



**NORFOLK CONSTABULARY**

**19 – 23 SEPTEMBER 2005**

**POLICE NATIONAL COMPUTER  
COMPLIANCE REPORT**

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## 1. Executive Summary

### 1.1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) conducted a Police National Computer (PNC) Compliance Inspection of Norfolk Constabulary between 19<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2005.
- 1.1.2 The Constabulary was subject to a PNC Compliance Audit using the July 2005 Protocols on PNC Compliance. Her Majesty's Inspector would like to acknowledge the enthusiasm of the Force and also to place on record his thanks to all members of staff who contributed to this report and provided assistance during the inspection.
- 1.1.3 This report is based on views and comments obtained from strategic, PNC and customer level management and users at Force Headquarters and at 2 of the 3 Borough Command Units (referred to as 'Areas'). These views have been supported by reality checks conducted by HMIC PNC Compliance Auditors (hereafter referred to as HMIC Auditors).

### 1.2 Background

- 1.2.1 Norfolk Constabulary is responsible for policing the county of Norfolk, which comprises an area of some 2,068 square miles (3,327 km), a coastline of 145 km with major ports at Great Yarmouth, King's Lynn and Wells, 402 km of waterways (of which 200 km is navigable), 10,189 km of roads and 541 parishes. Norfolk is a fairly sparsely populated, largely rural county of some 810,695 resident population and 351,744 households, at around 1.5 persons per hectare – (London has 46.1 per hectare). Approximately 38% of the population live in the three major built-up areas of Norwich, Great Yarmouth and King's Lynn, and a further 18% in the market towns. Another 20% live in parishes of under 1,000 population; 20% of these are in parishes with less than 300. In addition, there is an international airport at Norwich, royal residences and John Major's holiday residence. The force is also responsible for the offshore emergency plans, which include the key economic site of Bacton Gas Terminal (terrestrial policing extends out 12 miles into territorial waters). There are an estimated 4.7 million visitors to the county annually.
- 1.2.2 The force HQ is based at Wymondham, which is the operations and communication centre for the force, which is organised into three command areas, Eastern, Western and Central. The three territorial divisions are sub-divided into 16 sectors headed by an Inspector who is responsible for the management of day to day policing in the locality.
- 1.2.3 The Force is headed by the Chief Officer Team comprising a chief constable, deputy chief constable (DCC), an assistant chief constable (ACC) an assistant chief officer (ACO) and the corporate communications director. Around 1600 police officers and 1100 support staff work for Norfolk Constabulary.
- 1.2.4 The majority of PNC updates at Norfolk are the responsibility of the PNC Bureau (PNCB) which is staffed 24/7 and is located within the Communications and Dispatch Centre (CDC) at headquarters. The Bureau also incorporates Criminal Records and therefore has a dual

responsibility. Every member of staff within the PNCB is multi – skilled and able to cover both aspects of activity. With regard to PNC, the PNCB has responsibility for all updates with the exception of court resulting and updating the full Arrest/ Summons (A/S) record. These two activities are the responsibility of the Criminal Justice Units which are based on Areas. In addition, the PNCB provides enhanced enquiry facilities to officers on the PNC, such as Vehicle On Line Descriptive Searches (VODS) and Queries Using Extended Search Techniques (QUEST).

- 1.2.5 The creation of A/S records at Norfolk is a manual process which requires the custody officer to fax a form (Form C85) to the PNCB with the details required to create a skeleton record on the PNC (the minimum amount of data required to create a new record). This is followed by the arresting officer completing a source input document (known locally as the 'C88') which contains all the data required for a complete record on the PNC. This is posted to the local Criminal Justice Unit (CJU) who will complete the record on the system.
- 1.2.6 Magistrates court and crown court results are also updated by the CJUs. Paper magistrates court registers are received daily and crown court results are obtained from the Xhibit system which allows the information to be sent electronically by the court to the Force for update on PNC.

### 1.3 Methodology

- 1.3.1 A full inspection against the 2005 PNC Protocols was carried out, covering the sections of Leadership, Policy and Strategy, People, Partnerships and Resources, Processes and Results.
- 1.3.2 The inspection was conducted over three stages with a final assessment being provided in line with the current HMIC Baseline Assessment grading structure of:
- **Excellent** – Comprehensive evidence of effective activity against all protocol areas.
  - **Good** – Evidence of effective activity in many areas, but not comprehensive.
  - **Fair** – Evidence of effective activity covering some areas, but concerns in others.
  - **Poor** – No or limited evidence of effective activity against the protocol areas, or serious concerns in one or more area of activity.

1.3.3 The first stage of the inspection involved the force providing HMIC Auditors with documentation to support its adherence to the protocols. This was followed up by a visit to the Force with HMIC Auditors conducting numerous interviews with key staff. The visit to the Force also incorporated the final stage of the inspection, which was based upon reality checks. The reality checks included reviewing PNC data against source documents and a review of PNC policy documentation.

1.3.4 Using the evidence gathered during each stage of the inspection, this report has been produced based upon the European Foundation of Quality Management (EFQM) format.

