



HMIC Inspection Report

Gwent Police

October 2007



Gwent 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 both of the Home Office and of 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 has 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 then 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 fewer but more probing inspections. 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 will be gathered, verified and then assessed against an agreed set of national standards, in the form of specific grading criteria (SGC). 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.

Programmed frameworks

This report contains assessments of the first three key areas of policing to be inspected under HMIC's new programme of work:

1. Neighbourhood Policing;
2. performance management; and
3. protecting vulnerable people.

Neighbourhood Policing has been inspected not only because it is a key government priority but also, and more importantly, because it addresses a fundamental need for a style of policing that is rooted in and responds to local concerns. The police service must, of course, offer protection from high-level threats such as terrorism and organised criminality, but it

also has a key role in tackling the unacceptable behaviour of the minority of people who threaten the quality of life of law-abiding citizens.

Performance management is an activity largely hidden from public view, although members of the public are directly affected by poor performance on the part of their local force. This inspection has focused on the need for forces to maximise the opportunities for performance improvement. It also posed questions as to whether forces have an accurate picture of how they are doing and the capability to respond to changing priorities. This area was selected for inspection because it is a key factor in delivering good performance across the board.

Protecting vulnerable people covers four related areas – child abuse, domestic violence, public protection and missing persons – that address the critically important role of the police in protecting the public from potentially serious harm. In the 2006 baseline assessment this was the worst performing area and raised the most serious concerns for HMIC and others. As a result, this area was prioritised for scrutiny in 2007.

Risk-based frameworks

In addition to its programmed inspection work, HMIC continues to monitor performance across a range of policing activity, notably those areas listed in the table below.

HMIC risk-based frameworks
Fairness and equality in service delivery
Volume crime reduction
Volume crime investigation
Improving forensic performance
Criminal justice processes
Reducing anti-social behaviour
Contact management
Training, development and organisational learning

While these activities will not be subject to routine inspection, evidence of a significant decline in performance would prompt consideration of inspection. For 150 years, HMIC has maintained an ongoing relationship with every force. This allows it to identify and support forces when specific issues of concern arise. On a more formal basis, HMIC participates in the Home Office Police Performance Steering Group and Joint Performance Review Group, which have a role in monitoring and supporting police performance in crime reduction, crime investigation and public confidence.

HMIC conducts inspections of basic command units (BCUs), also on a risk-assessed basis, using the Going Local 3 methodology. Combining these various strands of inspection evidence allows HMIC to form a comprehensive picture of both individual force performance and the wider national picture.

The grading process

Grades awarded by HMIC are a reflection of the performance delivered by the force over the assessment period April 2006 to July 2007. One of four grades can be awarded, according to performance assessed against the SGC (for the full list of SGC, see <http://inspectors.homeoffice.gov.uk/hmic/methodologies/baseline-introduction/ba-methodology-06/?version=1>).

Excellent

This grade describes the highest level of performance in service delivery and achieving full compliance with codes of practice or national guidance. It is expected that few forces will achieve this very high standard for a given activity. To achieve Excellent, forces are expected to meet **all** of the criteria set out in the Fair SGC and the vast majority of those set out in Good. In addition, two other factors will attract consideration of an Excellent grade:

- The force should be recognised, or be able to act, as a 'beacon' to others, and be accepted within the service as a source of leading-edge practice. Evidence that other forces have successfully imported practices would demonstrate this.
- HMIC is committed to supporting innovation and we would expect Excellent forces to have introduced and evaluated new ways of delivering or improving performance.

Good

Good is defined in the Collins English Dictionary as 'of a high quality or level' and denotes performance above the minimum standard. To reach this level, forces have to meet in full the criteria set out in Fair and most of the criteria set out in Good.

Fair

Fair is the delivery of an acceptable level of service, which meets national threshold standards where these exist. To achieve a Fair grading, forces must meet all of the significant criteria set out in the Fair SGC. HMIC would expect that, across most activities, the largest number of grades will be awarded at this level.

Poor

A Poor grade represents an unacceptably low level of service. To attract this very critical grade, a force will have fallen well short of a significant number of criteria set out in the SGC for Fair. In some cases, failure to achieve a single critical criterion may alone warrant a Poor grade. Such dominant criteria will always be flagged in the SGC but may also reflect a degree of professional judgement on the level of risk being carried by the force.

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 as a strength in the body of the report. In addition, each force is given the opportunity to submit examples of its good practice. HMIC has selected three or more of these examples to publish in this 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.

Future HMIC inspection activity

Although HMIC will continue to maintain a watching brief on all performance areas, its future inspection activity (see provisional timescales below) will be determined by a risk assessment process. Protective services will be at the core of inspection programmes, tailored to capacity, capability and the likelihood of exposure to threats from organised criminality, terrorism and so on. Until its full implementation in April 2008, Neighbourhood Policing will also demand attention. Conversely, those areas (such as volume crime) where performance is captured by statutory performance indicators (SPIs), iQuanta and other objective evidence will receive scrutiny only where performance is deteriorating, as described above.

The Government has announced that, in real terms, there will be little or no growth in police authority/force budgets over the next three years. Forces will therefore have to maintain, and in some areas improve, performance without additional central support or funding. This in itself creates a risk to police delivery and HMIC has therefore included a strategic resource management assessment for all forces in its future inspection programme.

Planned Inspection areas
Serious and organised crime
Major crime
Neighbourhood Policing
Strategic resource management
Customer service and accessibility
Critical incident management
Professional standards
Public order
Civil contingencies
Information management
Strategic roads policing
Leadership

Force Overview and Context

Geographical description of force area

Gwent Police is responsible for policing the south east corner of Wales, an area with a resident population of just over 550,000. At the end of March 2007, the force consisted of 1,493 police officers and 934 police staff members.

The force covers over 600 square miles (155,600 hectares) comprising valley communities as well as a number of larger towns, including Monmouth, Caerphilly, Blackwood, Cwmbran, Pontypool, Ebbw Vale and the city of Newport. The force area also covers a significant rural area, primarily in the Monmouthshire unitary authority, where farming, tourism around the Usk and Wye Valleys, and Forestry Commission activities are the primary commercial activities.

Demographic profile of force area

Newport experiences policing problems unlike those anywhere else in the force because of both its multi-ethnic community and its vibrant social scene. The area's economy, once reliant on heavy industry and mining, has suffered considerably in recent years as these industries have declined or ceased.

Within the force area are high levels of deprivation: the county borough councils of Caerphilly, Torfaen and Blaenau Gwent fall within the West Wales and Valleys Objective 1 area (which gives access to special grants from the European Community (EC) that are available for areas where, per capita, the gross domestic product is less than 75% of the EC average). In addition, all the wards in Newport City Council and 31 of the 36 wards in Monmouthshire County Council contain areas where communities suffer economic hardship and which qualify for funding under either Objective 2 or transitional programmes to support the economic and social conversion of these areas.

Strategic priorities

The force is fully committed to the national key priorities included in the National Community Safety Plan 2006–09, and these form the backdrop for the force strategic priorities, as set out below:

- 1 Reduce overall crime by 15% by 2007–08 and more in high crime areas.** The force target for 2006/07 was to reduce crime by a further 6% after a 10.9% reduction in 2005/06.
- 2 Bring more offences to justice in line with the Government's Public Service Agreement.** As a stepping stone towards this, the force target for 2006/07 was to increase the overall sanction detection rate to 30%.
- 3 Provide every area in England and Wales with dedicated, visible, accessible and responsive Neighbourhood Policing teams; and reduce the public perception of anti-social behaviour.** Gwent has already established Neighbourhood Policing teams across the force area.
- 4 Tackle serious and organised crime, including improved intelligence and information sharing between partners.** During 2007 the force expects to see increasing investigative activity in respect of organised crime and the development of effective links with the new Serious and Organised Crime Agency at force and

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regional level. Service level agreements are being developed to ensure a two-way intelligence flow for level 1, 2 and 3 criminality.

- 5 Protect the country from both terrorism and domestic extremism.** The force community cohesion group will be further developed during 2006–07, with a continuation of seminars and awareness-raising activities within the community on the subjects of terrorism and domestic extremism.

Structural description of force, including changes in chief officer posts

The force headquarters is in the town of Cwmbran, and there are three BCUs, known locally as divisions. These are Newport, with a population of 138,826; Torfaen and Monmouthshire, with a population of 175,900; and Caerphilly and Blaenau Gwent, with a population of 239,600. Each BCU is coterminous with one or more unitary authority and community safety partnership (CSP). Two other divisions, namely uniformed operational support and citizen-focused policing, sit alongside force-wide departments, including criminal justice, information services, finance, the criminal investigation department (CID), professional standards, corporate communications and the force solicitors.

