



HMIC Inspection Report

Northumbria Police

October 2007



Northumbria Police – HMIC Inspection Report

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ISBN: 978-1-84726-471-8

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FIRST PUBLISHED 2007

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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://inspectors.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

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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.

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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

Northumbria Police is the sixth largest police force in the UK. It covers an area of 2,150 square miles, which includes the major conurbations of Tyne and Wear and the rural county of Northumberland, with a total population of 1.4 million people.

Structural description of force area

Chief Constable Michael Craik is supported by the deputy chief constable (DCC), David Warcup, three assistant chief constables (ACCs) and a director of finance and resources.

Policing is provided through six area commands, which match local authority boundaries, supported by 12 specialist headquarters departments. Each area command is headed by a chief superintendent who works at strategic level and is supported by a senior management team (SMT) with a minimum of two superintendents. Staffing levels range from 440 to just over 1,000, including between 360 and 800 police officers. The force currently employs more than 430 police community support officers (PCSOs), of whom more than 250 take part in patrol and reassurance duties.

Strategic priorities

Chief Constable Mike Craik's vision of 'Total Policing' commits the force to delivering a customer-focused service with the capability, capacity and resilience to combat crime and disorder at all levels.

Total Policing encompasses every aspect of the service, enabling neighbourhood officers to work with communities and partner agencies to address local issues, while maintaining the capacity to tackle serious and organised crime that crosses area command and regional boundaries. The aim is to ensure that more crimes are brought to justice, create safer stronger communities and increase public confidence in Northumbria Police.

The force has developed five key policing priorities that reflect both local concerns and an internal assessment of crime trends:

- violent crime;
- anti-social behaviour;
- criminal damage;
- harm reduction; and
- tackling named offenders.

As part of future business planning, the force has taken a structured approach to meeting protective services requirements while continuing to provide an exceptionally high standard of policing at all levels, an achievement that has become synonymous with Northumbria Police.

The force also supports the national policing priorities of workforce modernisation, criminal justice and public order.

Force developments since 2006

Local policing

Neighbourhood Policing is now firmly established, with neighbourhood teams comprising inspectors, sergeants, constables, PCSOs, special constables and police staff in each area command.

Anti-social behaviour has been a key focus for the teams, who work with partners to identify potential hot spots and introduce long-term solutions.

The force has taken a firm stand against drunkenness, violence and disorder in town centres, with high-profile, force-wide campaigns such as The Party's Over, Don't Spoil the Party and When to Stop to support national initiatives.

Violence in the home was the target for the force-wide End the Silence, campaign which encouraged victims of domestic abuse to accept police action against offenders. This positive protection approach, along with increased police activity and enforcement, saw an increase in calls for assistance from victims during the period of December 2006 to January 2007, creating a rise in incidents resulting in a crime from 15% to 25%. During the same period overall domestic violence recorded crimes rose by 61% compared with the previous year.

The force has also worked together with other emergency services on initiatives such as the 2006 Get Wise campaign, aimed at tackling crime and disorder associated with fireworks.

Following a review of custody services, area commands have taken responsibility from the criminal justice department, to provide flexibility and responsiveness to local circumstances.

Tackling crime

Northumbria has an unrivalled record of a continuous fall in overall crime for over 15 years.

This year was no exception, with almost 3,000 fewer offences recorded in 2006/07 than the previous year, a reduction of 2.2%. There were reductions in house burglary, vehicle crime, criminal damage, robbery and sexual offences. Only violent crime has risen, due in part to the force's uncompromising stance against anti-social behaviour. Up to February 2007 there was a 27% increase in the number of people arrested for violent crime, and Northumbria has the lowest levels of reported violent crime per 1,000 of population when compared with similar forces.

In 2006/07, nearly 6,000 more offences were detected than in the previous year – a rise in the overall detection rate from 34.7% to 40%. The sanction detection rate increased from 32% to 37.5%.

A corporate volume crime management model has enhanced investigative standards and has a detections audit schedule to provide a regular assessment of quality as well as quantitative performance.

Protective services

Maintaining a first-class Neighbourhood Policing service while having the capacity to address serious and organised crime has required that the force re-engineer its business needs and funding. As a first step, the new major investigation teams (MITs) will take

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responsibility for all homicide and manslaughter investigations, as well as other serious or complex enquiries.

The development of protective services is supported by an enhanced field intelligence, research and analytical capability, a dedicated harm reduction unit to assist in protecting vulnerable people, increased resources for computer crime and asset recovery, and a proactive capacity within the professional standards department.

Public satisfaction

A citizen focus project board was set up in May 2006 to review the force's approach to citizen focus, marketing and customer service. This has led to structural and organisational changes to improve accessibility and contact internally and externally.

To improve user satisfaction, a training programme supporting citizen focus, the national quality of service commitment (QoSC) and Neighbourhood Policing started in May 2007 for all members of staff. This is to raise awareness of customer service, needs and expectations and encourage everyone to seek ways of improving the quality of the service they provide.

The creation of a contact management unit within the communications department means that people call only one number to contact Northumbria Police, and calls are handled through an automated distribution and handling system. Enquiry office opening times, layout and call routing arrangements have been standardised, the Northumbria partnership 101 system has been enhanced and the force's web-based services and services to the media have been reviewed.

Northumbria continues to exceed national targets for both emergency and non-emergency calls.

The force's internal inspection process provides the framework for continual improvement and opportunities to share best practice and identify efficiency savings.

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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	Good
Performance management	Grade
Performance management	Excellent
Protecting vulnerable people	Grade
Child abuse	Excellent
Domestic violence	Good
Public protection	Good
Missing persons	Good

Neighbourhood Policing

GRADE	GOOD
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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 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

The protective services review (PSR) aims to build on the public service and performance review of 2003, which initiated a restructure of the force. Within the framework of the PSR a Northumbria Police Neighbourhood Policing model was created, to be co-terminus with local authority boundaries, and resources were allocated on the basis of performance and the diverse area covered by the force. A total of 38 sectors were identified. The model developed the role and expectations for neighbourhood inspectors and has provided sufficient resources to enhance performance. Appropriate spans of command and control were established for supervisors and a mixed economy of resources was created with a more creative role for PCSOs. A set of corporate principles were established which area commanders populated to address local conditions.

The ACC (area operations) provides a tangible commitment to the area of Neighbourhood Policing, supported by the rest of the chief officer team through the 'Total Policing' ethos. The PSR project board includes all of the chief officer team and is a key decision-making body overseeing a comprehensive reshaping of the organisation. The ACC chairs the Neighbourhood Policing implementation board and sits on the citizen focus board. The Neighbourhood Policing model makes sure that all area command policing functions centre

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on the Neighbourhood Policing inspector. The Chief Constable and the chief officer lead (ACC) visited all of the 38 Neighbourhood Policing sectors to ensure the required level of commitment towards Neighbourhood Policing.

The force has engaged consultants from KPMG in support of the 'Vision 2020', a focus of which was working effectively across portfolios on cross-cutting themes and developing a citizen-focused approach within the organisation.

Northumbria regards assessment of its needs as being a fundamental issue, together with an understanding of the relationships and linkages with other areas of policing. Neighbourhood Policing is not viewed as being about the model but about the outcomes.

The Chief Constable has bid for the Sunderland area command to be a demonstrator site for the workforce modernisation pilot programme. The bid is based on new levels of mixed economy further integrating community, response and investigation resources, with Neighbourhood Policing at the hub. The force is looking for a product that is sustainable, affordable and transferable and it will also look at the business of performance at a new level within existing and future imperatives around citizen focus and public confidence.

The British Crime Survey (BCS) data shows that public confidence and satisfaction in Northumbria policing services is consistently high when compared with the same data for similar forces.

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 in Northumbria. The responses gave a mixed indication in respect of the service given by the force: two of the six indicators were above the national average range; two fell within the range; and two were below the range.

Strengths

Neighbourhood Policing has been accorded a high priority by the responsible chief officer, who is actively driving development in this area. The project board is effective in steering development, with a strong focus on quality.

Within the 38 policing sectors a total of 746 neighbourhood areas have been identified in consultation with partners and the community. A force corporate template was based on local requirements, national doctrine and good practice elsewhere. The best value review (BVR) implementation plan is 70% complete, with appropriate partnership input. There are no plans to dissolve the project team.

Corporate frameworks are in place across the force, ie in respect of the staffing of neighbourhood teams and the shift patterns of PCSOs. However, frameworks have flexibility within them to enable the area commanders to deliver local policing to meet local needs. The Chief Constable and the ACC lead have undertaken a series of planned meetings with each of the neighbourhood teams to promote effective working, balancing robust corporate infrastructures with local flexibility.

The chief officer lead is the chair of the project board, which continues to be supported by a dedicated project team. The recommendations and key issues identified in the force BVR of Neighbourhood Policing fed into the project implementation plan, an area command action plan and a self-inspection timetable. Partners have been involved at each stage of the

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process together with the Police Authority. Over 70% of the actions in the implementation plan have been completed.

There is senior CDRP representation from Safer Newcastle, the crime and disorder reduction partnership (CDRP), on the force's Neighbourhood Policing strategic programme board. Within the pathfinder BCU, development of Neighbourhood Policing has been informed by support from the CDRP, eg training, analytical support, problem-solving aids, etc. The force has effective strategic links with the Police Authority, the Government Office for the North East (GONE) and the Home Office Neighbourhood Policing programme.

The development of Neighbourhood Policing is being managed within the force strategic management framework, consistent with the ethical principles and the Total Policing ethos.

Northumbria's implementation programme for Neighbourhood Policing is framed within the ten principles. The force is ensuring that Neighbourhood Policing is delivered in a way that builds a successful approach to policing – one that has an impact on the whole of the organisation, is sustainable, is supported by the correct investment, represents value for money and takes performance to the next level.

Members of the strategic independent advisory group (SIAG) have access to chief officers and area command management teams. Members describe their working relationships as constructive and say that their role is built around having a strategic influence, rather than focusing on community engagement.