#### **1.4 Current Performance**

1.4.1 On 27<sup>th</sup> April 2000, ACPO Council endorsed the ACPO PNC Compliance Strategy. The strategy is based upon the following four aspects of data handling:

- Accuracy
- Timeliness
- Completeness
- Relevancy

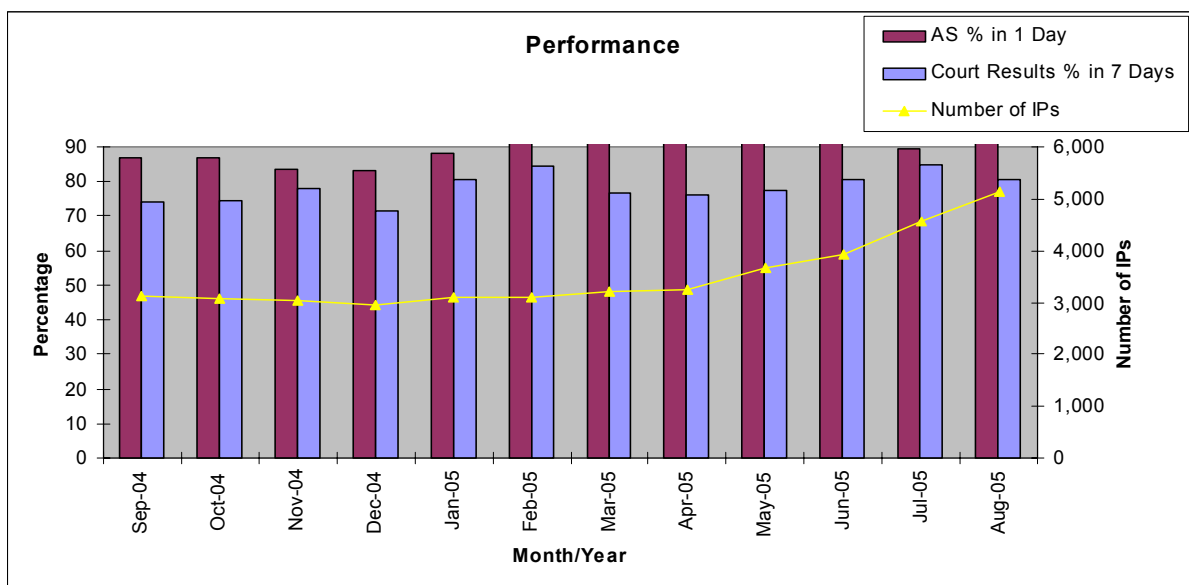
1.4.2 The strategy is owned by ACPO but is also reliant on other partners taking responsibility for key actions within the strategy. The partners include Centrex, HMIC, Police Information Technology Organisation (PITO) and individual forces.

1.4.3 On 1<sup>st</sup> January 2005, the performance indicators of the ACPO Compliance Strategy were replaced by the timeliness standards contained within the newly published Code of Practice for the PNC. The PNC Code of Practice, developed by the National Centre for Policing Excellence and endorsed by ACPO, is a statutory code made under s.39a of the Police Act 1996 (inserted by section 2 of the Police Reform Act 2002). It provides scope for the Home Secretary to invoke statutory intervention for forces failing to comply. With regards to individual forces, a number of performance indicators (PIs) specifically for PNC data standards were set. Each force has a responsibility to achieve the standards set within the Code of Practice. The timeliness standards within the Code are as follows:

- 90% of recordable offences entered onto PNC within 24 hours of the commencement of proceedings. The commencement of proceedings being defined as when a person is arrested, reported or summonsed.
- 50% of all finalisations being entered onto PNC within 7 days of the information being received by the police. This target increased to 75% on 1 July 2005, six months after the commencement of the Code. (Courts have their own target of 3 days for delivery of data to

the police. Therefore, the police are measured against an overall target of 10 days.)

- 1.4.4 In August 2005, Norfolk input 91.2% of Arrest/ Summons (A/S) updates on PNC within 24 hours. The Force has consistently achieved the 90% target or has been very close (less than 1% under) in the 12 months leading up to the inspection. Such consistently high performance is to be commended. However, the Force needs to ensure that this high level of performance is supported by the skeleton records being fully updated in a timely manner. This issue is discussed in more detail under Section 2.5 (Processes) of this report.
- 1.4.5 Norfolk's performance in terms of court results has also been consistently high against the Code of Practice target. In September 2004 the Force entered 73.9% of results within 7 days of the court date. This has increased to 80.5% being entered within 10 days in August 2005. Again the Force is to be commended for displaying a consistently high level of performance.
- 1.4.6 In terms of Impending Prosecutions (IPs) Norfolk has shown an increase of 64% in the 12 months to August 2005. This compares with a 59% increase in the number of A/S reports being created in the same period. HMIC Auditors would urge the Force to address this area of activity before the volumes 'snowball' to unmanageable levels.
- 1.4.7 A graph illustrating Norfolk's performance in the 12 months to August 2005 is shown below:<sup>1</sup>



**1.5 Conclusions**

1.5.1 HMIC's assessment of PNC compliance within the Force has been assessed as:

<sup>1</sup> Key: Purple columns indicate A/S performance, blue show court results performance and the yellow line shows the increase/ decrease in Impending Prosecutions.

**Good** – Evidence of effective activity in many areas, but not comprehensive.

1.5.2 This assessment is based on the detailed findings of the report which highlights many examples of good practice at Norfolk but some areas for improvement which will assist the Force in making best use of the system.

