteria will result in an MIR-based investigation.
- The SOCU covert investigation team fulfils roles around serious and organised crime investigation and acts as one of the force's two surveillance teams. (SB also has a capability to deploy a surveillance team.) Where firearms support is needed, a bolt-on configuration is utilised. The force has a fully trained dynamic entry team.

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- The technical support unit (TSU) itself and TSU representatives within the SOCU have a number of specialist skills associated with technical surveillance.
- A dedicated source handling unit (DSHU) services the needs of the force and BCUs (SB maintains its own source handling capability).
- Processes for the tasking of covert human intelligence sources (CHIS) are NIM compliant and managed through the secure PIMs system.
- The force has provided evidence of the use of undercover techniques, particularly test purchase operations, all of which are co-ordinated through a dedicated co-ordinator.
- The force is highly proactive in respect of its use of Proceeds of Crime Act (POCA) and money laundering legislation and the force has achieved all its POCA targets during 2007/08.
- The ANPR infrastructure includes fixed site coverage at Luton International Airport and at Toddington Service Station. Further fixed site coverage is developing around the strategic roads network. In addition, the ANPR system in Bedfordshire can be linked into CCTV in some of the main urban centres within the county including Luton. ANPR is routinely used in support of both proactive and reactive investigations.
- The response to kidnap is configured across the SOCU, other in-force specialist assets and the BHMCU. A kidnap can be designated to the BHMCU, in which case the former will provide the SIO and investigative assets with the SOCU providing the bulk of the proactive response.
- The force response to crimes in action has been tested on a number of occasions over many years, most notably during the recent successful handling of two blackmail investigations.

Work in progress

- At BCU level small teams of staff are being trained in foot surveillance in order to reduce the demand on the SOCU for surveillance assets.

Area(s) for improvement

- A conscious decision was made by chief officers to advance the BHMCU project quickly, This has resulted in a co located facility for both forces but with limited integration of staff and harmonisation of policies and procedures. Work is under way and due for reporting by 22 April 2008 in identifying policies and processes that need rewriting and/or amending to suit the new structure.
- The structure of MIR teams varies, with Hertfordshire teams more closely following MIRSAP-defined roles but with Bedfordshire continuing with hybrid roles such as that of major incident room officer (MIRO). MIROS are multi skilled in indexing, receiving, statement taking and exhibit handling.
- Teams are still predominantly Bedfordshire or Hertfordshire and label themselves as such. In the event of exceptional demand eg a Category A+ investigation, there would be a realistic expectation that teams would combine in order to provide extra resilience to the investigation. However, there is a risk that staff who are unfamiliar with each other's working practices and policies will be brought together.

Recommendation 3

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that the work to harmonise policies and procedures within the BHMU is accelerated.

Summary – The force has a full-time and dedicated case review team that is always deployed when current and historical major crime cases are reviewed, in accordance with ACPO guidance. Case review work is in development.

Strengths

- The review team provides the facility for operational reviews and cold case reviews and comprises 14 staff.
- The BHMCU has a dedicated resource to investigate unsolved (cold) cases. The cold case review team (CCRT) is headed by a retired DI who has a team of four detectives reporting to him. These detectives are on long-term secondment, by rotation one from each investigative team, three from Hertfordshire and one from Bedfordshire.
- The CCRT terms of reference allow for the examination of homicides and stranger rapes for Hertfordshire and for homicides only for Bedfordshire.
- Fail to stop fatal collisions incidents are currently investigated by experienced and well-trained road traffic collision investigators.

Work in progress

- The CCRT is at early stages of development, with cases for Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire being scoped and assessed. Work has started with the submission of DNA on a number of cases.

Area(s) for improvement

- Both forces need to be satisfied that there is an appropriate level of experience and adequate support within the CCRT to ensure the desired level of scrutiny is provided on cold case reviews.
- The terms of reference and other documentation for the CCRT, while produced only in 2007, is now dated and fails to acknowledge the existence of the BHMCU and its relationship to the process. Review processes are clearly capable of generating individual, organisational and partner learning. Terms of reference should identify this role and its link with other force processes.
- Consideration has not yet been given as to the process to be followed to quality assure the work of the review teams. Potential collaboration opportunities exist to fulfil this aspect.

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Summary – The inspection found evidence that the force is predominantly compliant with relevant ACPO standards of the Murder Investigation Manual and MIRSAP.