The chief officer team is based at headquarters and comprises the Chief Constable, deputy chief constable (DCC), assistant chief constable (ACC) and director of finance and administration. The current command team has been in place since May 2005. Chief officers' portfolios have been designed to place the force in the optimum position to deliver a citizen-focused Neighbourhood Policing style. The DCC has responsibility for policing activities that directly deliver this style of policing (area policing, call handling, criminal justice, community safety and strategic planning). The ACC is responsible for those areas of the organisation that enable and support this delivery (specialist operational support, information services, human resources (HR), diversity and professional standards). The chair of the police authority has established an open and constructive working relationship with the Chief Constable.

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Findings

National summary of judgements

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Neighbourhood Policing				
Neighbourhood Policing	6	14	21	2
Performance management				
Performance management	6	29	8	0
Protecting vulnerable people				
Child abuse	3	17	21	2
Domestic violence	1	13	27	2
Public protection	2	16	23	2
Missing persons	1	21	21	0

Force summary of judgements

Neighbourhood Policing	Grade
Neighbourhood Policing	Fair
Performance management	Grade
Performance management	Fair
Protecting vulnerable people	Grade
Child abuse	Poor
Domestic violence	Fair
Public protection	Fair
Missing persons	Fair

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Neighbourhood Policing

GRADE	FAIR
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National grade distribution

Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
6	14	21	2

National contextual factors

The national Neighbourhood Policing programme was launched by ACPO in April 2005 to support the Government's vision of a policing service which is both accessible and responsive to the needs of local people. It was anticipated that, by April 2007, every area across England and Wales would have a Neighbourhood Policing presence appropriate to local needs, with all Neighbourhood Policing teams in place by April 2008. For local communities this means:

- increased numbers of police community support officers (PCSOs) patrolling their streets, addressing anti-social behaviour and building relationships with local people;
- access both to information about policing in their local area and to a point of contact in their Neighbourhood Policing team; and
- having the opportunity to tell the police about the issues that are causing them concern and helping to shape the response to those issues (Home Office, May 2006).

By focusing on the key areas of resources, familiarity/accessibility, problem identification and joint problem solving, this inspection has identified the extent to which Neighbourhood Policing is being implemented. It has also examined forces' capability and commitment to sustain implementation beyond April 2008.

Contextual factors

Neighbourhood policing is one strand of the citizen-focused policing model led by the Chief Constable to deliver 'a citizen-focused force based on quality and value for money, delivering ward-based Neighbourhood Policing'.

A total of 135 wards in the Gwent Police area form the basis of identified neighbourhoods. A number of wards have been combined, based on research; consequently the force has 96 neighbourhoods, all of which are coterminous with ward boundaries.

There are 22 clusters of neighbourhoods, referred to as sections, each of which is led by an inspector, and each section has a sergeant dedicated to Neighbourhood Policing. Section inspectors have full geographical responsibility, which includes line management and tasking responsibility for the uniformed response teams within their section.

The force has its complete allocation of 119 PCSOs, 106 of whom are in post, together with an additional 10 officers funded by Torfaen CSP. By December 2007 it is hoped to have local funding for a further 10 PCSOs, making a total of 139. The force has embedded its special constables within Neighbourhood Policing teams.

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In order to implement Neighbourhood Policing within a short timescale, the chief officer team took the decision to roll out Neighbourhood Policing across the force ahead of the national timetable, learning lessons as they progressed; BCU commanders were allowed freedom within a corporate template. Now that Neighbourhood Policing is becoming embedded, and to ensure that corporate delivery incorporates lessons learnt and best practice, the ACPO lead has become more prescriptive since early spring 2007.

As part of the inspection process, a telephone survey of 100 randomly selected residents was carried out, consisting of six questions about their experience and view of how Neighbourhood Policing is being delivered. All responses were within the national average range.

Strengths

- There is a strong lead from the ACPO team to mainstream Neighbourhood Policing. The Listen Programme is part of the Chief Constable's culture change workstream to move the force from a quantitative, process-led organisation to one that is qualitative, empathetic and outward facing. The Chief Constable has personally led a large number of road shows to deliver his message to every member of the force.
- Neighbourhood teams have been fully established and staffed for some time, and the force has recently achieved 100% coverage well in advance of the April 2008 deadline. The alignment of neighbourhood clusters, led by an inspector with responsibility for all policing within the cluster, enables tasking of both response and neighbourhood functions. This has served to embed Neighbourhood Policing principles with minimal tensions between response and neighbourhood officers.
- The public-facing website has Neighbourhood Policing predominantly displayed on the title page and guides readers easily to their own neighbourhood contacts. The majority of these contact lists display photographs of the officers, neighbourhood priorities and unique telephone and email contact details.
- The CSP for the Caerphilly county borough area introduced the community and neighbourhood directed operations (CANDO) initiatives. These initiatives ensure a concentrated high-visibility partnership and community co-ordinated activity to resolve issues that adversely affect quality of life.
- The force has developed good working relationships with its five local authorities, particularly the CSPs.
- Personal development review (PDR) objectives for officers and staff employed within Neighbourhood Policing teams are appropriate to their role.
- The force training manager is a member of the Neighbourhood Policing project board, and has developed a close working relationship with the tactical project lead.
- One division has developed the problem-solving model to form an anti-social behaviour group, comprising local councillors, partners and key individuals from the local community. The group makes use of a matrix to prioritise referrals and develop tailor-made interventions and/or management plans, which are reviewed on a quarterly basis. (The force should evaluate the success of this approach and consider adoption force-wide.)
- Since April 2007, the force has been populating a neighbourhood management database to capture all neighbourhood ward profiles, contacts and overviews of all

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meetings that, at the time of inspection, were contained on paper files within ward bases. This information is now available across the force to feed National Intelligence Model (NIM) processes, and also provide control room information. Version 2 of the database, launched on 16 June 2007, enables free text searching, and data can be supplied within a timeline or geographical area. In addition, the database provides management information about:

- action plans generated in respect of ward priorities;
- action plans from contact with members of the public (not through the defined neighbourhood meeting process known as PACT (partners and communities together));
- action plans referred to partner agencies;
- action plans closed;
- quality assurance measures; and
- environmental visual audit findings.

The database has built-in supervisor alerts to ensure that any plans over one month old are flagged as requiring further attention.

- The abstraction policy directs that officers and staff dedicated to Neighbourhood Policing are available to perform Neighbourhood Policing functions for at least 85% of their duty time, increasing over time to 90%. This was new in place at the time of inspection, and no implementation data was available.
- The community engagement strategy is being rolled out incrementally across the force. It is designed to ensure a consistency of approach through PACT as a minimum model from which to build comprehensive community engagement; 67% of neighbourhoods in Gwent are now running PACT meetings. Evidence was provided of meaningful engagement with some hard-to-reach groups, particularly in Newport. The force estimates that 100% of neighbourhoods will be running PACT meetings by the end of September 2007.
- Joint problem solving is happening across the majority of neighbourhoods; some activities are quite sophisticated, others are clearly still developing. In most cases problems are identified at PACT meetings and taken back to the meeting for updates and agreement to sign off. Most PACT meetings are currently chaired by police officers or councillors, but the force aim is that all will be community led. Some PACT meetings are not attended by local authority staff or councillors. It is estimated that joint problem solving is currently taking place in 60% of all neighbourhoods.
- The force demonstrated use of a broad range of engagement techniques and provided good examples of engagement with hard-to-reach groups who had not previously engaged with police, examples being Muslim mothers and homeless groups.
- All five local authorities have signed up to the Gwent information-sharing protocol.
- Tracking data used by chief officers was shared with the inspection team.
- Special constables are fully aligned to Neighbourhood Policing.
- The implementation team is working to a project plan to deliver implementation to agreed milestones.
- The DCC chairs the citizen focus programme board, which brings together nine projects to ensure that the development of call handling, Neighbourhood Policing

and other projects is in line with the national quality of service commitment and the citizen focus agenda.

- Neighbourhood Policing is a clear central theme of the 2007/08 policing plan. Implementation is overseen by the DCC as chair of the programme board.
- Neighbourhood Policing is fully supported with intelligence products, and analysts are linking priorities that feature across neighbourhoods.
- Training of PCSOs has been adapted in response to feedback received and is now more focused on Neighbourhood Policing.
- Neighbourhoods were defined using a range of crime and deprivation statistics, and in consultation with communities and partners.