1.5.3 The findings of this report should read in conjunction with the previous reports and recommendations relating to the PNC. The previous reports are:

- Police Research Group Report – ‘Phoenix Data Quality’, *published 1998*
- HMIC Thematic Inspection Report – ‘On The Record’, *published 2000*
- HMIC Report – ‘PNC Data Quality and Timeliness, 1<sup>st</sup> Report’, *published 2001*
- HMIC Report – ‘PNC Data Quality and Timeliness, 2<sup>nd</sup> Report’, *published 2002*

1.5.4 A summary of good practice points, along with recommendations for improvement can be found at Appendices A and B of this report.

## 2. Detailed Findings and Recommendations

### 2.1 Leadership

#### 2.1.1 PNC Steering Group and User Group

2.1.1.1 At the time of inspection, Norfolk had both a PNC Steering Group and a PNC User Group which meet on a quarterly basis. The Steering Group is chaired by a Chief Superintendent with the Deputy Chief Constable (DCC) maintaining a 'watching brief'. The chair of the User Group also attends the Steering Group. HMIC Auditors view this as good practice as it enables issues to be tackled at a strategic, tactical and operational level. In addition, it was pleasing to note that the DCC raises PNC issues at the other meetings he chairs, such as the Operations Forum and the Tasking and Co-ordination Group (TCG).

#### 2.1.2 Responsibility and Accountability

2.1.2.1 Norfolk has an established performance management process in place regarding the timeliness of submission of data to PNC. Monthly statistics are produced which are broken down to Area and individual officer level. This information is discussed at the TCG, chaired by the DCC where each Area commander is held accountable for their performance. This mechanism has enabled the Force to achieve consistently high performance.

2.1.2.2 HMIC Auditors noted one area for improvement in relation to responsibility and accountability. Whilst there is an established performance process with regard to the timeliness of information, there is no such mechanism for the quality of data provided by officers to the PNC. Information relating to quality issues would enable Area Commanders to take any necessary action against officers who persistently submit poor quality information. This, in turn, would improve overall data quality within the Force and reduce the administrative burden caused by the submission of poor quality data

#### **Recommendation 1**

**Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary recommends that the Force develops and reacts to performance management information in relation to PNC data quality.**

## 2.2 Policy & Strategy

### 2.2.1 PNC Policy and Strategy

2.2.1.1 At the time of inspection Norfolk had a draft PNC Policy document. The document outlined each individual's responsibilities with regard to PNC data and HMIC Auditors would urge its finalisation, approval and publication. The Force also had a strategic action plan in place, in the form of a Code of Practice position statement. Whilst this is a good starting point, the document should be expanded to become a comprehensive strategic action plan covering all aspects of PNC activity, including Airwave, NSPIS, Schengen and any future developments affecting the use and functionality of the PNC. Furthermore, frequent review and update of the action plan would ensure that the Force gives 'ownership' of issues to individuals or departments and is proactive in its management of PNC.

#### **Recommendation 2**

**Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary recommends that the Force finalise, approve and publicise its PNC Policy and expands the current Position Statement document to become a comprehensive strategic action plan.**

### 2.2.2 PNC Security

2.2.2.1 With regard to system security, HMIC Auditors reviewed five key areas. These are User Access, Transaction Monitoring, Data Protection Auditing, the Role of Professional Standards and the Information Security Policy. Areas of good practice and some areas for improvement were identified during the review and these are discussed further below.

2.2.2.2 Access to the PNC is managed by the PNC Bureau. The Force has processes in place to ensure that a user is only given access to the system upon completion of a training course and there are mechanisms in place to ensure that movers and leavers have their access removed/amended as appropriate. In addition, an independent audit of the process is conducted annually by the Data Protection Officer (DPO) which ensures that the integrity of the system is maintained. HMIC Auditors commend the Force for adopting this good practice.

2.2.2.3 Transaction monitoring is a requirement of the ACPO Data Protection Audit Manual. It is a process where police officers and staff are asked to verify their reasons for performing transactions on the PNC and, as such, is an important activity in the prevention and detection of misuse or abuse of the PNC. At Norfolk Constabulary this activity is the responsibility of the DPO who selects transactions at random for checking. Verification of the reasons for a check is requested by email directly to the officer or member of staff concerned who is asked to

respond within 3 days and to have their response signed off by their line manager. The DPO has an Access database which enables the tracking of requests and responses and therefore the management of the process. In addition, the Information Security Officer (ISO) supplements the work of the DPO with additional checking procedures which could assist in the identification of information misuse/ abuse. HMIC Auditors viewed this comprehensive and joined- up working as good practice.

2.2.2.4 Data Protection Audits are also conducted by the DPO at Norfolk. The DPO performs an annual risk assessment of the IT data systems following which decisions are made as to the systems to be audited. This process complies with the ACPO Data Protection Audit Manual. The audits follow a process- based approach meaning that the DPO reviews the effectiveness of the process in conjunction with checks on data accuracy. This enables the DPO to make recommendations which improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the processes and therefore data quality. Upon completion of an audit the recommendations are provided to the PNC Steering Group which has responsibility for ensuring that all relevant actions are completed. HMIC Auditors viewed the data protection audit process as robust and in compliance with the ACPO Data Protection Audit Manual.

2.2.2.5 HMIC Auditors also reviewed the role of the Professional Standards Department (PSD) with regard to PNC issues at Norfolk. The PSD is independent of operational activities and such independence is viewed as good practice. In addition, the roles of DPO and ISO sit within the PSD which ensures that PSD is notified of any breaches of system security. The PSD has a PNC trained operator and HMIC Auditors feel that better use could be made of this resource in analysing PNC transaction activity. This would enable the department to be more proactive in its monitoring of the system and may assist in the detection of PNC misuse/ abuse.