Strengths

- Chief officers from each force review the initial response to critical incidents, including homicides. CIAs are also reviewed. During weekends SIOs or their representatives (both Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire) attend the Hertfordshire daily management meeting and report on current deployments, risks and incidents they have assumed responsibility for. In the case of Bedfordshire the on-call chief officer will consider the case with the SIO.
- All cases and workstreams are reviewed at bi-monthly meetings held by the two ACPO leads and the head of the BHMCU, A monthly meeting also takes place between the respective heads of the criminal investigation department (CID) for each force and the head of the BHMCU.
- Both forces have SIOs trained in the management of linked and series crime (see Areas for improvement below). SIOs are well-informed and familiar with the Murder Investigation Manual.
- Relevant doctrinal documents are referred to and used during the investigation of major crime.
- Decision logs are completed for every major crime.
- A number of decision logs examined during the inspection were found to contain decisions not to pursue lines of enquiry and separate logs were created for sensitive decisions (see Areas for improvement below).

Work in progress

- Major crime policy and supporting documents are being updated to fully reflect the introduction of the BHMCU. The reporting of necessary changes will be complete by 22 April 2008 but this is five months after the inception of the unit.

Area(s) for improvement

- There is no evidence of the flexible use of MIRSAP.
- Both forces need to ensure there is adequate formal scrutiny of SIO decision logs to ensure quality of rationales and consistency of practice.

Recommendations

Major Crime

Recommendation 1

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends action is taken to ensure the strategic intelligence requirement has clearly identified owners and that follow up activity is regularly monitored.

Recommendation 2

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends the force introduces bespoke diversity training for officers and staff working within the BHMCU.

Recommendation 3

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that the work to harmonise policies and procedures within the BHMU is accelerated.

Appendix 1: Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations

A

ABC	activity-based costing
ACC	assistant chief constable
ACPO	Association of Chief Police Officers
ANPR	automatic number plate recognition

B

BCU	basic command unit
BHMCU	Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire major crime unit
BIA	Borders and Immigration Agency
BME	black and minority ethnic
BORIS	Bedfordshire Open Research Information System

C

CCRT	cold case review team
CEOPC	child exploitation and online protection centre
CDRP	crime and disorder reduction partnership
CHIS	covert human intelligence source
CIA	community impact assessment
CIB	central intelligence bureau
CID	criminal investigation department
CPS	Crown Prosecution Service

D

DAT	drug action team
DC	detective constable
DCC	deputy chief constable
DCCT	divisional community cohesion teams
DCI	detective chief inspector
DCS	detective chief superintendent
DI	detective inspector
DIU	divisional intelligence unit
DS	detective sergeant

DSHU dedicated source handling team

E

ERIU Eastern Region intelligence unit

F

FCS force control strategy

FIB force intelligence bureau

FIO force intelligence officer

FMB force management board

FLO family liaison officer

FSA force strategic assessment

FSIR force strategic intelligence requirement

FSRR force strategic risk register

H

HMCS Her Majesty's Court Services

HMI Her Majesty's Inspector

HMIC Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary

HMRC Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs

HOLMES Home Office Large Major Enquiry System

HQ headquarters

HTCU high-tech crime unit

I

IAS informal sharing agreements

ICIDP Initial Crime Investigators Development Programme

INI IMPACT nominal index

IRUA intelligence requiring urgent action

L

LGBT lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender

LSCB local safeguarding children board

M

MAPPA multi-agency public protection arrangements

MCB major crime board

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MIR	major incident room
MIRSAP	major incident room standard administrative procedures
MIT	major investigation team
MoPI	management of police information
MOU	memorandum of understanding
MSF	most similar force(s)

N

NCPE	National Centre for Policing Excellence
NIM	National Intelligence Model
NPIA	National Policing Improvement Agency
NPSAT	National Protective Services Analysis Tool

O

OBTJ	offenders brought to justice
OCG	organised crime group
OOIC	officer in overall charge
ORM	operational review meeting
Osman	Osman v UK (1999) 1 FLR 193, where the court established that in certain circumstances the state has a positive obligation to take preventive measures to protect an individual who is at risk from the criminal activities of others

P

PA	police authority
PC	police constable
PCSO	police community support officer
PIEC	prevention, intelligence, enforcement and communication
PIP	professionalising the investigative process
POCA	Proceeds of Crime Act
POVA	protection of vulnerable adults
PPU	public protection unit
PSD	professional standards department

Q

QA	quality assurance
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R

RIU regional intelligence unit

RTTCG regional tactical tasking and co-ordination meeting

S

SA strategic assessment

SAR suspicious activity report

SB special branch

SCAS serious crime analysis system

SGC specific grading criteria

SIO senior investigating officer

SOCA Serious Organised Crime Agency

SOCU serious and organised crime unit

SPECCS separation/pregnancy/escalation/cultural/sexual assault/stalking

T

TTCG tactical tasking and co-ordination group