PCSOs feel accepted and valued by neighbourhood and response colleagues. Good performance is formally and informally recognised by supervisors, sector inspectors and members of the SMT but tends not to be acknowledged in performance development review (PDR) reports.

Demand profiles have been introduced that are consistent with national call-handling principles. Response officers are allocated to sectors with an expectation that if radio or tasking deployment does not require otherwise those officers will work within their allocated sector. Officers can be deployed to high-priority 1 and 2 calls outside their sector.

Neighbourhood Policing roles are deemed to be specialist posts and attract a significant special priority payment. The force has an annual reward and recognition scheme; at the most recent ceremony a number of neighbourhood officers were recognised. A Northumbria neighbourhood officer is the current Police Review Community Officer of the Year.

The force has considered existing good working practices and incorporated these within the deployment model framework, eg the diary system at Sunderland.

Partners are involved in the area command tasking and co-ordination groups (TCGs), with the exception of Gateshead area command, which has introduced a multi-agency TCG based on the sectors, which is in line with the area command TCG process.

There are examples of effective community engagement within a number of the area commands. An example is the close links between the Cowgate Community Forum and the local Neighbourhood Policing team. The forum is a locally managed, multi-agency initiative that provides support to the residents of the Cowgate estate in Newcastle. The estate has low levels of educational attainment and high levels of unemployment (8.5%) and ill health. Projects exist to improve health and education (eg a breakfast club, fitness meetings, access to computer facilities), and a multi-agency monthly crime and community safety meeting (in which local neighbourhood officers participate) addresses specific community

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concerns about crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour. The force has introduced a policy in March 2007 requiring each neighbourhood inspector to incorporate an engagement plan within their sector profile. The policy specifies what must be included: issue identification, prioritisation, problem solving, feedback and recording.

Joint problem-solving processes are embedded in sectors across the force area. There is evidence of:

- multiple sources of data recorded in neighbourhood profiles, with variation across area commands. Corporacy and standards are seen as an area for improvement via GONE;
- problem-solving initiatives contained in neighbourhood profiles and individual area command problem-solving databases. A corporate recording system is being piloted in South Tyneside;
- in neighbourhood profiles, tasking and responses from partners regarding problem solving, eg violent crime in Sunderland city centre; and
- partner involvement, via neighbourhood profiles, and community involvement, via elected representatives in some cases (eg the SNAPS project in Newcastle). Use of elected representatives is encouraged across the force via guidance published to complement agreed policy. There is evidence of community co-ordinators being used in other areas, eg the Gateshead neighbourhood profile mentions a neighbourhood co-ordinator. Other community representatives include the 'Wear Kids' youth group.

The force established the citizen focus project board in May 2006, in order to review the disparate work streams pertinent to citizen focus, marketing and customer service. The key aim of the board is to centralise the management and co-ordination of these activities, in order to develop and define a standard for high-quality service delivery. Work undertaken within the project is designed to deliver the following public-facing objectives:

- build trust and confidence in the community and reduce crime and disorder;
- provide a citizen-focused service to the public, especially victims and witnesses, that responds to the needs of individuals and communities and inspires confidence in the police;
- enable local communities to trigger action by the relevant agencies to deal with persistent problems of crime and disorder;
- improve the management of interactions with the public and partners, (Neighbourhood Policing programme team gap analysis);
- secure cultural change within the force to ensure that citizen focus becomes 'business as usual' for members of Northumbria Police;
- raise awareness levels throughout the force, through the development of suitable performance and accountability frameworks;
- create a diverse, effective and flexible workforce; and
- make it easy to contact the police, keep people informed, provide a professional and high-quality service and ensure that the voice of the service user counts.

As a consequence of the work being driven by the citizen focus project board, Northumbria is in a strong position to demonstrate compliance with the original implementation plan for the QoSC, which was agreed by the Police Authority in April 2005.

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The force aims to effectively integrate policing activity. The Neighbourhood Policing model puts the sector inspector at the core of policing activity, supported by the area command TCG process. The resource allocation structures are defined within the force deployment model, the abstraction policy and the call-handling plan. Deployment decisions are evidence based and are about getting the right people into the right places at the right time. Abstractions are monitored at the sector performance meetings. The force is conducting a review of 24/7 shift patterns aimed at making further improvements in the availability of resources. Investigative workloads are monitored via performance management reviews.

PCSOs are routinely briefed by their sergeant or the neighbourhood beat manager with whom they are aligned. The briefing is predominantly electronic and includes specific taskings, eg to patrol specific areas to provide high-visibility reassurance, prevent crime or keep observations of suspects. Each time they leave their base they have a clear understanding of what is expected of them.

Approximately 20% of operational members of staff are in Neighbourhood Policing roles, as per ACPO tracker submission. Vacancies for neighbourhood officers, including PCSOs, are given a high priority. Continuity and succession planning are included in the force policy.

Partnership training has been undertaken for area command staff in conjunction with the Centrex neighbourhood improvement workshops. Partners were invited to attend and participated in the training provided.

An induction package for police officers and staff working on neighbourhood teams has been developed by partners to educate new staff as to the processes, remit and aspirations of the CDRP. Partners are also having an input in the training of police officers (the inspectors training programme is delivered to all inspectors, not just those in Neighbourhood Policing roles).

The force is developing joint training with partners, ie local authority wardens with the neighbourhood teams. A volunteers' pilot is being conducted within the Northumberland area command.

The force participated in the Centrex partnership workshop in September 2006 and the practitioners workshops in February.

A dedicated special branch intelligence officer has been allocated to all area commands. The role includes the following:

- seek opportunities for acquiring intelligence relevant to the special branch control strategy;
- build and maintain partnerships with policing teams, other law enforcement agencies and local government departments;
- build and maintain community contacts;
- assess and disseminate locally obtained intelligence to headquarters;
- work with other departments and agencies in the identification of potential covert human intelligence sources;
- deliver counter-terrorism and other briefings or advice to policing teams and partnership agencies and, when necessary, facilitate the provision of threat assessments; and
- maintain area command-based security focus for the benefit of the local SMT.

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Northumbria is one of 12 forces which took part in the Home Office BCU performance pilot. This has been rolled out across the force and involves a number of key performance drivers. The pilot has involved identification of local policing priorities and problems and measures of confidence, satisfaction and the quality of local policing services. The work has included survey activity – designed in conjunction with area commanders and partners – covering force issues and aligned to BCS questions where possible. Analysis has been done on a force, area and sector basis, and the survey attracted over 17,000 responses, which represented 53% of the total sample. The initial survey will be repeated, most likely on the basis of a rolling programme.

The Neighbourhood Policing programme is supported by the chief officer lead who manages area command action plans through the policy support group (PSG) meetings. This includes a self-inspection package to be used by each area command twice yearly until implementation is completed. The focus is on the outcomes from the investment in Neighbourhood Policing.

Within the area commands, neighbourhood teams are consulted on a regular basis through inspectors, sergeants or sector meetings where sector priorities and tactics for delivering results are discussed. The Sunderland area command neighbourhood teams meet with an SMT member every seven weeks throughout the ongoing implementation of Neighbourhood Policing. Topics for discussion have included the make-up of the teams; deployment issues; role definition; community engagement; and the identification of the neighbourhoods. Within the Gateshead area command a similar position exists. Every ten weeks each shift meets with the SMT, where there is an opportunity for them to air any concerns they have in an open forum.

A communications plan has been agreed with partners through the Neighbourhood Policing board. The plan includes internal and external strands. Every effort is taken to promote Neighbourhood Policing teams, including: the local press; local authority newsletters; the force website; a focused policing summary to every household; the specialist press, eg the Jewish Newsletter; and public meetings, eg ward meetings in Newcastle area command, area forums in North and South Tyneside area commands, engagement panels in the Sunderland area command, and parish meetings in Northumberland.

Media campaigns are intelligence led and are determined in the main by the area commands. The major planned campaigns tend to be linked to issues in the control strategy. However, the situation is more flexible than that, and the force can respond to particular needs. Branding guidelines have been introduced to ensure that campaigns carried out in partnership take corporate branding issues on board.

There has been a significant number of high-profile media campaigns to support the development of specific issues. The campaigns have been well received and have made a significant contribution to improving public confidence in policing services. Each campaign is evaluated using an outside agency on the basis of 500 face-to-face interviews, and the results from different campaigns are cross-referred and inform the development of future campaigns.

A robust abstraction policy with targets has been implemented. The policy is monitored via the performance management meetings. The resource management system will include abstraction measurement capability.

In the Newcastle area command, the operational delivery group is supported by a range of tactical delivery networks to address specific problems. This includes a multi-agency anti-social behaviour group which can be tasked to examine and address problems on a themed

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or geographical basis. This group consists of operational partner representatives (at inspector level) who develop integrated action plans based on the National Intelligence Model (NIM) to address specific problems. The tactical group meets every four weeks (aligned to the ODG cycle) and is accountable to the ODG. Other area commands have similar processes.

The '101' project has been successfully implemented, together with new arrangements around critical incident management, firearms deployments and high-risk missing persons. There is evidence that critical incident managers are using the neighbourhood profiles for community impact assessment and when considering tactical options.

There is a structured deployment policy for members of the Special Constabulary who are linked to the neighbourhood teams. Members are now required to give notice of their intention to report for duty in order to give the neighbourhood team time to plan their deployment. Within this framework there is some flexibility to deploy special constables with the 24/7 teams where support is required. Since the introduction of this system the number of hours worked by members of the Special Constabulary has increased 400%, with only six instances (out of 167) in the first quarter of 2007 of inappropriate deployment.

The force has implemented the national PDR, which is mandatory for all staff with the exception of student officers. Each member of staff, including neighbourhood teams, has a specific competency-based role profile contained on the integrated competency framework (ICF) profile, against which objectives are set.

Northumbria has a long-established hate crime/incident revisit policy. A victim care bureau and witness care unit have been established, which facilitate contact and provide information and care for victims and witnesses.