Work in progress

- Version 2 of the neighbourhood management database will ensure that community priorities and action plans feed into strategic and tactical assessments for the CSPs. The force NIM manager is involved in the development of the system.
- The force has developed a resource allocation formula that is being applied to divisions to provide commanders with an indication of the level of resources that each neighbourhood ought to have in place. Each BCU is currently in the process of reviewing its resources against the model. In July 2007 some minor adjustments were made in one of the three BCUs; the tool will be used periodically by BCU commanders.
- The Your Voice Does Count initiative was conducted on a force-wide basis in early 2007. The survey was externally managed and validated and approximately 4,500 residents responded. The results indicated that 65% of respondents thought that the police in their area did a good job and 67% thought the police were dealing with the things that concerned them. Since then, two more localised surveys have been conducted in Communities First areas and others are planned in forthcoming months. This is enabling the force to learn lessons and gauge the effectiveness of Neighbourhood Policing, and will be mirrored in all neighbourhoods across the force.
- The neighbourhood management database provides easy access to performance data, including numeric and quality of service indicators, which the force is developing for use within the performance management framework.
- The pathfinder BCU, in liaison with the local authority crime and disorder co-ordinators, is developing opportunities to share data and common indicators to evidence quality-of-life improvements against aspirations. Success will be measured through joint survey activities. This data will feed into the development of the Neighbourhood Policing performance framework.
- The CSPs of Torfaen and Monmouthshire have funded an analyst, working as a member of the partnership team, to examine and develop data sharing to provide information for strategic and tactical analysis. This includes examination of the software tools which each of the partners has in place to collect and share information. A draft strategic assessment template will be produced in September 2007 for a draft assessment, due in November 2007. The first strategic assessment

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and work plan will be in place by April 2008. This will streamline partnership intelligence and facilitate the formation of joint NIM products.

- The force has adopted the Centrex modular neighbourhood training package over the past two years to meet local needs. The course was revised to meet the needs of officers by extending the period allocated for completion of workbooks. The force anticipates that all neighbourhood-based officers and staff will be trained by the end of December 2007.
- The force training programme has included partners in some areas; it intends to build upon this approach and further develop neighbourhood partnership training.
- Abstraction figures rely on officers and PCSOs self-completing an abstraction form, and there is a degree of confusion over what does and does not constitute abstraction. There is evidence that some staff feel pressured not to complete forms, and the level of completion is low. Recently, the paper system of abstraction monitoring has been replaced by an automated computer-based system, which is being piloted in Newport and about to be rolled out across the force.
- The force is in the process of developing a community intelligence strategy to provide guidance to officers and staff in the intelligence and neighbourhood domains, to maximise the intelligence opportunities provided by Neighbourhood Policing and ensure it is correctly recorded to feed NIM processes.
- The public-facing website contains contact details and photographs of all named staff, but the force is developing this further, by employing a full-time web designer, and this year it recruited an additional member of staff to develop the Neighbourhood Policing web pages. A new server has been procured and content management software is in the process of being installed. Once installed this will provide a two-way public interface and enable the micro-sites which have been pre-prepared for each neighbourhood team to go online. In addition, the force has recruited three divisional communications officers whose role will include responsibility for managing the neighbourhood sites. They will take up their posts in September 2007.
- The Listen programme sets out six quality of service principles to be used as a basis for supervisors to dip sample work and evaluate quality of service delivery by staff. This will include contacting victims to evaluate their experience.
- There is no corporate policy on the allocation of investigative work to neighbourhood-based officers and staff. Such matters are at the discretion of the inspector, in the absence of corporate guidance, and inconsistency is thus inevitable. The force has recognised this problem, and the Beyond the Call project team will develop a comprehensive graded response and deployment strategy, providing a framework for the direct allocation of workload in accordance with role.

Areas for improvement

- The abstraction policy was new in place at the time of inspection and no figures were available. It was apparent, however, that the policy is not yet implemented fully and that any figures currently produced on the 85% target are likely to be unreliable. In particular, the policy allows for named officers and staff to be effectively unavailable to their neighbourhood without being shown as an abstraction. For example:
 - a neighbourhood officer who is tasked to process overnight response team prisoners from outside the neighbourhood will not be shown as abstracted; and

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- officers undertaking joint problem solving in neighbouring wards are not recorded as abstracted, despite being unavailable within their own neighbourhood.

The abstraction policy ought to be reviewed so that it better meets the objectives; all officers and staff should be advised on who is covered by the policy, and what does or does not constitute an abstraction.

- A deployment policy for neighbourhood officers and PCSOs would clarify, for control room staff and supervisors, the type of incident that is within the skill base of a PCSO for direct deployment. Presently, control room staff rarely allocate any call directly to neighbourhood officers or PCSOs. (The Beyond the Call project team has started examining this issue.)
- The force ought to consider the use of developmental assessment processes in order to take stock and assess the effectiveness of implementation.
- The force should review its estates policy to provide suitable community bases for each neighbourhood; one example was provided of a base located seven miles from the neighbourhood.

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Developing Practice

INSPECTION AREA: Neighbourhood Policing

TITLE: Neighbourhood Policing initiative – Trevethin Estate, Pontypool

PROBLEM:

The police station that serves Trevethin Estate, Pontypool, was subject to arson and a ram raid, among other incidents, and officers were withdrawn to the main Pontypool police station. The problems afflicting the community included graffiti, anti-social behaviour, criminal damage and a real fear of crime combined with a high volume of actual crime. In particular, burglaries and stolen vehicles being set on fire were a major concern.

SOLUTION:

Following consultation with partners, extra police officers and PCSOs were deployed as a local neighbourhood team. They operated from a refurbished police station and were tasked with engaging all communities to help improve the quality of life on the estate.

Crime prevention surveys were undertaken to improve the security and lighting, particularly around the shopping precinct area; CCTV was installed.

Problem-solving groups were formed, which included one-to-one engagements with problem youths. High-profile operations were carried out, such as confiscating the assets of a notorious criminal who lived on the estate. All local authority garages were opened and a number of stolen vehicles and other stolen property were recovered. Regular meetings with residents' associations were held, and throughout the process the community was constantly updated via all forms of media.

A dispersal zone was implemented in the shopping precinct. A youth facility was opened in the Cold Barn Farm area (near the estate) to which the youths were invited (to alleviate the problems near the shops). The Timebank Project was initiated in Cold Barn Farm, which allowed youths to earn credits by undertaking projects within the community. They were then able to exchange credits for driving lessons, mountain bikes etc.

OUTCOME(S):

- In May 2005, 140 crimes were recorded; by May 2006 the figure had fallen to 40 crimes.
- There has been far less demand on the police.
- Trust and communication between police and the public are much improved.
- Anti-social behaviour is now resolved swiftly and effectively in partnership.
- The dispersal zone is now lifted, the precinct is well lit, and the shops are renovated and profitable.

FORCE CONTACT: PS 186 Mike Pheasant, Pontypool Neighbourhood Policing Team – 01495 232452

INSPECTION AREA: Neighbourhood Policing

TITLE: Community and neighbourhood directed operations

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PROBLEM:

The CSP for the Caerphilly County Borough area introduced CANDO initiatives to address quality-of-life issues. Every year a number of areas are selected for a CANDO initiative.

Information from police and partner agencies is used to identify areas that would benefit most from a CANDO operation, and the NIM is used to ensure an evidence-based approach. A number of factors are taken into consideration, including the identification of any areas where there has been an increase in crime and disorder. The underlying rationale is that, if additional resources are provided to these areas for a concentrated period of time, there should be a positive impact on the level of incidents.

SOLUTION:

Having identified the area, members of the (police) neighbourhood team and council wardens conduct house-to-house surveys, asking residents to identify three priorities that the community want the police and partner agencies to address. In addition to the priorities, 'fear of crime' questions are asked, the results of which are then used by the CSP.

The results of the survey are analysed and a meeting is arranged so that the priorities can be discussed among the police, partners and the community. Analytical information from the divisional intelligence unit is provided so that the audience are fully apprised of the specific issues facing their community from a police perspective, as well as their own identified priorities. Three main priorities are identified from the list, and problem-solving groups are formed to provide suggestions as to how these issues could be resolved.

After the priorities have been identified and problem-solving groups engaged in providing possible solutions, a number of days are allocated during which the neighbourhood team and partner agencies work together to tackle the issues.

OUTCOME(S):

Examples of previous issues and outcomes are:

- after drug dealers were identified by members of the community, warrants against them were executed;
- cleansing issues, such as fly tipping, litter and graffiti, have been dealt with, including the removal of white goods from front gardens and other areas;
- improvements have been made to street lighting;
- maximum impact site patrolling took place; and
- trading Standards officers have conducted test purchases in licensed premises to identify those which sell alcohol to customers under the age of 18.

The approach adopted has always focused upon the issues raised by the community. At the conclusion of the operation, the CSP provides an update to the partners and the community in relation to the work completed to ensure that feedback is provided.

The introduction of PACT meetings/panels in the division in March 2007 complements the CANDO initiatives, as the process will assist in the identification of new areas for CANDO initiatives.

FORCE CONTACT: Inspector Phillip Morris – 01495 232480

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INSPECTION AREA: Neighbourhood Policing**TITLE: Crack house closure, Bettws Estate, 'A' Division****PROBLEM:**

Bettws Estate in Newport was once the largest in Europe. It is a Communities First area and is listed as one of the most deprived areas in Wales (139th of 190 areas). The community had become desensitised to disorder and such behaviour had become acceptable. Community expectation was low, with little confidence in police, and as a result few calls for service were made. Therefore there was little or no evidence of disorder on the police database.