2.2.2.6 Finally with regard to PNC system security, HMIC Auditors reviewed the role of the Information Security Officer (ISO) and the Force's system security policies. At the time of inspection there was no documented Information Security Policy for PNC. HMIC Auditors were encouraged to note that the Information Security Auditor (reporting to the ISO) had conducted a review of the national Code of Connection document with a view to using this piece of work as a basis for a policy document. An absence of local policies may result in officers and staff not fully understanding their own roles and responsibilities in relation to information security and therefore addressing this issue is of urgent importance.

### **Recommendation 3**

**Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary recommends that the Force drafts, approves and communicates a PNC Security Policy adapted to local needs, ensuring that the roles and responsibilities of each individual are clearly explained.**

## **2.3 People**

### 2.3.1 Marketing and Awareness

2.3.1.1 During meetings and focus groups, it was evident that there is a good level of awareness of PNC and its functionality. It was also pleasing to note that officers were aware of their responsibility to provide complete and accurate data as this may be of assistance in future investigations.

2.3.1.2 The Force was in process of developing a Communications Strategy to ensure that the current level of awareness is maintained and enhanced. HMIC Auditors view this as a positive step and would encourage the Force to progress with this, under the auspices of the PNC Steering Group.

### 2.3.2 PNC Training

2.3.2.1 PNC Training is split at Norfolk between the PNCB trainer and Force training. The PNCB trainer largely provides training for PNCB staff. Her operational role allows her to ensure that staff are kept informed of all the latest developments on PNC and to amend their lesson plans accordingly. The PNCB trainer conducts an assessment at the end of each course in which the candidate must obtain a mark of 75% or more before access is given to the system. Having a trainer within the PNCB also ensures that new staff joining the Bureau can sit courses when required and the trainer is on hand to answer queries from all PNCB staff on an ongoing basis.

2.3.2.2 The Force training department has 2 PNC accredited trainers to deliver courses across the Force. Training plans are produced annually which include a variety of courses ranging from 1 to 5 days. Police officers and staff must have training approved by their line manager and Area Personnel Officer and the Force Training Manager has a final veto on whether a candidate can attend a course, based on their job requirement. Each candidate is required to achieve 75% to pass the assessment which is given at the end of each course. Training is evaluated at the end of each course by means of a 'Happy Sheet' and also by the Force Evaluation Officer (FEO) once the candidate has had an opportunity to put the training into practice in the workplace. The FEO produces quarterly report analysing the results of evaluation and this assists in future course delivery and design. This is viewed as good practice by HMIC Auditors.

2.3.2.3 At the time of inspection, Force training provided refresher training where this had been identified through an individual's Performance Development Review. In addition, there were plans to re-assess all PNC users, starting with Communications Centre staff. HMIC Auditors would encourage this move.

2.3.2.4 However, the Force needs to take note of two issues identified by HMIC Auditors if its current high standards are to be maintained. First, the Force should satisfy itself that the 1 day training course for police officers is sufficient to ensure that an officer fully understands the

information being provided on PNC. The Force has a policy that officers attending the 1 day course should not make decisions based on their own PNC checks but are to use the system for information only. If a decision is required, the officer should contact the PNCB or Communications Centre (CDC). However, there is a risk that an officer may make a decision based on their own checks when they do not fully understand the information in front of them.

- 2.3.2.5 Second, there are plans at Norfolk to roll out the driving licence facility to the CDC operators in the near future. Due to the resource implications of the roll out, a decision has been taken that the CDC tutors will supervise an e-learning package which has been developed for the operators. The operators will then be assessed by Force trainers prior to access to this facility being granted. However, the CDC tutors have received no training on this PNC application themselves but are required to work through a self- learning package provided by Force training and HMIC Auditors question whether they will have sufficient knowledge, understanding and confidence to effectively supervise the e-learning activities.

#### **Recommendation 4**

**Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary recommends that the Force:**

- **Re-visits its decision to provide a 1 day training course for officers to satisfy itself that the risks to the organisation are being managed, and;**
- **Provides formal training to CDC tutors on the driving licence application prior to the roll out of e-learning.**

## **2.4 Partnerships and Resources**

### **2.4.1 Relationship with the courts**

2.4.1.1 Norfolk Constabulary has a good relationship with its local courts and this enables the Force to obtain complete, accurate and timely information for update on PNC. As a result, the Force has consistently hit the national targets for the update of court results on the system. In addition, HMIC Auditors noted the work that is currently underway between the Force and the Crown Courts to address some of the difficulties arising from the implementation of the national court Xhibit system. This system enables the automatic transfer of court information to the Force. Whilst the introduction of the system has undoubtedly created problems for both parties, it is encouraging that they are working together to overcome the data quality and timeliness issues.

### **2.4.2 Relationship with non police prosecuting agencies (NPPAs)**

2.4.2.1 With the introduction of the Code of Practice for PNC in January 2005, the target for the input of A/S records no longer includes those records which are updated as a result of an NPPA prosecution. However, there is still a need for forces to ensure that these records are updated in a timely manner to assist operational policing activity. This can only be achieved if forces encourage the NPPAs to provide complete, timely and accurate information for input to PNC. HMIC Auditors would therefore encourage the Force to introduce Service Level Agreements with its NPPAs to achieve this.