There is clear evidence of the effective use of community impact assessments (CIAs) across the force area. Examples include a murder in South Tyneside; the fire bombing of a residential property in Sunderland; and a fight between a white and an Asian youth in Newcastle. The debrief for any critical IAG includes appropriate scrutiny of the CIA.

Work in progress

The area command self-inspection framework is based on that developed by the ACPO Neighbourhood Policing programme and is to be carried out by each of the area commands on two occasions before the implementation target date in April 2008. The force project team will provide quality assurance through reality checking; and in addition the progress on the area command action plan will be monitored through the chief officer lead's portfolio steering group.

The objects of the citizen focus project board are deliberately designed to echo and complement the principles behind Neighbourhood Policing, given the concerted effort by the force to improve the quality of service and provide a cohesive, joined-up message to internal and external customers. In pursuit of this aim, the following work streams are being progressed through the board:

- the production of a generic contact details and advice leaflet, to replace the existing CID 88;
- a review of all force publications, to ensure consistency and relevance regarding the key messages for internal and external customers;

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- implementation of the single call resolution model;
- a review of the working practices in all front offices;
- a review of web-based services;
- a review of media services;
- implementation of the national QoSC;
- citizen focus and QoSC training and awareness raising; and
- a force communications plan.

Work is under way to mainstream items pertinent to the QoSC (ie improvements to the front office environment) within headquarters departments and area command business plans.

The force is to use geo-demographic techniques to achieve enhanced profiling and community mapping, linked into the strategic assessment. Work has been undertaken to produce a first version of the profiles based on 38 sectors. The force is working towards a professional sustainable approach to process development with a clear sense of purpose and direction. Structures are in place to deliver an excellent product not just for Neighbourhood Policing but for the wider partnership environment. Arrangements are being made to ensure a bottom-up flow of information and effective back office support for all of these areas.

An audit of community engagement activity was conducted as part of the BVR of Neighbourhood Policing. There followed a recommendation to introduce a set of minimum standards for community engagement and establishing local priorities. These will involve tiers of consultation which will identify and feed local issues into the force strategic assessment, looking at issues which shape people's confidence in the police. The standards are based on good practice. For example, Operation Goldfinch in Gateshead is a multi-agency mechanism for identifying and responding to signal crimes and has now been made available to other area commands as a tactical option. The force is taking a long-term view of community engagement and citizen focus and with a focus on meaningful outcomes.

A community engagement communications plan and toolkit has been agreed with partners at the Neighbourhood Policing implementation board, and this activity is linked to the publication of local policing summaries. Each team has its own page on the force website, all members of staff are in the process of receiving Neighbourhood Policing training and citizen focus training, and there are plans for a new corporate communications strategy to drive forward the citizen focus agenda.

Each sector will have its own community engagement plan which will feed into the sector profile. The force is working to achieve a consistent quality standard across the organisation.

The contact management function has been subjected to a detailed change programme in line with the BVR of Neighbourhood Policing. A new deployment model with a clear distinction between five grades of call was introduced in April 2007.

The force has set ambitious response and resolution times. There are now significant changes to the way in which the crime desks work, whereby the force would attend almost all instances which involve the report of a crime. The drift towards attending all incidents is now being controlled in line with the graded response policy.

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High call volume generally coincides with grade 3 incidents, which currently represent 70% of all calls. The target is to reduce this proportion to 40%. Grades 1 and 2 are the priority response calls, and grade 3 calls can be allocated to response officers or to neighbourhood teams, depending on the circumstances. The effectiveness of the force in this area will depend on the ability of local line management and supervision to apply the proper controls. Grade 4 calls are diary appointments, and a target has been set that this type of call should represent 15% of all calls. Grade 5 calls will be resolved without deployment and will be mainly in the hands of the call management unit.

The headquarters-based call management unit incorporates 20 members of staff and supervisors and is the means by which dynamic monitoring of grade 3 calls will take place. There is a need for real-time quality assurance to take place to maintain quality services.

The deployment model will be a key feature in the harmonisation of resources around neighbourhoods. The Chief Constable is keen for the benefits to be quickly visible to the reactive, investigative and neighbourhood teams as a means of achieving a greater understanding of the relationships between the different functions.

Case-building activity is being developed to support front-line officers and in particular Neighbourhood Policing and to reinforce the force's abstraction policy.

The force is developing joint training with partners, such as local authority wardens with the neighbourhood teams. A volunteers' pilot is being conducted within the Northumberland area command.

An NIM review board is to be established, which will feed into the force information management board.

The force has established a performance management steering group to develop a suite of performance measures. Although these are based on activity common to all members of staff, it is understood that teams have specific expectations of different functions and different geographical areas. Options being considered include indicators which reflect boundaries of acceptable performance and a band of competency. A database will support this activity.

Provision has been made within the 2007/08 budget to further increase consultation and quality assurance activity. This will involve surveys to support Neighbourhood Policing; surveys of statutory user satisfaction and quality of service; and staff, departmental and area command surveys.

Within the Newcastle area command a process is being developed jointly by the Agencies against Race and Hate Crime (ARCH) and the community relations unit to assess community tensions in wards. Key individuals will be tasked every four weeks with making specific enquiries about feelings in communities, with a view to maintaining a 'traffic light' database that can be used to alert a range of interventions.

Joint problem solving is taking place. In the Sunderland area command, this was seen as well established through local multi-agency problem solving (LMAPS) meetings, which involve a range of partners. Processes in other area commands are not yet embedded to this level. However, partners are positive about the future.

Joint training is to be co-ordinated by the force training department. Examples of existing joint training include the SNAPS joint problem solving in Newcastle; tenancy enforcement

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and with the Environment Agency in South Tyneside; and training of local authority wardens in Gateshead.

The delivery of problem-solving initiatives is contained in the neighbourhood profiles and area command problem-solving databases. A corporate recording system has been piloted in the South Tyneside area command. This is acknowledged as work in progress.

Data sharing is an area of significant focus. The force has seconded a senior officer to GONE to support the development of partnership information-sharing capacity and intelligence processes and has the ability to support meaningful strategic assessment at a regional level. A joint strategic assessment process has taken place in Sunderland, and the target for Newcastle is September 2007.

The force is relaunching neighbourhood watch and an implementation plan has been agreed. This will ensure further integration into Neighbourhood Policing. In addition, the force is forming a volunteer structure, as suggested by the national neighbourhood watch lead.

Processes for information sharing between the area commands and their CDRPs are effective, although there are significant differences in the capacities of the CDRPs. For example, in the Sunderland CDRP there is a team of experienced analysts who have access to the police systems. The Sunderland CDRP has also allocated £100,000 to the development of joint intelligence systems. Northumberland CDRP, however, does not currently have an analyst within the team, and their financial boundaries would not currently allow for this. Despite these differences, all CDRP representatives reported positive experiences of information sharing with the relevant area commands at all levels.

Core leadership development programme (CLDP) training has been delivered to police staff for the past two years and is now being delivered to inspectors and sergeants. This is being delivered in a controlled way and with robust evaluation on a pilot basis in the Newcastle area command, where it incorporates elements of Neighbourhood Policing. This is a development of the workbook-based CLDP framework, and as a result achievement of the learning outcomes has been more consistent. There has been positive feedback from the pilot, which is due for completion in June 2007.

There is currently no formal relationship between the area command IAGs and the SIAG. The need for a closer relationship is currently under review.

Areas for improvement

CDRP partners are involved in tasking in a number of the area commands, while those that are not involved are changing their structures in order to facilitate this. Where partners are attending TCGs, they report this as a meaningful process where they are routinely allocated tasks and are making a positive contribution to the process. The inspection team visited an area command TCG. Specific issues around community engagement and public satisfaction and confidence formed a very small part of the discussions, which mainly concerned levels of crime and the management of targets that were having a significant impact on the levels of crime. The focus and interpretation of the issues was narrow.

The NIM support team has flagged up analytical capability as an area for development, particularly in relation to community intelligence. In response, dedicated analysts are being provided to each area command to manage the links between community engagement and the problem-solving process and to identify recurring problems and priorities. Across the

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force, analytical capability is being enhanced with the introduction of 31 new members of staff. Each area command will gain one senior analyst and one researcher to assist with Neighbourhood Policing. This investment needs to be converted into delivery. The problem-solving database needs to be refreshed and has been acknowledged as an area for improvement.

The force has recruited a new corporate communications manager as the first stage of the plan to implement a marketing strategy. Media services will become a corporate communications function, which will include the acquisition of a communications officer for each of the area commands. A gap analysis has been undertaken by an independent body. The role of the PCSO has been defined within the integrated competency framework, and guidance is available on the instructional information system (IIS) to highlight the distinction in roles between PCSOs and police officers. Although this has lent itself to a better understanding across the force in relation to the PCSO role, some variance in interpretation of the PCSO role exists. The force needs to redress this variance to encourage consistent service delivery, support and training.

Neighbourhood Policing will form an element of the citizen focus training to be delivered to all members of staff from April 2007. Neighbourhood Policing also features in intelligence training. Centrex training products have influenced the development of force training products in support of the development of Neighbourhood Policing. The Centrex package has been piloted in the Newcastle area command. A training needs analysis has been carried out at inspector, sergeant, constable and PCSO level.

Staff described training in respect of problem solving, anti-social behaviour order (ASBO) applications etc as being inadequate. Some supervisors have tried to influence themes for the half day training session but have been informed that central prescription gives little opportunity for local flexibility. There is evidence that supervisors have acted upon their own initiative to arrange sessions to raise awareness of specific issues among their staff.

Some PCSOs believe that the training they receive does not equip them to undertake their role effectively. There is a belief that the provision of training is haphazard and depends on opportunity and availability.

RECOMMENDATION 1

A community engagement communications plan and toolkit has been agreed with partners. However, there remains a need to develop an engagement strategy that ensures that members of local communities and partners have a consistent opportunity to be involved in identifying neighbourhood priorities; that engagement tactics are tailored to manage expectations; and that effective opportunities are provided to give or receive feedback on the levels of service provided.