A historical problem of drug abuse and supply existed on the estate. Concerted efforts through criminal justice processes had failed to resolve the core problem. Three houses were identified as being used in connection with the production, supply or use of class A drugs and associated with occurrences of disorder or serious nuisance (commonly known as 'crack houses').

SOLUTION:

Police and the local authority housing department undertook joint visits to the estate. Initial comments that 'everything is okay, just normal day-to-day problems' were not accepted. There was recognition and acceptance of past criticism of an inadequate police response. To find an effective and lasting solution, a problem-solving model was adopted and used in partnership, proving very effective. The solutions considered included the use of injunctions, evictions, anti-social behaviour orders and crack house closures.

OUTCOME(S):

The outcomes secured included:

- a three-month crack house closure;
- a three-month crack house closure with a three-month extension; and
- an eviction (crack house procedure not needed).

PCSOs distributed leaflets before, during and after the events to update local residents and the community in general. A media strategy was developed, including national TV coverage. The situation was monitored after the evictions and closures. High-visibility police patrols were deployed and contact was maintained with residents and evicted persons.

Drug agencies counselled those evicted and gave support to those who could no longer purchase drugs. The RSPCA looked after displaced animals; social services gave support to evicted vulnerable mothers and young children. All partner engagement was co-ordinated by the anti-social behaviour team through multi-agency problem-solving meetings.

Residents saw an immediate improvement to their environment and their lives. The first crack house closure acted as an example to other areas as to what can be achieved when people give evidence, without the problem being displaced to other localities.

In conclusion, effective local problem-solving meetings, considering the needs of the community (and the different agendas of partners) and being aware that compromise may be necessary, will all lead towards effective solutions for the public. Partners should agree aims and objectives, and deliver them as promised, to build confidence and trust and improve the quality of life.

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Performance Management

GRADE	FAIR
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National grade distribution

Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
6	29	8	0

National contextual factors

There is no single accepted model of performance management across the police service but any such model or framework must be fit for purpose. Ideally, forces should demonstrate that individuals at every level of the organisation understand their contribution to converting resources into agreed delivery, and know how they will be held to account. On a daily basis, first-line supervisors monitor, support and quality assure the performance of their teams. At the other end of the spectrum, chief officer-led performance meetings – often based loosely on the American Compstat model – are a vehicle for accountability and improvement. Robust leadership, a commitment to improvement and reliable, real-time information systems are all critical factors in effective performance management.

There is no mechanistic link between overall force performance and the grade awarded in this framework. The grade is based on the quality of the force's processes that enable it to identify and react to changes in performance.

Contextual factors

Gwent Police continues to be an improving force. The year April 2006 to March 2007 saw sanction detection rates reach 30% overall, which placed Gwent second in its most similar forces (MSF) group. In terms of crime reduction, following a reduction of 10.9% in 2005/06, crime reduced by a further 1% in 2006/07, which leaves the force on profile to achieve its three-year reduction target of 18% against the 2003/04 baseline. There is a strong emphasis from the ACPO team upon volume crime success and a focus on the customer to provide quality service, driven primarily through the Listen Programme to secure culture change throughout the organisation. Performance group meetings are held at force, divisional and sectional level to hold relevant staff to account for performance and delivery of objectives, supported by the publication of daily and weekly performance-tracking documents and a monthly strategic tasking and co-ordination group (STCG) performance pack, which includes MSF and BCU comparison performance data.

Strengths

- The Listen Programme is part of the Chief Constable's Culture Change workstream to move the force from a quantitative, process-led organisation to one that is qualitative, empathetic and outward facing. The Chief Constable has personally led a large number of road shows to deliver his message to every member of the force, supported by a wealth of information which is accessible to staff via the force intranet system.
- The force has in place systematic performance review mechanisms. The Chief Constable chairs the monthly STCG; all divisional commanders and heads of department attend the STCG. The meeting includes force-level performance review.

Chief officer monthly performance reviews are held at divisional commander and head of department level. This robust performance framework is permeated through all divisional and departmental levels throughout the force.

- The police authority holds the Chief Constable to account for performance at its monthly corporate planning and performance committee meetings, which are formally minuted. Additionally, a member of the authority has been security cleared to attend force performance review meetings held at all levels.
- Each of the three divisions has an annual policing plan which takes into account national and force objectives, and local priorities identified from consultation with the community. At the monthly meeting divisional commanders are required to provide an update to ACOP on progress towards the plan and associated police/partnership targets.
- A planning cycle has been in place for two full years; the process provides an integrated approach to ensure that all departments, partners and the police authority are joined up when planning for the forthcoming year, including the development of a cost-based approach to corporate planning. The process of interlinking this with NIM processes is an evolving one.
- The force holds commendation ceremonies at force and BCU level in recognition of good performance, including awards for members of the public and partners.
- Internal feedback on strategies and plans is encouraged and received from staff through an annual process undertaken by the police authority and the corporate services department, coupled with supervisor development seminars held on divisions.
- The Your Voice Does Count initiative was conducted on a force-wide basis in early 2007. The survey was externally managed and validated, and approximately 4,500 residents responded. The results indicated that 65% of respondents thought that the police in their area did a good job and 67% thought the police were dealing with the things that concerned them. Since then, two more localised surveys have been conducted in Communities First areas, and others are planned in the forthcoming months. The force and police authority are extending this initiative by developing a comprehensive database of members of the community who are willing to be consulted on other policing issues, either by email or post.

Work in progress

- The force is in the process of acquiring a data-convergent IT solution which will trawl force systems to amalgamate live performance information in an easily accessible format. The system will be capable of producing performance information at all levels, from individual officer to force level and all team levels in between. The system will enhance performance review meetings across the organisation and may well be 'beacon' practice once established.
- The formulation of the performance management strategy is nearing completion; this will outline clear accountability for performance and further develop the performance management culture. It will clearly set out responsibilities and accountabilities, define the force aims, and put policies and processes in place to achieve continuous improved performance.

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- Between June and September 2007, the force and police authority planned to attend local events, as well as holding road shows at supermarkets throughout the force area, to answer questions from the community on policing and to hear their views on the service provided. This is a good example of a joined-up, direct approach to consultation.
- The CSPs of Torfaen and Monmouthshire have funded an analyst, working as a member of the partnership team, to examine and develop data sharing for the purpose of providing information for strategic and tactical analysis. This includes examination of the software tools which each of the partners has in place to collect and share information. A draft strategic assessment template was to be produced in September 2007 for a draft assessment to be produced in November 2007. The first strategic assessment and work plan will be in place in April 2008. This will streamline partnership intelligence and facilitate the formation of joint NIM products.

Areas for improvement

- Currently, records of key aspects of crime investigations are paper based, and the force has no system in place to test compliance with the Victims Codes of Practice. The force has been developing Guardian 2, the new force crime recording system, for around 18 months; in October 2007, the crime management platform will go live, enabling such information to be included within performance review processes.
- The current method of resource allocation, particularly in divisions, does not fully reflect workload, risk management and priorities. The Chief Constable is leading the 2011 project, which aims to reshape the force to meet future demands. This will take account of all such factors when determining the future shape of the organisation. As an interim measure, the force is utilising a resource allocation matrix to assign resources to Neighbourhood Policing teams.
- The force does not conduct a systematic outcome analysis of objectives, which would provide a meaningful review of outcome against cost, taking into account the degree of efficiency, economy and effectiveness. It is recognised that the force plans to undertake considerably more in-depth, activity-based costing this year to inform the 2011 review.
- Formal appraisal (PDR) of each officer and member of staff takes place annually, examining performance against set objectives. While the PDR system to some degree holds individuals to account for their individual contribution to force performance, the force acknowledges problems with completion rates, which are subject to monitoring at the force STCG.
- Risk-based internal audit and review to probe quality of product, compliance with policy and associated issues has been limited. The force has reviewed its corporate services department and increased the audit and review capacity. Plans are in place to introduce a business unit review process based on the European Foundation of Quality Management principles. The review cycle will include scheduled and risk-based audit and inspection.

Protecting Vulnerable People – Overview

National contextual factors

The assessment framework for Protecting Vulnerable People was first developed in 2006 as part of HMIC's baseline assessment programme. It replaced two existing frameworks – Reducing/Investigating Hate Crime and Crimes against Vulnerable Victims – which focussed on hate crimes (predominantly racially motivated), domestic violence and child protection. Following consultation with practitioners and ACPO leads, a single framework was introduced with four components – domestic violence, the investigation and prevention of child abuse, the management of sex and dangerous offenders, and vulnerable missing persons. Although the four areas are discrete, they are also linked and share a common theme – they deal with vulnerable victims where there is a high risk that an incident can quickly become critical, and where a poor police response is both life-threatening and poses severe reputational risks for the force.