## **2.5 Processes**

### **2.5.1 Creation and update of Arrest/ Summons (A/S) reports**

2.5.1.1 On 1<sup>st</sup> January 2005, the performance indicators of the ACPO Compliance Strategy were replaced by the timeliness standards contained within the newly published Code of Practice for the PNC. The PNC Code of Practice, developed by the National Centre for Policing Excellence (NCPE) and endorsed by ACPO, is a statutory code made under s.39a of the Police Act 1996 (inserted by section 2 of the Police Reform Act 2002). The Code stipulates that 90% of recordable offences be entered onto PNC within 24 hours of the commencement of proceedings. The commencement of proceedings is defined as when a person is arrested, reported or summonsed. However, for forces that create skeleton records on the PNC update of the full record in a timely manner is required in order to comply with principles 3 and 4 of the Data Protection Act. HMIC Auditors believe that the previous ACPO PNC Compliance Strategy target of 5 days is a guide to satisfy the legislation.

2.5.1.2 HMIC Auditors reality checks showed that the Force was failing to update the full record promptly with 6% of records still on PNC in skeleton form after 3 months. At Norfolk, the skeleton record is created upon receipt of a form C85 in the PNCB from the officer in case. The officer is subsequently required to complete and submit a form C88 to

the local Criminal Justice Unit (CJU) which enables the full record to be updated. There is no process in place at Norfolk to ensure that a C88 is received for every C85 with the result that the Force is unable to identify skeleton records which have not been fully updated on the system. This gap in the current process goes some way to explaining the 6% error rate identified by HMIC Auditors.

- 2.5.1.3 In addition, HMIC Auditors obtained anecdotal evidence from officers that the process for submitting C85s and C88s is confused as a result of implementation of the 2003 Criminal Justice Act powers, which allows DNA and fingerprints to be taken at the point of arrest. Officers were uncertain at what stage in the process forms should be completed and the level of information required for PNC for these cases. Some officers were similarly unclear of the procedures for cases which do not pass through the custody suite (e.g. reported for summons at home). There is a risk that Norfolk Constabulary could fail to meet its performance targets and data quality could be compromised due to confusion among officers. It is therefore important that the procedures in place are communicated effectively.

#### **Recommendation 5**

**Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary recommends that the Force reviews its processes for the update of A/S records to ensure that all PNC records are complete, accurate and timely and ensures there is clear communication of the procedures in place.**

## 2.5.2 Update of court results

2.5.2.1 Magistrates courts in Norfolk have the Equis system which is updated by court staff with disposal information and enables the automatic transfer of this information to the Constabulary. Each CJU has an Equis terminal which staff can access and print off the daily results for update on PNC. This enables timeliness to targets to be met as the Force can access court results information as soon as the court register has been validated. However, HMIC Auditors were notified that in one CJU the printer for the Equis terminal is not able to print the results as it “chews up” the registers. As a result the CJU has taken the decision not to use Equis, but awaits the paper court register to come through the post. This affects the timeliness of PNC updates and is an inefficient use of resources.

2.5.2.2 Crown Court results are also received electronically via the national Xhibit system. The introduction of the system has caused a number of problems for CJU staff, some of which are caused by problems with the technology and some of which may be as a result of training needs not being adequately addressed at the courts. HMIC Auditors were encouraged that at the time of the inspection the Force had arranged a meeting with the court to discuss the issues and work together to find solutions.

### **Recommendation 6**

**Her Majesty’s Inspector of Constabulary recommends that the Force takes the necessary steps to ensure it is getting maximum efficiency and effectiveness from the systems it has available.**

## 2.5.3 Ad hoc intelligence updates<sup>2</sup>

2.5.3.1 Norfolk Constabulary has a process in place to identify and capture ad hoc intelligence on the PNC. Officers are required to complete a form (known locally as a ‘C174’) and submit the information to their Local Intelligence Officers (LIO’s). This form is used for any intelligence/information gathered which may be input to any of the Force’s systems. The LIO’s notify the PNCB if any of the data could be applied to PNC. If the information is applicable to the Violent and Sexual Offences Register system (ViSOR), a check is made to ensure that PNC and ViSOR records are in parallel. HMIC Auditors view the current procedures as good practice.

## 2.5.4 Data quality

2.5.4.1 HMIC Auditors conducted reality checks at Norfolk to determine the quality of data being supplied by officers and subsequently input to the PNC. This was achieved by obtaining 50 source input documents (C85s), checking whether a subsequent C88 had been received and

<sup>2</sup> Information applicable for update to PNC that originates from a source other than the creation of an Arrest/ Summons report.

comparing the details submitted to the PNC record. HMIC Auditors were pleased to note that what officers were supplying was complete and they were obtaining as much information as possible for the PNC record.

2.5.4.2 The level of accuracy with regard to the input on PNC was deemed good although there were a scattering of minor errors identified. For example, an alias date of birth for an offender had been supplied by officers but not input to the system, likewise eye colour and height.

2.5.4.3 Finally, HMIC Auditors noted that 18% of the records reviewed were classified as 'Unlinked' on the PNC. Cases which are unlinked are those cases which have not yet been assigned a court date which, in effect means that the majority of unlinked cases should be for those offenders who have not yet been charged. The checks were conducted in September and related to cases from May 2005 and all were in relation to less serious offences. It is therefore likely that these will have been dealt with and should have been resulted on PNC and not showing as Unlinked.