Developing Practice

TITLE: Effective tension monitoring and community impact assessments – Sunderland Area Command

PROBLEM:

The area command's community contact details were held in different paper and computer-based systems by the seven community inspectors and 14 community sergeants. This meant that contact details held by one community team were, on the whole, inaccessible to other teams.

Also, the system for monitoring tension was present but inconsistent, and details were not circulated among key staff. This meant that an inspector working in one area was unaware of issues relating to tension in another.

SOLUTION:

Community contact details

All of the contact details held by all of the teams were collated and migrated onto one central database (initially, some 300+ contacts). Any amendments or additions are now sent to the 'gatekeeper' (chief inspector (operations support)), and the master database is updated.

To assist the community teams a 'community contacts directory' is printed off from the database for each of them. The directory is arranged alphabetically by area. Periodically a new directory is circulated (when there are sufficient amendments or additions). The directory's location allows access for the community inspectors and sergeants.

This solution is part of the area command's movement towards a position where any of the community inspectors or sergeants would know who to contact (at least initially) in any area (ie not just their own) to start a community impact assessment (CIA).

While the directory is useful for day-to-day use, it is of more benefit at the point of the community teams' area command responsibility for CIAs. This links into the shift pattern for the neighbourhood inspectors, which provides the area command with an inspector on duty late shift during the week and on duty at the weekend.

There are two types of community impact assessment: 'emergency' CIAs, which are conducted within six hours of the initial request by a critical incident commander or senior investigating officer (SIO); and 'full' CIAs, conducted within 12 or 24 hours. This would contain extensive consultation with community contacts and provide the relevant commanders with a broader understanding of the impact and implications of an incident. It is possible that this would be the initial assessment if the request was made during office hours.

Tension indicator monitoring

The existing community intelligence system is updated on a weekly basis with a sector-specific overview of tension indicators. The overview is broken down under the following headings: political; racial; crime; and community. This provides an intelligence system within the NIM process. The weekly tension indicator entries are collated by the chief inspector (operations support) and emailed to all community inspectors and sergeants.

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OUTCOME(S):

The outcomes have been:

- more effective tension monitoring;
- more complete and informed CIAs (the inspectors have all produced ward 'pen pictures', which are added to the front of the CIA to provide an overview);
- the CIAs are undertaken for relatively low-level incidents, which means that contact with key groups, organisations and individuals is maintained on a regular basis, thereby breaking down barriers; and
- the CIAs have become an effective means of marketing police activity (eg a raid at a rave club in March 2006, where the CIA was used to highlight the raid to local people and councillors).

FORCE CONTACT: Chief Inspector 7856 Paul Orchard – 01661 872555, ext 66124

TITLE: Operation Forge – community tension response – Sunderland Area Command

PROBLEM:

During the summer of 2006 the area of Thornhill, in Sunderland, experienced a rise in tension in the community. It is clear that the seeds of tension were sown some time earlier, with arrests having been made after fighting between Asian and white youths from Thornhill School in March 2006. Sporadic disorder and violence had occurred throughout that year, with the tension reaching its height in the summer.

The disorder centred on large groups of Asian and white youths from local schools gathering before, during and after school, meeting at pre-arranged venues and engaging in violent exchanges. There were several allegations of groups of either Asian or white youths launching unprovoked assaults on isolated (and often innocent) schoolchildren from the other ethnic background.

It was not clear whether this was a racial dispute or rather a convenient excuse for young men to engage in violence. There was community and media attention on the disorder, and an immediate response was necessary.

SOLUTION:

Police senior management held a critical independent advisory group meeting, and among a number of considerations a formal response was communicated under the banner of Operation Forge, a high-profile policing operation that was complemented by several strands of community engagement and problem solving.

The local neighbourhood team took a leading role, assisting in the resourcing of local reassurance patrols. These deployments were carefully managed to be proportionate to levels of tension, as determined from local community intelligence. To complement the operation the team did much to promote engagement and cohesion and involved a wide range of partners and voluntary organisations in the process. Through strong links that were built up with Thornhill school, the team was successful in securing a community base within the school, which is still used on a regular basis.

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To formalise the approach to cohesion, an extraordinary LMAPS group was convened, which included a number of key partners.

OUTCOME(S):

Operation Forge has created an extremely strong base, allowing local agencies to address the underlying causes of tension and to inform an appropriate policing response.

Through working with the school, police officers are able to gauge levels of tension and intervene where appropriate. They retain a thorough overview of any issues that occur in the area. While Operation Forge remains an active consideration as an option, in practice it rarely has to be used.

Each of the organisations involved has played a part in reducing local tensions via youth work and diversionary activities. Periodic meetings take place between all those involved to discuss future progress. The police area commander recently secured support from the Local Authority Community Cohesion Department, which agreed to co-ordinate and oversee all future diversionary and cohesion issues and to apply its expertise to ensure that all required aspects are catered for. The local policing team will remain involved, however, and continue to apply a proportionate level of policing to allow these activities to take full effect.

FORCE CONTACT: Steve Tallentire, Neighbourhood Inspector, Sunderland Central – 0191 5636768

TITLE: Tackling crime and anti-social behaviour in Wallsend – North Tyneside Area Command

PROBLEM:

Within the Wallsend area a number of neighbourhoods (Wallsend, Howdon, Willington Quay) rank in the top 10% of deprived areas in England in relation to employment, housing and educational attainment. Recorded crime and anti-social behaviour within the sector were rising. Supervision within the neighbourhood team identified an opportunity to use anti-social behaviour legislation, in partnership with the local authority, to challenge the offending behaviour by way of education, diversion and enforcement.

SOLUTION:

Meetings are arranged between the sector disorder sergeant and the housing patch manager from the local council office (held every four weeks) to discuss those individuals, families and housing estates which are causing concern. A joint decision is then made as to how the problem is to be resolved. This is usually the implementation of an acceptable behaviour agreement (ABA), which can be either a suspended agreement (duration six weeks) or a full agreement (duration 12 months), depending on the individual's offending history; tenancy enforcement is also highlighted. A brief overview of the process is:

- reprimand, final warning, caution, first conviction – suspended ABA;
- continued offending and disorder – full ABA;
- further offending and disorder – breach of ABA;
- further offending and disorder – final warning;
- persistent offending and disorder – ASBO, anti-social behaviour injunction (ASBI), tenancy enforcement.

The full process is recorded on a computerised schedule and used as evidence when

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making an application for an ASBO, ASBI or eviction proceedings.

During the surgery, attendees are referred to partner agencies in relation to drug or alcohol issues, if applicable, and juveniles are invited to attend a drop-in event on a Friday night at a local school (Positive Futures). The local youth offending team (YOT) is contacted prior to the surgeries and given details of juveniles who are to attend, including brief information about the type of agreement they are being invited to sign. The YOT then contacts the neighbourhood team with any recommendations or concerns it may have.

OUTCOME(S):

The initiative had several positive outcomes, including:

- signing of a total of 47 suspended agreements, with only one advancing on to a full agreement, showing that 46 individuals have not re-offended; and
- a vast reduction in the amount of recorded crime and disorder over an 18-month period:
 - criminal damage – down 30.0%
 - burglary (dwelling) – down 18.1%
 - burglary (other) – down 5.0%
 - violent crime – down 16.0%
 - vehicle crime – down 18.0%
 - all crime down 20.5%
 - detections – up 8.0%
 - disorder – down 34.0%.

FORCE CONTACT: Sergeant 3254 Mal Wallace – 0191 2146555, ext 63341

Performance Management

GRADE	EXCELLENT
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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

Although the current strategic vision is appropriate, the force is looking at developing a longer-term vision: Vision 2020. The vision has been established around an assessment of need. KPMG consultancy has been employed to assist the process and to help with the visioning document. Communication and how the force will make the vision into a reality are key issues.

Northumbria Police has prepared an organisational assessment covering both crime and non-crime areas, including performance, finance, public consultation and business planning. Following chief officer consideration, the force sees the opportunity to merge the recommendations of the strategic assessment and the organisational assessment to identify priorities across all policing performance assessment framework (PPAF) or APACS domains. These priorities can then be addressed through local business planning and evidenced in the local policing plan. An early prototype has been completed that allows performance regarding crime, detections and arrests to be compared. The next step is to incorporate measures relating to incidents and attendance. A second group of measures to ensure the broadest picture of performance and activity has been proposed and will form the basis of continuing consultation with area commands.

There has been consultation with members of staff on what the force really values around performance and on how to create an environment where members of staff can value their contribution to performance.

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The performance targets are shaped to achieve and excel in the upper quartile of performance. The force has identified the risk of failing to deliver in key areas and has accordingly set stretch targets.

Strengths

Northumbria Police has prepared an organisational assessment covering both crime and non-crime areas, including performance, finance, public consultation and business planning. Chief officers have a clear appreciation of intelligence, intelligence processes (NIM) and their relationship with performance management and strategic planning. A step change in investment in performance management is associated with the appointment of the current Chief Constable.

Chief officers use performance review meeting structures to look at themes across portfolios. As a result, the development of themed areas of responsibility is being actively developed. The force is building systems to monitor activities which underpin the top-line performance indicators.

A robust process sets targets from the top down, informed by PSA targets and based on an aspiration to reach the upper quartile of performance in each category in the most similar forces (MSF) group and to achieve continuous improvement beyond that. Aspirations around baseline grades are also employed in the target-setting process. Northumbria looks at the cost of achieving grades as a consideration in target setting. The force is currently introducing target holidays, and acknowledges that saturation point may have been achieved in some areas.

Data-sharing relationships are strong. The Sunderland area command has a project in place (Vault) to develop an effective partnership data warehouse which is being driven by partners across the area command and led by GONE. The force is using these means to widen the scope of its strategic assessment.

Performance management structures have become relevant to operational delivery. Members of staff are increasingly being held to account for doing the 'right things'. Appropriate links are made to the financial management of the force.

The corporate development department has adopted more of a business change role, subsuming the public service review (PSR) and moving those resources into a quality assurance function.