This year's inspection has been carried out using similar assessment standards as those in 2006. These highlight the importance of leadership and accountability; policy implementation; information management; staffing, workload and supervision; performance monitoring and management; training; the management of risk; and partnership working.

The work carried out by forces to protect the public, particularly those most vulnerable to risk of serious harm, is complex and challenging. No single agency, including the police, has the capacity to deliver the required response on its own. Success is therefore, dependent on effective multi-agency working and there are a number of established partnerships, involving a wide range of services and professionals, aimed at ensuring that an integrated approach is adopted to protecting those most vulnerable to risk of serious harm.

Contextual factors overview

Gwent Police initiated a comprehensive service improvement review of public protection, including child protection, domestic violence, violent and sex offenders and missing persons. The results of the review were published in August 2007 for consideration by a review board chaired by the ACC. The review covers a number of areas of concern that the force has identified, and implementation of its findings will help the force to improve its management of risk in these critical areas.

The generic issues set out below should be read in conjunction with the sections specific to the four disciplines.

Strengths

- The ACC is the force strategic lead for all aspects of protecting vulnerable people, pulling the strands together under single ownership to provide strategic leadership and oversight. All three divisions have a public protection unit (PPU) directly overseen by a detective inspector; each PPU investigates child protection matters. The units also house the public protection officers (PPOs) and domestic violence officers (DVOs).
- The force has rolled out supervisor development seminars. Devised and commenced in C Division, the seminars are specifically directed at operational sergeants and inspectors, with every supervisor required to attend on a quarterly basis. The seminars have included specific inputs on policy and procedure on public protection.

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- The force has established a National Policing Improvement Agency (NPIA) programme board, chaired by the DCC, to provide governance for the implementation of published National Centre for Policing Excellence (NCPE) doctrine on domestic violence, child protection and missing persons, and to reflect other changes taking place at national level.
- In some divisions, all disciplines are co-located and exchange information routinely as the need arises.

Work in progress

- ACPO/NCPE guidance suggests that independent and confidential counselling, by suitably qualified personnel, should be provided to officers and supervisors working in child abuse; forces should consider mandatory referral at least annually. The force policy requires mandatory annual occupational health interface with all officers employed in public protection. In practice, no individual sessions are booked for officers, officers are not always self-referring, and no action is taken as a consequence. The force is producing a stress management policy which will address this issue and strengthen current arrangements.

Areas for improvement

- The force does not undertake periodic, thematic audit and review of public protection work to test compliance with policy, or corporacy and consistency of quality of service delivery, as well as a health check on staffing levels and workloads. Such audits, undertaken by the central strategic team, would provide chief officers with a regular overview, independent of divisional commanders' advice.
- In the absence of national guidance on workload, Gwent has until now based its staffing and supervisory levels on a historical rationale. Recognising that it needs to put this situation on a more objective footing and minimise the risk – both operationally and in terms of staff welfare – of under-resourcing, Gwent is now examining staffing levels as part of the service improvement review.
- Accountability at detective sergeant (DS) level is unclear, particularly where more than one DS has line management responsibility for the same officers and their workload. This presents an element of risk, in that something could be missed on the assumption that another officer has sight of it. On one division, for example, three DSs are all responsible for public protection, domestic abuse and child protection but none of them has clear lines of specific responsibility or accountability. This issue will be addressed by the service improvement review
- There is no specific reference in the force policing plan or strategic assessment to public protection generally or child protection specifically. A comprehensive and detailed assessment of the potential risk or harm factors in the public protection arena ought to be routinely undertaken by the force to influence future plans and the development of a public protection strategy.
- The force training strategy does not specify where basic or advanced training for officers working in public protection sits within overall priorities. An assessment would clearly highlight training gaps and demonstrate the rationale for prioritisation of training.
- A combination of quantitative and qualitative performance indicators for public protection work would raise awareness and understanding of these issues at all

levels within the force. It would also provide overviews and early warning signs in terms of workloads and staff welfare, and facilitate proactive intervention to reduce operational risks. The force recognises this need, and plans are in hand to develop an appropriate suite of measures.

- Job descriptions for public protection staff do exist, although the supervisory description – last updated in September 2000 – is generic and does not accurately reflect specific supervisory responsibilities for each of the public protection elements of domestic violence, child abuse and sex offender management. A comprehensive update of every role within public protection, including supervisors and managers, needs to be undertaken as part of the ongoing service improvement review.

Protecting Vulnerable People – Child Abuse

GRADE	POOR
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National grade distribution

Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
3	17	21	2

National contextual factors

The Children Act 2004 places a duty on the police to ‘safeguard and promote the welfare of children’; safeguarding children, therefore, is a fundamental part of the duties of all police officers. All police forces, however, also have specialist units which, although they vary in structure, size and remit, normally take primary responsibility for investigating child abuse cases. Officers in these units work closely with other agencies, particularly Social Services, to ensure that co-ordinated action is taken to protect specific children who are suffering, or who are at risk of suffering, significant harm. The Children Act 2004 also requires each local authority to establish a Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB). This is the key statutory mechanism for agreeing how the relevant organisations in each local area will co-operate to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in that locality, and for ensuring the effectiveness of what they do.

Membership of LSCBs includes representatives of the relevant local authority and its Board partners, notably the police, probation, youth offending teams, strategic health authorities and primary care trusts, NHS Trusts and NHS Foundation Trusts, the Connexions service, Children and Family Courts Advisory and Support Service, Secure Training Centres and prisons.

Contextual factors

The requirement for local authorities to establish local safeguarding children boards (LSCBs) is the key statutory mechanism for agreeing how relevant organisations work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in that locality. The Welsh Assembly Government has mandated that LSCBs will be established throughout Wales by April 2007. The All-Wales Child Protection Review Group has a mandate and representation from all Welsh LSCBs and partner agencies. The group is tasked with updating the all-Wales child protection procedures. These were first produced in 2002 and updated in 2004 and 2005; although they currently reflect immediate changes required to meet recommendations from the Clywch, Bichard and Kelly reports, they are currently the subject of a complete refresh and update.

HMIC acknowledges that committed, professional officers are working hard to protect vulnerable children in Gwent. However, the weaknesses in corporacy, resilience and referral criteria to social services mean that the force is carrying a high level of risk.

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Gwent Police initiated a comprehensive service improvement review of public protection, including child protection, domestic violence, violent and sex offenders and missing persons. The results of the review were published in August 2007 for consideration by a review board chaired by the ACC. The review covers a number of areas of concern reflected in this Poor grade, and implementation would help to ensure that the force improves its management of risk in these critical areas.

The specific comments in this section should be read in conjunction with those contained in the generic section on protecting vulnerable people.

Strengths

- The ACC is the force strategic lead for all aspects of protecting vulnerable people, pulling the strands together under single ownership to provide strategic leadership and oversight. All three divisions have a PPU directly overseen by a detective inspector; each PPU investigates child protection matters. The units also house the PPOs and DVOs.
- The force has established an NCPE programme board, chaired by the DCC, to provide governance for the implementation of published NCPE doctrine on domestic violence, child protection and missing persons and to reflect other changes taking place at a national level.
- The force has recently published an updated policy and procedures document, which complies with the ACPO guidance on investigating child abuse and safeguarding children.
- The force has rolled out supervisor development seminars. Devised and commenced in C Division, the seminars are specifically directed at operational sergeants and inspectors, with every supervisor required to attend on a quarterly basis. The seminars have included specific inputs on policy and procedure within the Public Protection areas.
- The force is contributing positively and appropriately to strategy discussions and meetings and case conferences, which are recorded and retained on relevant files.
- All child abuse investigators are required to be accredited detectives to maintain the professionalism within this specialist area of policing. In time this will ensure that the unit is attractive to experienced detectives and has the status this area of investigation merits.
- Child protection training has been provided to control room staff by specialist officers, to raise awareness of their responsibilities in line with force policy requirements, supported by the issue of aide-memoire cards for easy reference.
- The 'designated officer' is the officer – of at least inspector rank – who takes an independent oversight of the circumstances under which a child is taken into police protection. This is a pivotal role in ensuring that police action is correct first time. Training is provided during supervisor development seminars to equip them for the role (although there is a training gap in respect of those already in post).
- The force command and control system (ORIS) provides an interface with the family unit database (FUD); in principle, this means that every command and control log that is closed as a child protection incident automatically transfers to a PPU. PPU's then have specific responsibilities, such as ensuring that addresses are flagged on command and control, enabling an appropriate response to future incidents. The general approach is commendable, although this method is reliant upon the accurate

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closure of every relevant log. To avert instances where cases are not referred automatically, the force should introduce a robust audit process to capture such instances and enable corrective action to be taken.