#### **Recommendation 7**

**Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary recommends that the Force ensures that CJU update all relevant information on the PNC including assigned court dates.**

2.5.5 MO keywords

2.5.5.1 MO keywords are a parameter that can be used during a QUEST search. This is an important intelligence feature of the PNC, which can be used to identify possible suspects, particularly for serious offences, during a police investigation. It has been a requirement for several years that all forces must input MO keywords into the system to ensure that searches via QUEST cover the whole of PNC. Norfolk Constabulary has undertaken MO keywording for serious offences. However, HMIC Auditor reality checks identified one record with four offences which all merited keywording but not all the offences had been updated accordingly.

#### **Recommendation 8**

**Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary recommends that the Force ensures that keywording is undertaken for all serious offences, including when more than one offence is input to a record.**

2.5.6 Finally with regard to processes HMIC Auditor reality checks showed that Norfolk updates all relevant information with which it is provided, for example all disposals and remand information including bail conditions and adjournments.

## **2.6 Results**

2.6.1 In August 2005, Norfolk input 91.2% of Arrest/ Summons (A/S) updates on PNC within 24 hours. The Force has consistently achieved the 90% target or has been very close (less than 1% under) in the 12 months leading up to the inspection. Such consistently high performance is to be commended. However, the Force needs to ensure that this high level of performance is supported by the skeleton records being fully updated in a timely manner. This is required for operational policing and investigative purposes, as discussed earlier in this report.

2.6.2 Norfolk's performance in terms of court results has also been consistently high against the Code of Practice target. In September 2004 the Force entered 73.9% of results within 7 days of the court date. This has increased to 80.5% being entered within 10 days in August 2005. Again the Force is to be commended for displaying a consistently high level of performance.

2.6.3 Finally, with regard to outstanding prosecutions on the PNC Norfolk has shown an increase of 64% in the 12 months to August 2005. This compares with a 59% increase in the number of A/S reports being created in the same period. HMIC Auditors would urge the Force to address this area of activity before the volumes escalate to unmanageable levels. In April 2001, HMIC supported by the Home Secretary stated that all forces should be in a position to confirm that any outstanding case that is over twelve months old, is legitimately outstanding. HMIC Auditors understand that the overall increase can be largely attributed to the Force's implementation of the Criminal Justice Act powers and that, therefore, the majority of outstanding cases on PNC are less than 12 months. Whilst the Force can currently account for all its old outstanding cases, it is imperative that the increased volume is managed on an ongoing basis to enable the Force to maintain its current position.

### **Recommendation 9**

**Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary recommends that the Force implements procedures to review outstanding prosecutions on a continuous basis.**

**APPENDIX A – SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NORFOLK****Recommendation 1**

Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary recommends that the Force develops and reacts to performance management information in relation to PNC data quality.

**Recommendation 2**

Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary recommends that the Force finalise, approve and publicise its PNC Policy and expands the current Position Statement document to become a comprehensive strategic action plan.

**Recommendation 3**

Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary recommends that the Force drafts, approves and communicates a PNC Security Policy adapted to local needs, ensuring that the roles and responsibilities of each individual are clearly explained.

**Recommendation 4**

Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary recommends that the Force:

- Re-visits its decision to provide a 1 day training course for officers to satisfy itself that the risks to the organisation are being managed, and;
- Provides formal training to CDC tutors on the driving licence application prior to the roll out of e-learning.

**Recommendation 5**

Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary recommends that the Force reviews its processes for the update of A/S records to ensure that all PNC records are complete, accurate and timely and ensures there is clear communication of the procedures in place.

**Recommendation 6**

Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary recommends that the Force takes the necessary steps to ensure it is getting maximum efficiency and effectiveness from the systems it has available.

**Recommendation 7**

Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary recommends that the Force ensures that CJU update all relevant information on the PNC including assigned court dates.

**Recommendation 8**

Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary recommends that the Force ensures that keywording is undertaken for all serious offences, including when more than one offence is input to a record.

**Recommendation 9**

Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary recommends that the Force implements procedures to review outstanding prosecutions on a continuous basis.

**APPENDIX B – SUMMARY OF GOOD PRACTICES AT NORFOLK**

- **The Force has a strategic and a user group for PNC with the chair of the user group attending the strategic meetings.**
- **PNC issues are raised at senior officer groups across the Force.**
- **The Force has effective mechanisms in place to monitor and improve its PNC performance with regard to timeliness.**
- **The Force conducts an annual independent audit of user access changes on the system.**
- **Data Protection works in conjunction with Information Security to ensure the integrity of the system.**
- **PNC training is subject to short and medium term evaluation processes to ensure that the level of training provided is of a high quality.**
- **The Force has developed strong working relationships with its partnership agencies to enable any issues to be addressed at the earliest opportunity.**
- **There is a process to identify and capture ad hoc intelligence updates on the PNC.**
- **The Force updates all aspects of the PNC record.**

**APPENDIX C – 'ON THE RECORD'****THEMATIC INSPECTION REPORT ON POLICE CRIME RECORDING, THE POLICE NATIONAL COMPUTER AND PHOENIX INTELLIGENCE SYSTEM DATA QUALITY - RECOMMENDATIONS****Recommendation 9** (Chapter 5 page 86)

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that all Forces produce position statements in relation to the 1998 PRG report recommendations on Phoenix Data Quality and the ACPO Compliance Strategy for the Police National Computer. He further recommends that Forces produce a detailed action plan, with timescales, to implement their recommendations. The position statements and action plans together with progress updates should be available for audit and inspection during future HMIC PNC Compliance Audits and inspection of Forces. Forces should send copies of action plans to HMIC's PNC Compliance Audit Section by 1 February 2001.