The operational performance meeting (OPM) exists to examine all of the gaps between current performance levels and targets that are set by benchmarking against other forces and BCUs in the MSF. Targets are based on the levels required to achieve top-quartile performance in the MSF. The corporate development department is tasked by the OPM to find out the 'reasons why'. The OPM frequently requires sector inspectors to provide action plans to deal with specific issues for continuous monitoring by the area commander.

All Police Authority members except the chair are members of the audit and scrutiny committee. This demonstrates an effective scrutiny approach with a transparent focus on performance improvement, service efficiency and effectiveness on behalf of local communities.

A business planning database has been developed which tracks the progress of actions aimed at achieving goals and objectives identified in the force plan. An intranet-based

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version has replaced the original standalone system. Actions are prioritised, and some departments have extended its use into a programme management tool.

The force requires all change activity that will affect several areas of the force or lead to significant performance improvement to be recorded on the system, which supports better tracking of issues and actions that cut across portfolios. Training and support have been given to introduce a balanced scorecard philosophy in conjunction with the database, and the force has a number of key performance indicators that are significant within the context of the balanced scorecard. The force adopts a process of simplification to make these tools an asset and not a burden to the organisation.

The force has built capability to support area commands in developing satisfaction and confidence measures and performance management. A survey-based approach has been used to identify local priorities, measure confidence linked to the BCS and monitor perceptions on service delivery. A recent survey involving over 30,000 questionnaires sent to the public resulted in a return rate of 53%. This has enabled the force to provide information to the 38 sector inspectors to inform the development of the area profiles and set local priorities, using authenticated and detailed information gathered to a corporate standard.

Northumbria has identified productivity in terms of outputs associated with desired outcomes as a key issue. The force has recognised the need to assess the balance between demand management and the Neighbourhood Policing functions and the impact on the force and its ability to deliver. There is a clear focus on making Neighbourhood Policing work within the force; however, there is a need to properly assess the impact of the implementation of policy.

An additional superintendent has been deployed in each area command to improve resilience and strengthen leadership. The post holders oversee crime issues, but they also bring improved oversight and accountability to the protecting vulnerable people (PVP) business area to drive standards up. The increase in resources has been well received in the area commands.

Audit and inspection has developed from a table-top environment to more intrusive fieldwork. The approach has more of a customer focus and is based on the HMIC GL3 methodology. Provision has been made within the 2007/08 budget to increase consultation and quality assurance activity. This will involve surveys to support Neighbourhood Policing.

Meetings involving the DCC and corporate development department take place every two weeks, aimed at improving the performance management process. The focus is across a number of strands that impact on effective performance management, and the meetings look at issues in a holistic way and how they impact on different aspects of the business, creating a matrix of performance indicators that describes the relationships and dependencies between different functions.

Through the DCC the force has consulted members of staff on what the force really values around performance and how to create an environment where members of staff can value their contribution to performance. The force has employed consultants (KPMG) in support of this work.

Northumbria has made significant efforts to ensure that the Police Authority has a strategic overview and can scrutinise force performance and the management of its processes effectively. Relationships have been strengthened, and being more open enables the authority to be better informed.

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An information and intelligence department was created in 2006, further enhancing capabilities around level 1 and 2, protective services, Neighbourhood Policing and citizen focus. NIM processes are well developed.

All area commands are at an advanced stage of awareness of their position against targets at key times of the year. Target breaks are being introduced from numerical targets in acknowledged high-performing areas – associated with upper quartile performance in most similar BCU groups.

Northumbria is procuring a system called Performance Soft to fill the gaps identified in the National Management Information System (NMIS) product, ie the interdependencies around the work of crime scene investigators in terms of detections, customer service and accessibility.

There is evidence of continuing improvement in the development of performance management. A thematic internal review of performance management has informed areas of individual accountability. Risks were identified and actions generated within the framework of the force plan.

There is evidence of the force adopting effective evaluation processes. The force incorporates 'areas for improvement' identified in the HMIC baseline assessment (BLA) process with data from its own audit and inspection activity into corporate planning and review processes. Areas for improvement from the BLA self-assessment were cross-referred with the force planning database, and additional cross-referencing was made with the area command business plans. BLA areas for improvement inform the risk assessment, which drives internal audit and inspection activity. They also feature on a database that includes BLA 'work in progress' and SPIs; this database monitors the progress of actions generated from identified areas for improvement. Portfolio steering groups have been established, part of their remit being to monitor developments in areas for improvement.

The local criminal justice board (LCJB) has introduced a performance management group, sitting below board level, to oversee the workings of the local delivery groups. This has ensured a focused and co-ordinated approach that is driving performance.

There is a clear understanding of the need to identify and effectively manage – using a systems audit approach with intrusive inspection – the relationships and interdependencies of all activities that underpin effective performance. The process is designed to look at issues in a holistic way, rather than taking a silo-based interpretation of the top-level performance indicators.

At the corporate level, activity-based costing (ABC) data is used to monitor performance in relation to the front-line policing (FLP) measure, and interim targets are set on that basis. The process has been adapted to take account the new FLP definition and incorporates sickness data. Financial data is also being presented in conjunction with this information.

Additional ABC work has been undertaken to link activity inputs to outputs in relation to burglary dwelling performance and double and single crewing of staff. Ad hoc survey work has also taken place outside of the scope of the national guidance for the training department and in relation to police staff.

ABC data features in the work of the force efficiency group and the workforce modernisation programme. It also features in modelling activity by the corporate development department in developing implementation plans.

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PVP has been shown to be a high priority area for the public. Following the abandonment of force amalgamations, PVP has been high on the agenda of the force and the Police Authority in their move to becoming a strategic force. This is being included in the Chief Constable's vision for the future.

The PSR review, together with an additional PVP-themed review, has pointed to areas for development, and enhancements of public protection units (PPUs) are being piloted in the Newcastle area command. The reviews have also looked at good practice in those area commands that currently operate above the corporate minimum standards. In addition, the force is looking at the issues of reduced overall operational flexibility as a result of further investment in those specialist areas where resources are effectively ring-fenced. A strategic group chaired by the ACC will influence partnership working and corporacy.

Robust performance management around domestic violence provides good evidence of how issues which feature in the force control strategy are managed.

There has been a shift in emphasis from implicit to overtly influential products, and this is associated with a shift in approach of the force TCG together with enhanced capability. The focus is on bringing decision making into the same force tasking environment with better tools and products and on looking at the wider implications of each product. The primary objective is to simplify and to demystify the process without losing integrity and to develop a clear understanding among officers of their responsibility within the intelligence function.

Work in progress

The force has a strong culture of performance in crime reduction and detection but now wishes to develop a broader set of performance indicators to better reflect Neighbourhood Policing and community engagement. The force acknowledges that pursuit of existing performance indicators designed for response officers and CID may not be helping to support community engagement. Purely quantitative performance indicators are not seen as the best way to drive forward improvement. An implementation plan has been developed as a result of a recent thematic review of performance management arrangements within area commands.

A suite of performance measures is being established. These are based on activity common to all members of staff, but there is an understanding that teams have specific expectations of different functions and different geographical areas. The indicators will reflect boundaries of performance and a band of competency. The force will seek to identify exceptions and develop them into the acceptable norms. The system seeks corporacy while acknowledging the variations based on function and geography. A database to support these developments is being designed.

Force and authority officers work together to ensure that members are able to robustly scrutinise the efficiency and effectiveness of the force. Members' scrutiny skills will continue to be developed and strengthened.

The development of performance arrangements outside the internal corporate framework, through joint working arrangements in the wider performance management arena of neighbourhood harm reduction and criminal justice, remains work in progress.

The strategic objectives of the citizen focus programme board continue to be developed. The programme board will provide the environment where the connections between fairness, equality, Neighbourhood Policing and quality of service can be managed. Issues

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cut across a number of chief officer portfolios, and the board will feed actions and influence workstreams in the performance, policy and business management committee structure.

A citizen focus project team was established in 2006 to review the disparate workstreams around citizen focus, marketing and customer service. The team is working to centralise the management and co-ordination of these activities and develop and define a standard for service delivery. The team works to an approved project initiation document (PRINCE2 methodology) and reports directly to the citizen focus project board every four weeks. The DCC is the chief officer lead.

A rolling programme of ABC exercises are carried out where one area command is surveyed per month. The extent to which this information is used by area commands varies, although the level of understanding has grown.

The force is looking to provide a joint assessment between corporate development and the force intelligence bureau, which will provide a control strategy for each domain. Business activity can then be prioritised and assessed according to the impact on domain priorities.

The force is modelling Neighbourhood Policing and the reconfiguration of investigators, including the implications for the introduction of an MIT. The balance and proportion of resources are being modelled, with area commanders being allowed to manage the balance of resources within their particular situation. Locally, resources can be moved horizontally but not vertically.

The force is looking to extend the scope and scale of its PVP activities (eg extra-familial abuse), although there is an issue over resources. A big issue is area commands making resources available to properly support PVP: it really should be seen as their opportunity to have an impact on levels of criminal behaviour in the future. This thinking is a development of work being done in Strathclyde, where an investment in children and young people today, in partnership, will produce lower levels of criminal behaviour and better citizens in the future.

Areas for improvement

Daily demand has been mapped against the availability of resources in each of the area commands. The force has recognised that public demand for service isn't effectively matched to resources and is looking to put more people on the ground to manage demand in conjunction with Neighbourhood Policing. At the present, issues remain in respect of the European Working Time Directive and health and safety standards. These factors are significant in the business change for changing shift work systems. A proposed new shift system can provide 17% to 20% more resources on the ground at key times. The work will be completed in October 2007, and the force is managing the process effectively.

Human resource management is seen as an area for development towards a strategically driven asset that manages people in a way that is consistent with the force vision. The human resources (HR) department has in the past been a traditional and inward-looking personnel department.

A risk to the business is a corporate lack of understanding of the importance of managing data quality. This is often seen to be an unproductive burden on the organisation. The latest detections audit graded Northumbria as Fair. Understanding of management of police information (MoPI) and information security issues are also areas to be addressed.