- The DCC holds monthly performance reviews with divisional commanders, which allow a focus on performance issues concerning public protection raised by the ACC (ACPO lead). An example relating to poor performance surrounding IMPACT nominal index usage was given.
- In some divisions, all disciplines are co-located and exchange information routinely as the need arises.
- A pan-Gwent away-day was held in November 2006, involving force representatives and key strategic partners, to consider the best means of managing the transition from area child protection committees to LSCBs. To maintain this momentum, a follow-up day was scheduled to take place in early 2007 to consider performance indicators. Clear working plans should be developed for each of the five LSCBs to deliver the wider safeguarding mandate, detailing membership, structure, accountability, staffing, continued funding arrangements and performance criteria.
- The LSCBs co-ordinate activity and ensure the effectiveness of the member agencies in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. In the Gwent area, five boards are established and the police are represented on each one.

Work in progress

- The force has developed a joint training package for child abuse investigators, known as joint investigation of child abuse (JICA), which is delivered instead of the Centrex modular training package. The force is currently assessing whether JICA meets the Centrex standards, but in any event, not all officers and supervisors in child abuse investigation units (CAIUs) have undergone the training.
- A combination of quantitative and qualitative performance indicators for public protection work would raise awareness and understanding of these issues at all levels within the force. It would also provide overviews and early warning signs in terms of workloads and staff welfare, and facilitate proactive intervention to reduce operational risks. The force recognises this need, and plans are in hand to develop an appropriate suite of measures.

Areas for improvement

- Accountability at DS level is unclear, particularly where more than one DS has line management responsibility for the same officers and their workload. This presents an element of risk, in that something could be missed on the assumption that another officer has sight of it. On one division, for example, three DSs are all responsible for public protection, domestic abuse and child protection but none of them has clear lines of specific responsibility or accountability. These issues will be addressed by the service improvement review.
- In the absence of national guidance on workload, Gwent has until now based its staffing and supervisory levels on a historical rationale. Recognising that it needs to put this situation on a more objective footing and minimise the risk – both operationally and in terms of staff welfare – of under-resourcing, Gwent is now examining staffing levels as part of the service improvement review.

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- ACPO/NCPE guidance suggests that independent and confidential counselling, by suitably qualified personnel, should be provided to officers and supervisors working in child abuse; forces should consider mandatory referral at least annually. The force policy requires mandatory annual occupational health interface with all officers employed in public protection. In practice, no individual sessions are booked for officers, officers are not always self-referring, and no action is taken as a consequence. The force is producing a stress management policy which will address this issue and strengthen current arrangements.
- Although the terms of reference for CAIUs are published as force policy, in reality the division-based units all operate differently. An investigation which may, in one part of the force, be investigated by a specialist together with other agencies, may elsewhere be investigated by a uniformed constable. This issue has been addressed by the service improvement review and is likely to lead to the development of a central referral unit.
- There is no specific reference in the force policing plan or strategic assessment to public protection generally or child protection specifically. A comprehensive and detailed assessment of the potential risk or harm factors arising from the public protection arena ought to be routinely undertaken by the force to influence future plans and the development of a public protection strategy.
- The referral process for police to alert social services of concerns about a child is a simple paper form which has to be faxed to social services. Once the form has been sent, a copy should be placed in a binder together with the receipt. This is potentially problematic, as there are a number of ways in which this process can – and occasionally does – fail without there being any follow up. For example, a busy officer could record on ORIS that the form has been sent but for various reasons subsequently fail to actually do so. The force needs to review this process to build in safeguard mechanisms and minimise the attendant risk.
- Divisional CAIUs do not work to a consistent standard in identifying those cases that should trigger a joint investigation with social services. The force should develop guidance, with social services, on the circumstances under which a joint investigation is appropriate, in line with the principles of Working Together to Safeguard Children.
- Job descriptions for public protection staff do exist, although the supervisory description – last updated in September 2000 – is generic and does not accurately reflect specific supervisory responsibilities for each of the public protection elements of domestic violence, child abuse and sex offender management. A comprehensive update of every role within public protection, including supervisors and managers, needs to be undertaken as part of the ongoing service improvement review.
- The force does not undertake periodic, thematic audit and review of public protection work – including child abuse – to test compliance with policy, or corporacy and consistency of quality of service delivery, as well as a health check on staffing levels and workloads. Such audits, undertaken by the central strategic team, would provide chief officers with a regular overview, independent of divisional commanders' advice.
- Although risk factors are incorporated into force policy and procedures, consistent with the ACPO guidance on investigating child abuse and safeguarding children, there is no formal process for identifying whether all or some of the risk factors have been considered, and possibly then discounted, to support decisions made. The force needs to strengthen this position by ensuring that staff are aware of all the risk

factors which should be considered, coupled with a formal process for recording exactly which factors have influenced the decision-making process on every occasion where a child is a potential victim.

- The frequent changes in policy, legislation and national good practice mean that specialist officers should have access to regular professional development seminars, preferably undertaken jointly with partners. All officers interviewed were keen to undertake joint case conference training, as they felt relatively unequipped to represent the police service in such vital meetings.
- Force expectations about representation on LSCBs are clear. The detective chief inspector (DCI) at HQ routinely attends the pan-Gwent South East Wales Child Protection Forum. The DCI, or exceptionally the DI from the divisional management team, should attend one of the five LSCBs. However, a scrutiny of LSCB minutes revealed that some meetings had no police representation. The force should ensure that its policy on LSCB attendance is properly complied with in its practice.

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Protecting Vulnerable People – Domestic Violence

GRADE	FAIR
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National grade distribution

Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
1	13	27	2

National contextual factors

There is no statutory or common law offence as such of ‘domestic violence’; the term is generally used to cover a range of abusive behaviour, not all of which is criminal. The definition of domestic violence adopted by ACPO does, however, take account of the full range of abusive behaviour as well as the different circumstances in which it can occur:

‘any incident of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional) between adults, aged 18 and over, who are or have been intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality’.

As with the investigation of child abuse, responding to and investigating domestic violence is the responsibility of all police officers. Again, however, forces have dedicated staff within this area of work, although their roles vary. In some forces staff undertake a support/liason role, generally acting as a single point of contact for victims and signposting and liaising with other agencies and support services; in others, staff have responsibility for carrying out investigations.

Irrespective of who carries out the investigation in domestic violence cases, an integral part of every stage is the identification of risk factors, followed by more detailed risk assessment and management. In 2004, HMIC, together with HMCPSI, published a joint thematic inspection report on the investigation and prosecution of domestic violence. At that time, risk identification, assessment and management were in the early stages of development throughout the service. Since then, there has been considerable progress in developing formal risk identification and assessment processes and - in a number of forces - the implementation of multi-agency risk assessment conferences (MARACs). Other improvements include the introduction of specialist domestic violence courts and the strengthening of joint working arrangements.

Contextual factors

Domestic violence (DV) remains a major problem in general for society and professionally for the police. DV accounts for around 15% of all violent crime and will involve one in four women and one in six men at some point in their lives. Tragically, two women are murdered every week because of DV, accounting for 35% of all murders. DV also has a high rate of repeat victimisation.

In 2004, ACPO provided guidance to forces in the form of the *Guidance on Investigating Domestic Violence*. This has been supported by numerous Home Office research papers guiding good practice, and ought by now to be embedded into everyday policing.

Taking into account the statistics, there is no doubt that forces that follow good practice ought to impact on repeat victimisation rates and thus save lives. This is an area where

basic processes and procedures in place, acknowledged and understood by all front-line officers and staff, will ensure that forces maximise every opportunity to prevent a victim from enduring further harm.

The specific comments in this section should be read in conjunction with those contained in the generic section on protecting vulnerable people.

Strengths

- The ACC is the force strategic lead for all aspects of protecting vulnerable people, pulling the strands together under single ownership to provide strategic leadership and oversight. All three divisions have a PPU directly overseen by a detective inspector; each PPU investigates domestic violence matters. The units also house the PPOs and DVOs.
- Sexual assault referral centres (SARCs) are a model of good practice in the provision of immediate aftercare to victims of serious sexual violence. Excellent partnership working between public agencies and the voluntary sector is crucial in the provision of such services, but there are currently just 14 SARCs across the country. Commendably, Gwent is one of a small number that have invested time and resources in partnership to set one up.
- Force policy and procedures have recently been implemented and reflect the ACPO guidance on investigating DV.
- The force has recently introduced a risk identifier process. This informs meaningful risk assessment, mirroring the standards set out in the ACPO *Guidance on Investigating Domestic Violence*.
- The multi-agency risk assessment conferences (MARAC) approach commenced in South Wales in 2003. This recognises the multiple and unique needs of victims and their children, and has been independently evaluated by Cardiff University. MARACs are convened in order to consider the needs of very high-risk victims (and in some cases high-risk victims). Two out of the three divisions in Gwent have put MARACs in place, with the aid of Home Office funding for an administrator post, although their future is in doubt because of ongoing funding problems. The third division has just received Home Office funding to set up and run a MARAC. Comprehensive force policy is now in place which complies with the ACPO guidance.
- DV training has been provided to control room staff by specialist officers to raise awareness of their responsibilities in line with force policy requirements, supported by the issue of aide-memoire cards for easy reference.