**Recommendation 10** (Chapter 6 page 104)

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that Forces urgently review their existing SCAS referral mechanisms in the light of the above findings. These reviews should include verification with SCAS that all Force offences fitting the SCAS criteria have been fully notified to them, and updated. This process should be managed by Forces through their in-Force SCAS Liaison Officers.

**Recommendation 11** (Chapter 7 page 111)

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that the marketing, use and development of national police information systems is integrated into appropriate Force, local and departmental, strategic planning documents.

**Recommendation 12** (Chapter 7 page 112)

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that where not already in place, Forces should establish a strategic PNC Steering Group. This group should develop and be responsible for a strategic plan covering the development, use and marketing of PNC and Phoenix.

**Recommendation 13** (Chapter 7 page 118)

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that all Forces conduct an audit of their present in-Force PNC trainers to ensure they have received nationally accredited training. Any individuals who have not been accredited as PNC trainers by National Police Training should not conduct in-Force PNC training.

**Recommendation 14** (Chapter 8 page 145)

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that Forces ensure that each Phoenix inputting department develops an audit trail to register the return of substandard PSDs, via line supervisors, to originating officers. The system developed should include a mechanism to ensure the prompt return of PSDs. Forces should also incorporate locally based audit trails, monitoring the passage of returned PSDs between line supervisors and originating officers.

**Recommendation 15** (Chapter 8 page 146)

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that Forces develop clear guidelines to cover their expectations of officers on the return of incomplete or substandard PSDs. This guidance should be communicated to all staff and regular checks conducted to ensure compliance.

**Recommendation 16** (Chapter 8 page 148)

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that Forces should develop a system to ensure that all ad-hoc descriptive and intelligence updates registered on local Force systems are automatically entered onto the Phoenix system. The policy should clearly outline whose responsibility it is to notify Phoenix inputters of any descriptive changes. Forces should also ensure that the policy is marketed to staff and that regular checks are conducted to ensure compliance.

**Recommendation 17** (Chapter 8 page 150)

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that Forces develop a formal system to ensure that a proportion of each member of Phoenix inputting staff's work is regularly checked for accuracy. Forces should also consider the benefits of measuring other aspects of their work including speed of entry and compliance with policies. Performance outcomes should be evidenced in staff PDRs.

**Recommendation 18** (Chapter 9 page 164)

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends, where not already present, that Forces develop risk assessed Force Data Protection Officer audit programmes.

**Recommendation 19** (Chapter 9 page 164)

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that Forces integrate PNC and Phoenix data quality compliance into their performance review and inspectorate programmes for BCUs and specialist departments.

**Recommendation 20** (Chapter 9 page 165)

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that PSD performance statistics should be incorporated in routine Force performance information. The statistics should identify omissions and errors in individual fields, in particular, descriptive information. Appropriate accountability measures should be established to ensure that any performance shortfalls identified are addressed.

**APPENDIX D – PRG REPORT****“PHOENIX DATA QUALITY” RECOMMENDATIONS**

- National performance indicators and standards for timeliness of input, data fields to be completed, quality assurance requirements and the provision of training should be agreed by ACPO and promulgated to all Forces.
- Achievement against and compliance with these indicators should be audited after a period of 12 months, perhaps through the inclusion in the scope of HMIC audits.
- Senior officers take an active and visible role in policing compliance with agreed standards within their own Force.
  - ACPO performance indicators should be reflected in Force policy or standing orders (or the Force equivalent). Guidance should include the responsibilities of officers at each stage of the process e.g. for the provision of source documentation, for approval, time taken to pass to input bureaux, and the bureaux' responsibilities for data entry and quality control.
  - Line and divisional managers, as well as chief officers, should be held accountable for compliance with these standards. This could be achieved through inclusion in divisional efficiency assessments, and through the publication and dissemination of performance statistics throughout individual Forces and nationally.
- Source documentation should be common across all Forces, if not in design, in the information requested. A national format, stipulating a hierarchy of fields to be populated, should be developed.
- Programme(s) geared to raising awareness amongst operational officers and line managers of the potential benefits of Phoenix in a practical sense and their responsibilities of the provision of data should be developed. To ensure all officers have an opportunity to benefit from these programmes, consideration should be given to inclusion of a 'Phoenix awareness' module in probationer training, promotion courses and divisional training days.
- Best practice in administrative arrangements and organisational structures should be widely distributed. Internal working practices and organisational structures should be streamlined to remove any redundancies.