Developing Practice

TITLE: Area command profiles

PROBLEM:

Performance review publishes several different aspects of performance information in a number of different documents. Some users found it difficult to move between different documents in order to make comparisons and to get an overview of current progress.

SOLUTION:

In order to address the identified problems in having multiple data sources, a single amalgamated document was conceived. This allows comparisons to be made in relation to target, historical performance and performance in comparison with MSF peers.

A profile is produced for each of the six area commands and the force. Each profile provides data in relation to:

- crime levels;
- corresponding figures from the same period of the previous year;
- percentage change;
- crime per 1,000 population;
- overall detection rate;
- sanction detection rate;
- charts showing previous 12-month performance and current target performance;
- counts of cumulative crime from current year and previous year;
- 'traffic-lighting' of current performance to show progress towards target;
- full list of crime and detection targets;
- MSF rank for crime and sanction detections; and
- significant change in MSF.

Following the success of the crime profiles, the documents were expanded and a further sheet added in order to provide concise information relating to non-crime issues. These include:

- arrests and arrest disposal information;
- staffing figures;
- sickness data;
- repeat burglary;
- complaints;
- breakdown of violent crime by aggravating factors;
- road traffic collisions;
- response times;
- incident data;
- VAP sanction detection figures (SPI 3d); and
- domestic violence.

The profiles are published monthly on the force intranet.

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OUTCOME(S):

The outcomes include:

- easier access to a broad range of performance information;
- a simple document that forms the basis of area command inspection;
- reinforcement of central provision of high-quality performance information;
- reduced requirement for area commands to compile data;
- quicker identification of developing performance trends; and
- broader range of performance issues rather than simply concentrating on crime and detections.

FORCE CONTACT: Mr Neill Davy, Performance Review Adviser – 01661 868324

TITLE: Tackling crime and anti-social behaviour in Wallsend – North Tyneside Area Command

PROBLEM:

Within the Wallsend area a number of neighbourhoods (Wallsend, Howdon, Willington Quay) rank in the top 10% of deprived areas in England in relation to employment, housing and educational attainment. Recorded crime and anti-social behaviour within the sector were rising. Supervision within the neighbourhood team identified an opportunity to use anti-social behaviour legislation, in partnership with the local authority, to challenge the offending behaviour by way of education, diversion and enforcement.

SOLUTION:

Meetings are arranged between the sector disorder sergeant and the housing patch manager from the local council office (held every four weeks) to discuss those individuals, families and housing estates which are causing concern. A joint decision is then made as to how the problem is to be resolved. This is usually the implementation of an ABA, which can be either a suspended agreement (duration six weeks) or a full agreement (duration 12 months), depending on the individual's offending history; tenancy enforcement is also highlighted. A brief overview of the process is:

- reprimand, final warning, caution, first conviction – suspended ABA;
- continued offending and disorder – full ABA;
- further offending and disorder – breach of ABA;
- further offending and disorder – final warning;
- persistent offending and disorder – ASBO, ASBI, tenancy enforcement.

The full process is recorded on a computerised schedule and used as evidence when making an application for an ASBO, ASBI or eviction proceedings.

During the surgery, attendees are referred to partner agencies in relation to drug or alcohol issues, if applicable, and juveniles are invited to attend a drop-in event on a Friday night at a local school (Positive Futures). The local YOT is contacted prior to the surgeries with and given details of juveniles who are to attend, including brief information about the type of agreement they are being invited to sign. The YOT then contacts the neighbourhood team with any recommendations or concerns it may have.

OUTCOME(S):

The initiative had several positive outcomes, including:

- signing of a total of 47 suspended agreements, with only one advancing on to a full agreement, showing that 46 individuals have not re-offended; and
- a vast reduction in the amount of recorded crime and disorder over an 18-month period:
 - criminal damage – down 30.0%
 - burglary (dwelling) – down 18.1%
 - burglary (other) – down 5.0%
 - violent crime – down 16.0%
 - vehicle crime – down 18.0%
 - all crime – down 20.5%
 - detections – up 8.0%
 - disorder – down 34.0%.

FORCE CONTACT: Sergeant 3254 Mal Wallace – 0191 2146555, ext 63341

TITLE: Use of a combined database to manage business planning and corporate risk

PROBLEM:

Business planning and corporate risk management have several shared requirements:

- recording local activity such that it is available centrally and to the rest of the organisation;
- evidencing progress made against activity, both locally and to the centre, to support performance management;
- clear structures and guidance to ensure sound planning and identification of corporate risks and to facilitate good management; and
- transparency of decision making.

SOLUTION:

Northumbria Police developed a local planning database in 2005 to capture business plan activity and updates. At the same time, risk management was embedded in the organisation through the use of local and central risk registers.

Both initial solutions were developed independently and were based on local databases. In early 2006 the need for an integrated approach was recognised, and so new, integrated, risk and planning databases have been developed.

Key features of the databases are:

- integration of risk and planning – activities resulting from risks are reflected in business plans, and business plan activity can be ‘mapped’ across to mitigate risks;
- databases are intranet-based, available to all staff, managers and chief officers;
- tasks (planning/risk) can be allocated to named individuals, with online reporting of progress (against each individual task if required) and status (of the action as a whole);
- clearly defined process steps (with compulsory information requirements), to ensure good-quality entries in the databases;
- risks and plans can be flagged up as contributing to several areas such as baseline, force aims, national quality of service or National Centre for Policing Excellence (NCPE)

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doctrine, which in turn can highlight where the organisation may be vulnerable in terms of service delivery; and

- supporting committee structures have been developed to maximise the impact of the databases. Monthly reporting of progress to chief officers is a fundamental requirement.

OUTCOME(S):

The outcomes include:

- ready access to information about business risk management and business planning, including progress and status reporting;
- minimum duplication – updating business activity also updates risk activity;
- realistic and real-time presentation of local activity and status;
- named individuals are accountable for risk and planning, supporting PDR and performance management;
- updates are captured via the system, which maintains an audit trail and facilitates management across diverse sites;
- management reports can instantly be provided against a range of fields such as baseline, quality of service, etc; and
- provides evidence of how business risk management dovetails with the business planning process.

FORCE CONTACT: Dr Mark Wood, Corporate Planning Manager – 01661 868340

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

Northumbria is integrating the separate elements of the PVP agenda into a business framework. The aim is to ensure that the various elements are brought together and that issues are properly managed at every level of the organisation. Each of the PVP elements is required to develop an intelligence plan outlining how they are going to achieve integration, including the basics around area command and force tasking and co-ordination processes. Accountability has been established, and the force now needs to embed intelligence and to monitor the quality of the work being undertaken.

The force clearly understands that this is a high-risk area and has built effective relationships with partners to fully address the issues. Northumbria was one of three forces that presented good practice at the Warwick Conference to all police forces in England and Wales.

Strengths

There is active involvement of chief officers in setting force strategic priorities, which inform the PPU strategic priorities that are recorded in the crime department business plan. Key strategic priorities for 2006/07 were to implement NCPE guidance on investigating domestic abuse; develop a performance management framework; devise an intelligence plan; and build an effective communications strategy. Progress is recorded in the business action plan and via a series of performance and policy group meetings from detective inspector to chief

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officer level. PVP issues are discussed across the portfolios in the chief officers' business meetings and also at the OPM, which all area commanders and the chief officer portfolio leads for PVP and performance attend. Accountability of the area commanders is also managed via the system of performance and policy group meetings. Investigating domestic abuse is included in the force control strategy and strategic assessment under the overarching strategic priority of reducing violent crime.

The force has clearly defined corporate management structures in place in respect of public protection. The lead chief officer is supported by the chief superintendent, superintendent and detective chief inspector based at headquarters. This structure is complemented by the area command PPU structure, where local responsibility lies with the area commander and detective inspector PPU. This clearly established corporate system is a product of the PSR review and ensures accountability at all levels to support performance and service delivery. Links between the area command operational performance and headquarters strategic overview are made by the headquarters PPU inspection process, and by the local multi-agency public protection arrangements (MAPPA) strategy group, which reports to the MAPPA strategic management board (SMB).

The chief officer lead sits on the LCJB, which sets priorities for service to vulnerable victims and monitors progress.

Protecting vulnerable people is recorded as the ninth protective service in the force strategy plan and local policing plan. A PVP PSR review has highlighted 33 areas for development, which are the subject of a project board for implementation in 2007/08.

The force adopts a standards-based and guidance-based approach to the management of public protection. Demand from around the force for awareness-raising activity is high, and the headquarters department provides a detailed insight and overview.

The headquarters PPU undertakes a detailed audit and inspection role that balances corporacy and innovation. Before each inspection, the area command is given details of the issues under examination and completes a self-assessment questionnaire. Multi-agency implications of the issues are a key consideration. The template for assessment has been agreed with area commands through a process of consultation. The assessment is done and areas for improvement agreed in collaboration with the area command SMT.

Work in progress

Overspill work is allocated to non-specialist staff with differing skill levels, thereby affecting the quality of service provided. Following the introduction of PPUs the need for administrative support has become more acute. A review of administrative support has been recommended and action passed to the PSR board.

Intelligence structures are being developed to address the gap in the PVP area of the business. An area for improvement from a recent inspection of PVP in Newcastle is to pull together all aspects of PVP into a consistent communication strategy, to make it easier to embed these workstreams into the application of the NIM. The implications for structural development are being looked at in terms of the intelligence requirement for PVP, where this links into Neighbourhood Policing and neighbourhood sector profiles, and results analysis.

Areas for improvement

Staffing levels were originally set in 2004. The current PSR review recognises that although staffing levels are currently in line with force policy, additional demands have increased workloads and have instigated a review. Members of staff working with the PPU's believe that resource levels should be reviewed against current demand.