Areas for improvement

- The core aim of identifying, assessing and managing risk in the context of policing DV is to reduce the likelihood of future harm to a victim. The force has introduced a risk assessment process, which requires the first responding officer to complete a DV form (DV1). The form has to be submitted on paper and forms the basis of the risk assessment later completed by the DVO. Although in principle this is a sensible and necessary approach, some problems are evident in Gwent:
 - Uniformed officers, including first-line supervisors, see the DV1 as overly burdensome, often because they do not understand the rationale behind its use.

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The importance of prompt completion is not always recognised; consequently, the DVOs are chasing a large backlog dating back to December 2006. In just two divisions, this amounted to a backlog of approximately 450 cases; this poses a risk to the force and devalues the process. A re-launch of this process, with appropriate marketing, would provide an opportunity to raise awareness of the salient issues for front-line officers and staff.

- The fact that the system is paper based increases the time needed for DVOs to check systems for compliance and manually complete the risk assessment process. A number of forces have adopted electronic systems which automatically provide the DVO with a risk score as a basis to apply professional judgement.
- The ACPO guidance recommends that the role of DVOs should be to use their knowledge of DV offending to inform the investigation process. The overwhelming volume of DV1 forms has inadvertently changed the role of the DVO to that of an office-based risk assessment processor, and is not consistent with the ACPO guidelines. It also means that continual contact with and support of victims has been lost, and dynamic risk assessment based on evolving situations and new information has largely ceased.
- Although the DV1 form is partially entered onto FUD to acknowledge submission, a lot of information is not being inputted on any other force system, thus the opportunity for any form of analysis to be undertaken is being missed.

However, HMIC is aware that the force is about to undertake a complete review of the DV1 and MARAC process.

- ORIS provides an interface with the FUD database, which in principle means that every command and control log that is closed as a DV incident automatically transfers to the PPU. Each PPU has specific responsibilities, such as ensuring that addresses are flagged on command and control, enabling an appropriate response to future incidents. This method is reliant on the accurate closure of every relevant log, and the force needs to introduce a robust audit process to identify occasions when this does not happen, to enable corrective action to be taken.
- Secondary investigation of DV-related crime is undertaken by uniformed response officers and overseen by uniformed response supervisors. There is no additional investigation support or resilience in relation to those victims identified as being at high or very high risk.
- The process for identifying cases to child protection officers where concerns exist about children living in households where DV is taking place relies on a copy of the simple paper form – which has to be faxed to social services – being submitted with the completed DV1 form to the divisional PPU. This is problematic, as there are a number of ways in which this process can and does fail without there being any follow up. For example, a busy officer could record on ORIS that the form has been sent but for various reasons fail subsequently to do so.
- The role of the DSs (DV) is unclear; despite their level of investigative expertise, they are not involved in setting and reviewing investigation strategies or overseeing investigations in any tangible sense.
- National good practice suggests that DVOs should undertake the relevant modules of the Centrex DV training programme – specifically, Module 5, Protecting Victims

and Holding Offenders Accountable, which includes risk- related training. None of the DVOs in the force had, at the time of inspection, benefited from such training, and a training plan needs to be developed to deliver the relevant Centrex modular training programme, or its equivalent, to staff performing specialist roles.

- The force should ensure that the training needs of all front-line officers and staff are met; the Centrex DV modular programme is commended to the force for adoption as it provides clarity of purpose to all roles involved in the process. The force has provided training to a number of officers, but a comprehensive training plan is needed to deliver the relevant Centrex modular training (or its equivalent) to relevant front-line officers and staff.
- DV is not a standing agenda item at divisional tasking meetings. Specific inclusion of owned action plans around priority DV targets would serve to complement the MARAC meetings, which consider the highest-risk victims. This would additionally raise the profile of DV at divisional level and ensure concentrated NIM tasking in relation to serial and repeat offenders.

Protecting Vulnerable People – Public Protection

GRADE

FAIR

National grade distribution

Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
2	16	23	2

National contextual factors

The Criminal Justice and Courts Services Act 2000 led to the formation of the Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements, commonly known as MAPPA, requiring the police and probation services to work together as the Responsible Authority in each area of England and Wales to establish and review the arrangements for the assessment and management of sexual and violent offenders. Subsequent legislation brought the Prison Service into the Responsible Authority arrangements and also requires a range of social care agencies to co-operate with the Responsible Authority in the delivery of the assessment and management of risk in this area. These agencies include health, housing, education, social services, youth offending teams, Jobcentre Plus, and electronic monitoring services.

Under MAPPA, there are three categories of offender who are considered to pose a risk of serious harm:

Category 1 – Registered Sex Offenders (RSOs)

Category 2 – violent and other sex offenders

Category 3 – other offenders (with convictions that indicate they are capable of causing, and pose a risk of, serious harm).

To be managed under MAPPA, offenders must have received a conviction or caution. However, there are some people who have not been convicted or cautioned for any offence, and thus fall outside these categories, but whose behaviour nonetheless gives reasonable ground for believing a present likelihood of them committing an offence that will cause serious harm. These people are termed Potentially Dangerous Persons (PDPs).

Following risk assessment, risk management involves the use of strategies by various agencies to reduce the risk, at three levels:

- Level 1 offenders can be managed by one agency;
- Level 2 offenders require the active involvement of more than one agency;
- Level 3 offenders – the ‘critical few’ – are generally deemed to pose a high or very high risk and are managed by a multi-agency public protection panel (MAPPP).

In 2003, the Home Secretary issued MAPPA guidance to consolidate what has already been achieved since the introduction of the MAPPA in 2001 and to address a need for greater consistency in MAPPA practice. The guidance outlines four considerations that are key to the delivery of effective public protection.

- defensible decisions;
- rigorous risk assessment;
- the delivery of risk management plans which match the identified public protection need; and,
- the evaluation of performance to improve delivery.

Contextual factors

At the time of inspection, there were 529 people resident in Gwent communities who were being risk managed through Gwent's multi-agency public protection arrangements (MAPPA).

The specific comments in this section should be read in conjunction with those contained in the generic section on protecting vulnerable people.

Strengths

- The ACC chairs the MAPPA strategic management board (SMB). The force has recently appointed a MAPPA co-ordinator to work with partners in promoting efficient and effective working practices, in accordance with Home Office and local MAPPA guidance. Operational responsibility for public protection sits with divisional commanders, who are line managed by the DCC. A small headquarters-based team, led by a detective superintendent, is responsible for policy and strategy under the management of the ACC.
- In advance of prison Service staff gaining access to the Violent and Sex Offenders Register (ViSOR), the force has developed an informal arrangement with Her Majesty's Prison Usk whereby a comprehensive package of intelligence on all MAPPA category 1 prison releases is shared with the force. Gwent then populates the ViSOR, irrespective of the force area to which the prisoner is being released.
- The force has delivered joint police/probation training to MAPPA chairs, developing a local training package ahead of a recommended NPIA training package, to ensure a consistent level of knowledge and corporacy of approach.
- The force has published a 'working draft' policy and procedures ahead of the awaited national ACPO/NCPE guidance; this is compliant with current guidance.
- All officers and staff with access to ViSOR are vetted to security check level.
- The force has up-to-date role descriptions for officers employed in public protection work.
- Gwent Police has invested in the provision of nationally accredited training for PPOs and supervisors, provided by an outside force. The Lancashire Sex and Violent Offender Management Course is accredited by the National Crime Faculty and provides PPOs and their supervisors with a foundation in the risk management of such persons. The course now includes a one-day overview on the use of the RM2000 static risk-assessment tool. Take-up is as follows:

- four out of seven PPOs have undertaken the Lancashire course, and the remainder will be trained before the end of the year;
- two DSs in B Division and one from C Division have been trained, and one DS from A Division will be trained in September;
- the PPU DI in each division has undertaken the Lancashire course.

Work in progress

- The MAPPA SMB is overseeing the implementation of recommendations emanating from a recent investigation into the MAPPA handling of a high-profile sexual offender. There is no single implementation action plan in place, although the SMB retains oversight. Seven specific recommendations were addressed to the SMB and eight recommendations to the force, a number of which have yet to be implemented. Key recommendations are:
 - provision of guidance concerning intelligence checks at point of registration;
 - updating of local policies to reflect national guidance;
 - development of processes to ensure that PPOs become aware of crimes committed by registered sex offenders;
 - provision of good practice guidance to PPOs concerning the gathering, recording and dissemination of intelligence in relation to high-risk sex offenders;
 - guidance to ensure that intelligence which has the potential to increase the level of risk posed by a sex offender informs the PPO supervisor's decision on the need for an urgent MAPPA meeting;
 - development of systems to ensure that a MAPPA meeting takes place ahead of expiration of licence, to review risk management;
 - frequency of home visits to be considered at relevant MAPPA meetings and stipulated within risk management plans;
 - review of supervision arrangements for PPOs; and
 - development of minimum standards of supervision for PPOs.
- The force is developing a generic risk assessment template in respect of home visits to MAPPA nominals.
- The ACC commissioned a review of the management of all registered sex offenders, which will include the appropriate use of ViSOR. This review was to have reported on 10 August 2007 in respect of low- and medium-risk offenders and 31 August in respect of high- and very high-risk offenders.
- Guardian 2, the new force crime recording system, will ensure that when a sex offender is entered as a victim, offender or witness, the details will automatically be flagged to the PPO and FIB for ViSOR; this was published in two parts during August 2007.