- Greater computerisation of the transfer of results from courts direct to Phoenix should continue to be developed. In the shorter term, the Police Service is likely to retain responsibility of the input of court information. To minimise the resource burden on the Police Service in this interim period, the police and courts should work to ensure recognition of each other's requirements and to minimise any inconsistencies in their respective working practices.
  - In the first instance, this might be achieved by ACPO highlighting to Magistrates' Courts and to the Crown Court, perhaps through the Trials Issue Group, the importance of Phoenix records to the integrity of the criminal justice system as a whole. Liaison meetings could usefully be established to introduce greater consistency in working and recording practices between the courts and police Forces e.g. for recording data. In the first instance, this could be pursued locally, perhaps through the court user group. Issues considered by such meetings might include supplying additional information (such as Arrest / Summons numbers) to the Magistrates' Court system and to automated transfer of court registers.
  - Consistent practice and performance is also required from the courts. Recommendations referring to performance indicators and standards, audits and monitoring, senior level commitment, common recording practices, awareness of system customers and administrative 'best practice' could equally apply to the courts. Mirroring the responsibilities of Chief Constables for their Force, the Court Service and the Magistrates' Court Committee should be accountable for the performance of courts.
  - Consistent practice in advising custody details, including transfers and releases, is required. This includes consistency in advising CRO numbers to maximise the number of complete records. The police and prison services should liaise to encourage greater understanding and acknowledgement of each other's requirements.

**APPENDIX E – 1<sup>ST</sup> PNC REPORT****POLICE NATIONAL COMPUTER DATA QUALITY AND TIMELINESS –  
RECOMMENDATIONS****Recommendation One (Paragraph 5.2)**

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector recommends that ACPO nationally review the position and priority of PNC within the structure of portfolio holders to reflect both the technical and operational importance of PNC.

**Recommendation Two (Paragraph 5.11)**

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector draws renewed attention to Recommendations 11 to 20 of *'On the Record' (2000)*, and recommends that all forces develop appropriate systems, overseen at a senior level, to ensure that they are implemented.

**Recommendation Three (Paragraph 5.19)**

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector recommends that PITO review, as a matter of urgency, the supplier/customer relationship between PNC and forces, particularly in relation to the marketing of PNC functionality, and the type, frequency and validity of management information reports produced.

**Recommendation Four (Paragraph 5.29)**

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector recommends that Her Majesty's Inspector (Training), in consultation with PITO and National Police Training, conducts a review of the quality and availability of accreditation training for PNC trainers and the extent to which they are subsequently employed in forces.

**Recommendation Five (Paragraph 5.31)**

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector recommends that discussions take place between ACPO, PITO and other relevant stakeholders to examine what opportunities exist for a short term 'technology solution' for the inputting of Court Results, either involving NSPIS applications currently in development, or an interim solution.

**Recommendation Six (Paragraph 5.34)**

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector recommends that renewed and re-invigorated discussions should take place between relevant stakeholders to, (a) Ensure that local systems are in place to maximise co-operation with the courts to achieve their respective 72 hours targets and, (b) Work towards Magistrates' Courts and Crown Courts assuming full responsibility for inputting all case results directly onto PNC.

**Recommendation Seven (Paragraph 6.10)**

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector recommends that following appropriate consultation with relevant stakeholders, a national inspection protocol for PNC data quality and timeliness be introduced.

**Recommendation Eight (Paragraph 6.12)**

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector recommends, that following appropriate consultation with relevant stakeholders, the Secretary of State should consider using his powers under Section 5 of the Local Government Act 1999, to require all police authorities to institute a Best Value Review of processes to ensure PNC data quality and timeliness. Such review should be conducted against a common template and terms of reference.

**Recommendation Nine (Paragraph 6.14)**

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector recommends, that in consultation with the Standards Unit and other stakeholders, HM Inspectorate should urgently review their current PNC audit responsibilities in the light of the findings of this report, with a view to adopting a more proactive stance in relation to force performance, data quality and timeliness.

**Recommendation Ten (Paragraph 6.16)**

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector recommends, that in consultation with other stakeholders, ACPO IM Committee initiate research with a view to encouraging mutual support between forces for out of hours PNC data entry purposes.

**APPENDIX F – 2<sup>ND</sup> PNC REPORT****POLICE NATIONAL COMPUTER DATA QUALITY AND TIMELINESS –  
RECOMMENDATIONS****Recommendation 1**

The Home Office should lead and co-ordinate an urgent re-examination of the current PNC strategy and standards with a view to producing national binding performance and compliance criteria to which all relevant stakeholders and partners are agreed and committed.

**Recommendation 2**

ACPO nationally and Chief Constables locally must ensure that the national standards for PNC operation, resourcing and training are fully integrated into local Information Management Strategies and recognised as an important part of operational service delivery. This area must receive sustained high-level support through a 'champion' at chief officer level.

**Recommendation 3**

PITO should be tasked to consolidate the force 'profiling' approach as used in the inspection into the routine statistical returns provided to forces. PNC statistics should then be integrated into the mainstream suite of management information/indicators that inform decisions at force and BCU levels.

**Recommendation 4**

HMIC should be tasked to establish a risk-assessed programme of monitoring and inspection that is able to respond quickly and effectively to deviations from accepted standards. This programme should include;

- remote monitoring of performance (PITO profile statistics)
- regular collaboration and contact with force PNC Managers
- proportionate programme of visits and inspections
- targeted interventions to respond to identified problems

**Recommendation 5**

The Home Office should establish a structured process for addressing and remedying any significant and persisting deviation from the agreed national standards (see Recommendation 1). This process should identify the respective roles of HMIC, Police Standards Unit and police authorities. It should set out the escalation of responses, which might include an agreed action plan, re-inspection, Intervention, and ultimately withdrawal of facility.