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Protecting Vulnerable People – Child Abuse

GRADE	EXCELLENT
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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

Protecting vulnerable people is identified as the ninth protective service in the local policing plan 2007/08, and safeguarding children is a key policing priority outlined in the plan under the overarching strategic priority of reducing crime. The headquarters crime department business plan drives other strategic priorities in this area, and these priorities were determined by the requirements of the NCPE guidance *Working Together: Every Child Matters* and the protective services review. Progress is monitored by the protective services review project board, business plan actions and the headquarters PPU audit/inspection process, which continues to assess effectiveness of PPU activity in safeguarding children. Policies and procedures are consistent with ACPO guidance.

Strengths

The ACC (crime) has the strategic lead for this area. There is active involvement of chief officers in setting force strategic priorities, which inform the PPU strategic priorities. Key strategic priorities for 2006/07 were to implement NCPE guidance on investigating child abuse; develop a performance management framework; devise an intelligence plan; build a communications strategy; and roll out the Impact Nominal Index (INI) programme. Progress

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is recorded in the business action plan and via a series of performance and policy group meetings (at the detective inspector and chief officer level). Child protection is included as a priority in the force local policing plan, where it is included under the overarching strategic priority of reducing crime, but it does not appear in the force control strategy at this stage. The force contributes £30,000 to local safeguarding children boards (LSCBs).

A PVP PSR review has highlighted 33 areas for development, which are the subject of a project board for implementation during 2007/08.

Guidance has been published for accountability from practitioners to the chief officer level. The headquarters PPU audit/inspection structure informs area commanders about the effectiveness of their local PPUs, thereby ensuring accountability of strategic management for actions of practitioners and middle management. Management information is collated by area command SMTs and by headquarters PPU. A PVP communication plan in development will further evidence accountability.

Evidence of innovative activity can be found across the force area. Examples include:

- a clinical network of paediatricians is available on a rota basis according to a strategic health model (partially funded and driven by Northumbria Police) to provide forensic examination in cases of sexual assault for all children (9 am to 10 pm at age appropriate accommodation).
- a forensic nurse project has been funded for 12 months, which will alleviate pressure on doctors and will enhance the service to victims of sexual assault (including children).
- a sexual offence referral centre (SARC) called REACH (rape examination, advice, counselling and help) has been established, which provides a one-stop service for victims of serious sexual assault in terms of examination, counselling and referral to other support pathways. This was one of the first SARCs to exist in the UK and is a significant achievement, particularly as it involved arrangements across a number of primary care trusts, which are currently in dialogue with Northumbria Police to support developments around clinical governance and provision of a daytime forensic examination facility.

Accountability is well managed, and there was consistent evidence from partners of trust and confidence in the force and the processes used to obtain the necessary support. Although it was acknowledged that personalities have played an important role in embedding those processes and structures, the force has shown consistent commitment towards developing robust and resilient processes.

Communication strategies and structures are in place, and accountability mechanisms exist within the policing context via the performance management frameworks at both area commands and the headquarters PPU. Accountability mechanisms are also present within the LSCB framework.

Policy and guidance that are based on NCPE guidance and that set out definitions and criteria, including when joint enquiries are appropriate, are published on the intranet. Policy was published in March 2007 (reviewed annually) that took into account *Working Together* guidance. The profile of child abuse work has been raised by area command in-house training, and the force training department is developing corporate training for all response, neighbourhood and CID personnel. Headquarters PPU staff have designed sudden unexplained death of an infant (SUDI) training for SIOs and area command personnel, including child abuse investigation staff, to incorporate the 'Kennedy principles' and raise

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child abuse in the investigation profile. IIS guidance concerning police protection has been published and is monitored through the audit/inspection regime.

The force is an active supporter of the NCPE and is actively engaged in establishing standards. Current and emerging NCPE doctrine drives standards within the organisation.

The force clearly understands that this is a high-risk part of the business and is building relationships with partners, building a solid foundation and using a business planning approach.

The force routinely gathers and uses performance management information to improve performance. Data includes the following: number of joint visits carried out; intelligence items submitted; number of children taken into police protection; quality of child concern notifications (CCNs); and whether referral of offender to MAPPA or non-MAPPA has been considered. The list is not exhaustive and shows only a small amount of the data used.

Northumbria has effective audit and quality control processes in place across all disciplines, including child abuse. The PVP business area is audited twice yearly, balancing corporacy and innovation. The performance and policy group oversees audit, and the inspection process feeds into that group together with the area command SMTs. Before each inspection the area command is given details of the issues under examination and it completes a self-assessment questionnaire. Multi-agency implications are a key consideration. Areas for improvement are agreed in collaboration with the detective inspectors in the area command PPU.

Northumbria has in excess of 60 staff dedicated to child abuse investigation across the area commands and headquarters. There is a dedicated detective inspector in each of the six area command PPUs and a dedicated detective sergeant responsible for child abuse. Staffing levels vary across the area commands, which is seen as appropriate. There is an ongoing review in respect of administration support. The review will result in the establishment of minimum standards, which some area commands have already proactively addressed.

Northumbria has good systems in place to manage third-party public interest disclosures. This management is auditable, is linked to the application of the NIM and provides the force with a defensible position.

Confidence is high that the force gives public interest and protection issues full consideration when making decisions concerning disclosure. Northumbria looks for opportunities to share information and to give members of staff the confidence to do so when acting in good faith. There is clear evidence of effective information sharing between the related disciplines, and a team ethos is evident. Work is being undertaken to make recording procedures more efficient.

Staff at the area command PPUs share information across the disciplines, and the headquarters inspection process captures this activity.

IT systems are integrated into the force mainframe, and IT developments are being progressed, which will further improve processes through the creation of a vulnerable persons nominal index. This will make the process of case tracking even more efficient.

Effective recording procedures are in place, via final coding of incidents (quality assured by communications centre staff) and CCN submission. Corporate IT systems (incident logging and the CCN system) are in place and ensure effective management. Standards for

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inputting data are published, and child abuse investigation unit (CAIU) detective sergeants act as a quality assurance process for CCNs that are not consistent with force standards.

The performance and policy group is the strategic mechanism for ensuring effective outcomes, and the inspection process feeds into that group and into the area command SMTs. In addition, area commands use regular minuted performance management meetings between the SMT and PPU detective inspector to improve performance.

An evaluation of the training needs of members of staff dealing with child abuse will be assessed using National Centre for Applied Learning Technologies (NCALT). New members of staff and existing members assessed as not being competent will be given the full specialist child abuse investigation development programmes, and existing members of staff who are assessed as being competent will be given top-up training. The force is training 18 additional professionalising the investigative process (PIP) assessors, three for each area command, to support this initiative. A total of 44 members of staff were given achieving best evidence (ABE) training in 2006/07, and six specialist child abuse investigators were given Initial Crime Investigators' Development Programme (ICIDP) training. Newly appointed officers must undertake the specialist child abuse investigator development programme (SCAIDP, which includes a supervisor's module. Members of staff also have access to multi-agency training from the LSCB.

Northumbria contributed (as a police delegate) to the creation of the mandatory national training course for senior house officers that was developed by the Royal College of Paediatricians in partnership with police, social services and other agencies with a duty to safeguard children. This course is now receiving international recognition.

An appropriate accountability framework exists as follows: area command-based units have operational accountability and control devolved through the area commanders; strategic/policy responsibility is retained at the centre through the chief officer lead.

The force has terms of reference for specialist officers which set out operational definitions and criteria for investigation, including allegations against family members, a person in the role of carer or a professional person with responsibilities for children. Additionally, child abuse investigators are attached short-term to SUDI enquiries, for the purpose of gathering information for multi-agency assessment of the family. In two area commands a separate team of officers working within PPU deal with extra-familial abuse

Job descriptions and role definitions are in place, and the role of managers is clearly defined. Members of staff with a role in child abuse investigations have an annual mandatory referral to occupational health.

Management information and inspection processes provide evidence of police contribution to case conferences, strategy discussions and joint investigations. Force policy is that attendance at initial case conferences should be achieved in 90% of cases. The area commands are compliant, except in Northumberland, where geographical considerations are a factor. The police do not regularly attend review conferences, unless there is ongoing criminal investigation or new information of concern. Clear guidance is published that Section 47 investigations are the threshold for joint investigation, and there is no blurring of roles between police and social workers. A Section 47 protocol with the six local authority areas has been developed.

The LSCB meeting has a structured programme, objectives and targets, and a regime of subgroups that are attended by the police. The subgroups include case audit groups and/or quality assurance committees that undertake joint review, as well as groups which monitor

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performance of progress against action plans. Police attendance and action are documented via minutes and are analysed and reviewed as part of the inspection process.

The unanimous view of partners was that there is a true partnership environment and evidence of effective joint working at an operational level. Reference was made to the appropriateness of decision making within a framework of effective governance. There is good information sharing at the numerous multi-agency boards and meetings. It has been recognised that some of the meetings are at a level that is too strategic.

Investigations which constitute the serious category crime are managed and quality assured by the detective inspector, in accordance with force procedures. Other investigations are robustly managed by the detective sergeant CAIU. The headquarters PPU inspection regime measures compliance with the National Crime Recording Standard (NCRS) and the Home Office Counting Rules (HOCR) and the quality of investigations. The force has a dip-sampling process to measure NCRS adherence, carried out by headquarters crime audit staff. The CAIU detective sergeant assesses risk and reviews actions taken by officers in creating CCN referrals.

Work in progress

An intelligence plan has been developed and an intelligence implementation plan is being progressed.

The force is developing a bespoke IT solution to support child abuse investigation. There will be a phased implementation of prioritised elements of IT tools in the form of a victim and witness database that will be available in the latter part of 2007.

Formal meetings within each PPU are in development as part of the headquarters PPU communications plan (meetings already exist in two area commands). These will evidence links across disciplines outside the framework of individual cases. Meetings will be minuted.

Areas for improvement

Intelligence structures are being developed to address the gap in the PVP area of the business. An area for improvement from a recent inspection of PVP in Newcastle is to pull together all aspects of PVP into a consistent communication strategy to make it easier to embed these workstreams into the application of the NIM. The implications for structural development are being looked at in terms of the intelligence requirement for PVP where this links into Neighbourhood Policing and neighbourhood sector profiles and results analysis.