Areas for improvement

October 2007

- Some DSs in PPU are not specifically trained in public protection, and their workload across the specialisms means that PPOs are largely unsupervised by first-line managers. First-line supervision and leadership by a line manager with full knowledge, skills and appreciation of this specialism is vital – its importance cannot be over-emphasised. Supervision arrangements for PPOs are the subject of two specific recommendations from a recent external review.
- Good practice suggests, for a number of well-rehearsed reasons, that officers should conduct home visits in pairs; however, single officers conduct the majority of home visits in Gwent.
- A documented risk assessment should take place prior to home visits, but the inspection found no evidence of formal pre-visit risk assessment.
- Neighbourhood officers have an important role in respect of the risk management of sex and violent offenders. A few neighbourhood officers demonstrated knowledge, received through briefing, of the highest-risk nominals. However, the force has not corporately addressed the issue and does not routinely involve neighbourhood officers and staff in intelligence gathering on MAPPA nominals.
- Although there is currently no national guidance on the use of ViSOR, force policy states that all information relating to the management of MAPPA offenders should be on ViSOR. A file sample of six high-risk, category 1 offenders was examined in relation to compliance with force policy, which revealed that:

- in all cases, risk management plans were not up to date;
- in three cases, home visits were overdue; and
- in all cases there was no record of supervisors' approvals on the system.

Although it would not be appropriate to draw definitive conclusions from such a small sample, the force is advised to reflect on the findings as illustrative of underlying problems. It ought to consider the adoption of corporate ViSOR standards and take steps to ensure compliance and corporacy of application.

- There is no national guidance concerning the maximum number of offenders to be managed by a PPO, but the number – combined with factors such as risk levels, travelling time to undertake visits and level of administrative support available to the PPO – will provide an indication of workload manageability. The average numbers being managed per PPO at the time of inspection were:
 - A Division – 43;
 - B Division – 72;
 - C Division – 89.

C Division is partially rural and therefore visits involve considerably longer travelling times; no division benefits from ViSOR administrative support. Workload in C Division ought to be reviewed to ensure that it does not present a risk to the force in terms of staff welfare or operational objectives. All divisions lack resilience in the case of PPO absence.

- MAPPA level 3 meetings are intended to manage those entitled 'the critical few' – high-risk or very high-risk offenders requiring the consideration of senior managers with the authority to release and prioritise exceptional resources. Draft guidelines suggest that MAPPA level 3 meetings should be attended by a police representative

of appropriate rank, experience and expertise, typically a BCU commander or equivalent; Gwent Police is currently represented at this level by divisional DCIs.

- There is no systematic method of ensuring that PPOs are alerted to intelligence which has the potential to increase the level of risk posed by an offender. This is the subject of a recommendation from a recent review conducted by the Independent Police Complaints Commission.
- The majority of PPOs work Monday to Friday office hours, and consequently the majority of home visits are conducted during these hours. MAPPA nominals can thus be confident they are unlikely to be visited during the evening or weekends; random out-of-hours visits should be a normal part of the visiting regime.
- The nature of their role means that control room staff will often be in possession of valuable intelligence relevant to public protection work. Control room staff do not have 'write access' to the intelligence system and are therefore unable to input anything of note.
- While there is provision for out-of-hours access to ViSOR through control room supervisors, there was little knowledge outside the public protection environment of the type of information contained on ViSOR or the potential operational benefits of access.

Protecting Vulnerable People – Missing Persons

GRADE

FAIR

National grade distribution

Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
1	21	21	0

National contextual factors

Each year, thousands of people are reported to police as missing. Many have done so voluntarily and are safe from harm, whether or not they return home. But a number are vulnerable, because of age or health concerns, and the police service has developed well-honed systems to respond swiftly and effectively to such cases. For obvious reasons, missing children arouse particular concern, and many forces deploy 'Child Rescue Alert' to engage the media in publicising such cases. Key good practice in this framework are early recognition of critical incident potential, effective supervision of enquiries, the use of NIM problem profiles and other intelligence techniques to analyse repeat locations (eg, children's homes), and the use of an IT-based investigation tracking system such as COMPACT.

Contextual factors

The joint ACPO/NCPE guidance on the management, recording and investigation of missing persons was one of the first of the current generation of national doctrine to be published, and is now well embedded into force business. The management of missing persons investigation is owned operationally by divisional commanders, with an HQ-based detective superintendent providing a policy lead on behalf of the chief officer group.

In the year April 2006 to March 2007, the force investigated a total of 4,440 missing persons. Of these, 2,286 were classed as high risk, 859 as medium risk, and 716 as low risk and 579 were unauthorised absences from care.

The specific comments in this section should be read in conjunction with those contained in the generic section on protecting vulnerable people.

Strengths

- The ACC has portfolio responsibility for all areas of protecting vulnerable people that were inspected, including missing persons, providing strategic overview and direction.
- The force has recently implemented policy and procedures that are compliant with the ACPO/NCPE guidance. The policy contains guidance on risk assessment and tactical options, supervisory responsibilities and review requirements.

October 2007

- High-risk, vulnerable missing persons enquiries are the responsibility of the neighbourhood section inspector; they are overseen at an early stage by a detective inspector.
- Missing persons are an agenda item at daily management meetings and are discussed at tactical tasking meetings as appropriate.
- The force policy and guidance sets out the recording process, risk assessment, tactical options, supervisory responsibilities and requirements.
- There are clearly defined review criteria in place; however, the force has no mechanism in place to monitor compliance.
- Details of missing person investigations cannot easily be accessed by intelligence staff in order to undertake meaningful analysis and feed NIM-based products; they are, however, raised at tactical tasking meetings.

Work in progress

- The force is actively engaged in the procurement (with Dyfed-Powys Police) of a dedicated IT system for the recording and investigation of missing persons enquiries. Two companies have tendered, and a purchase is expected by summer 2007. The chosen solution will enable analysis, audit and review of missing persons enquiries and generate performance data.
- C Division has commenced sergeants development seminars; every front-line supervisor is required to attend on a quarterly basis to be taken through new procedures, systems and training (including DV and missing persons). Inspectors development days are bi-monthly and have included PPU issues. This approach to briefing and development is currently being rolled out to all divisions.

Areas for improvement

- All student officers receive training that covers a number of the National Occupational Standards for Police Officers, including immediate actions and initial risk assessment relevant to missing persons work. Newly promoted sergeants have a relevant input on initial training. However, there is no current training, in any format, for other officers.
- The use of the force command and control system to record investigation actions in relation to missing persons is acknowledged to be inadequate but has served the force reasonably well as an interim solution, pending purchase of a bespoke package. The bespoke package is expected to be in place by late autumn 2007.
- The missing person policy is comprehensive but extremely lengthy and there may be benefit in communicating a brief synopsis to ensure that all staff and officers, as appropriate, are acquainted with the expectations of their role.
- Compliance with force policy is a divisional responsibility. The force has no current mechanism in place to satisfy the chief officer team as to the level of compliance with policy or degrees of corporacy.

Appendix: Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations

A

ACC	assistant chief constable
ACPO	Association of Chief Police Officers

B

BCU	basic command unit
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C

CAIU	child abuse investigation unit
CANDO	community and neighbourhood directed operations
CSP	community safety partnership

D

DCC	deputy chief constable
DCI	detective chief inspector
DS	detective sergeant
DV	domestic violence
DVO	domestic violence officer

F

FUD	family unit database
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H

HMI	Her Majesty's inspector
HMIC	Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary
HR	human resources

J

JICA joint investigation of child abuse

L

LSCB local safeguarding children board

M

MAPPA multi-agency public protection arrangements

MARAC multi-agency risk assessment conference

MSF most similar force(s)

N

NCPE National Centre for Policing Excellence

NIM National Intelligence Model

NPIA National Policing Improvement Agency

P

PACT partners and communities together

PCSO police community support officer

PDR personal development review

PPU public protection unit

S

SARC sexual assault referral centre

SGC specific grading criteria

SMB strategic management board

SPI statutory performance indicator

STCG strategic tasking and co-ordination group

V

ViSOR Violent and Sex Offenders Register