A themed public protection performance and policy group is to be established as a sub-PPG, feeding into the operational performance group. This represents a step forward in further mainstreaming PVP into force business.

The SCAIDP programme has been agreed through the training group and is to be implemented for all child abuse investigators from autumn 2007. This was a recommendation of the PSR review.

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Protecting Vulnerable People – Domestic Violence

GRADE	GOOD
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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

Northumbria has run an extensive domestic violence campaign, End the Silence, which has received wide recognition. The campaign has raised public and police awareness and increased the number of referrals to support services as well as improving the number of arrests and disposals. In two area commands, enhanced risk identification measures were piloted as part of the campaign. The initiative will be subject to full evaluation to consider effectiveness. The campaign was supported by the Police Authority, which received a formal briefing and an analysis report in respect of the outcomes.

An academic researcher (Professor Marianne Hester) produces Home Office research papers based on Northumbria data, providing research and recommendations regarding approaches to policing domestic abuse and putting into place interventions to protect victims.

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Strengths

The force domestic violence strategy (as evidenced in strategic assessment) is supported by the Northumbria Police domestic violence action and implementation plan, developed from NCPE guidance. Policy, procedure and practice were republished in March 2007 and will be reviewed annually. A robust structure exists to monitor the process of reporting and response and investigation from practitioner to chief officer lead. This is supported by the PPU's at area commands and headquarters, where specialist officers co-ordinate responses, represent area commands on multi-agency forums, and quality assure reporting, responses and investigations of domestic violence and related issues. The role of domestic violence officer ensures corporacy and improved service delivery to victims.

Policies and procedures are consistent with ACPO policy, and ACPO guidance on harassment and police officers who commit domestic abuse has been adopted. Domestic abuse guidance sets out clear role responsibilities for reporting, responding and investigating domestic abuse. Guidance is regularly reviewed, the last time being before the commencement of the End the Silence campaign. Training for all response and neighbourhood officers has been designed centrally and delivered by area command training officers to raise the profile of domestic abuse training. A DVD with the ACPO keynote speech and practical scenarios has been delivered to all staff.

The domestic abuse campaign undertaken in the latter part of 2006 has enhanced awareness and quality of recording and investigation, from senior management to practitioner. Guidance published on the intranet sets minimum standards for domestic abuse investigations. Quality assurance mechanisms are in existence to ensure compliance.

Response supervision has responsibility for monitoring the initial attendance at a scene, and this process is quality assured by neighbourhood inspectors. The quality of individual investigations is monitored by the line management of the investigating officer. There are additional monitoring systems in place via neighbourhood inspectors and Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) statutory charging.

There is active involvement of chief officers in setting force strategic priorities, which inform the PPU strategic priorities that are recorded in the crime department business plan. Key strategic priorities for 2006/07 were to implement NCPE guidance on investigating domestic abuse; develop a performance management framework; devise an intelligence plan; and build an effective communications strategy. Investigating domestic abuse is included in the force control strategy and strategic assessment under the overarching strategic priority of reducing violent crime.

Performance management meetings between the PPU detective inspector and area command SMT ensures that management information informs improvement. A quality assurance process via neighbourhood inspectors is in place to improve performance locally. A headquarters PPU audit and inspection programme uses a range of qualitative and quantitative assessments as the basis for judging domestic violence performance, measuring corporacy and consistency and informing improvement.

The CPS is positive about arrangements where retraction statements are taken by the PPU in each area command to a consistent good standard.

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Domestic violence is incorporated into the force and local policing plans, CDRP plans and the force control strategy. Each local authority area has a domestic abuse co-ordinator who chairs the domestic abuse forums, which are attended by the area command PPU supervision. Minutes are monitored by headquarters PPU to measure links between policing priorities and other agencies' priorities. The action plan produced after the formal evaluation of the domestic abuse campaign will inform future domestic abuse strategies and initiatives.

Each area command has active police involvement in the local domestic violence forums and their subgroups, evidenced by action plans and minutes. These groups are attended by PPU supervision. Members of staff attend the community domestic violence perpetrators programmes, which are chaired by the probation service. The force contributes to multi-agency domestic abuse action plans in each area command, with joint objectives and targets, which are monitored through the local domestic abuse forums.

There is clear evidence of innovative practice, which includes:

- the community domestic abuse programme, an accredited programme for domestic abuse perpetrators and non-MAPPA offenders;
- marketing of the End the Silence domestic violence campaign to the public, using press releases, local news programmes, local radio programmes, billboards, posters, leaflet drops, bus and taxi advertising, and posters on the police station area headquarters.
- a refuge for perpetrators introduced in the Sunderland area command;
- the first 0800 free phone helpline in the region for advice;
- development and use of CID 14 on all domestic abuse case papers, following liaison with the CPS;
- use of the national centre for domestic violence, offering free legal advice to victims seeking civil injunctions; and
- co-location of police and victim support specialists in domestic violence in the Newcastle area command.

The co-location of resources with partners is seen as a key strength. The placing of victim support within a PPU has resulted in the number of yearly referrals rising from 800 to 1200. A substantial increase in second-party referrals has also been seen.

Risk identification and assessment procedures were based on research carried out in 2000 and 2001: risk assessments are based on levels of violence suffered in conjunction with SPECCS model risk factors. All risk assessors have received training in risk assessment: the assessment is carried out by PPU staff in 5 of the 6 area commands; a staffing review is in progress (PSR recommendation).

Quality assurance mechanisms are in place to ensure that risks to children are identified, documented and assessed, via submission of CCNs. Risk assessment processes are linked in some area commands to the multi-agency risk assessment conference (MARAC) process. Dialogue across the disciplines within the area command PPUs ensures that in appropriate cases domestic abuse perpetrators are considered for MAPPA procedures.

Domestic abuse-related homicide reviews take place, and lessons learnt are disseminated force-wide with the involvement of the professional standards department.

Command and control systems at the communications centres (ie CIMs) and the crime investigation policy (serious category crime) ensure that serious incidents attract

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supervisory management. Quality assurance processes measure compliance with NCRS and HOCR at each area command (morning management meetings and dip sampling by area command quality assurance units). The force measures the percentage of incidents that result in arrests, crimes and referrals to victim support services (VSS). Quality assurance processes exist to monitor the quality of the police response, including decision not to arrest (area command morning management meeting, quality assurance by neighbourhood inspectors). Vulnerable person statements are used, and local criminal justice units have a quality assurance process in place to measure compliance. The force policy is that all domestic incidents are graded as 'high 1', and call takers are given domestic abuse training (as per Centrex training).

Recent IT developments in crime and custody recording have improved accountability, and robust compliance and accountability mechanisms are in place within the area command PPU, response and sector supervision.

All domestic violence incidents are coded. A ten-point update is required to be completed, providing robust quality assurance. Each incident is quality checked by the communication centre prior to closure. The update template is included in incident logs to assist capture of all intelligence and information, to address identification of significant risk factors associated with domestic abuse, and to ensure compliance with force policy on arrest and NCRS. The End the Silence domestic abuse campaign has resulted in an increase in crimes recorded and a decrease in recording of breaches of the peace.

Flags coding incidents as domestic abuse are appended by communications staff, who have all received appropriate training; the communications department has quality assurance systems in place to ensure that incidents are correctly coded.

Risk assessments are recorded in a standalone domestic violence database. High-risk information is also recorded in the force IT system on the suspect intelligence page of the computerised information system (CIS) and the mainframe street index of the victims' addresses.

There is a distinction to be made between risk identification, which is carried out by front-line officers at the first point of contact with victims of abuse, and risk assessment of future harm, which is subsequently carried out by specialist members of staff. Training is delivered and processes developed to enhance the capability of the force in both of these complementary areas. The activity of front-line officers working with the checklist is about risk identification. Risk identification revolves around separation, pregnancy and the perpetrator.

The PVP business area is audited twice yearly, balancing corporacy and innovation. The area command PPU lead is at the detective inspector level, and accountability to support performance and service delivery is at all levels. Structure and supervisory responsibility is written into guidance. The headquarters PPU communication strategy includes bi-monthly performance and policy meetings with staff with line management responsibility.

Corporate supervisory standards exist through the crime recording system, volume crime standards, serious category crime investigation and policy, and procedure and guidance on investigating domestic abuse incidents.

Domestic abuse training has been given a high priority. Training is being delivered to all first responders, including call takers and their supervision and managers, from April 2007. All specialist members of staff, response officers and neighbourhood inspectors were trained between November 2006 and February 2007. Relevant Centrex modules have been

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adopted for training for specialist and non-specialist staff. Training is being designed for newly promoted response sergeants and will be rolled out during 2007.

Call taker training has incorporated the asking of appropriate questions when dealing with an initial report of domestic abuse.

There is a programme of training for student officers, which places them with various shelters and refuges, allowing them to get a greater awareness of the issues concerned. This is felt to be a very positive step by the partners.

The area command PPU lead is at the detective inspector level, with accountability at all levels to support performance and service delivery. Structure and supervisory responsibility is written into guidance. High-risk domestic violence offenders are flagged on logs so that patrols know of that history when they attend.

Northumbria routinely gathers performance management information across a range of indicators. These include:

- high-risk victims who are actively managed;
- number of referrals to non-MAPPA or MAPPA;
- number of incidents awaiting risk assessment after 48 hours;
- percentage of referrals to VSS;
- whether risk is correctly identified and assessed appropriately;
- whether the action plan records accurate data and information sharing, if appropriate;
- whether the action plan includes a relevant safety plan; and
- whether the offender has been arrested.

A review of PPUs carried out in March 2007 confirms that staffing levels are in line with force policy and are equitable across the force. The organisational development department has been tasked with carrying out staffing review in line with PSR recommendations. Staff are not routinely abstracted from their core responsibilities.

Supervisors do not have their own workload and are able to proactively supervise the work of domestic violence officers. In four of the area commands the domestic abuse sergeant also has responsibility for MAPPA.

ICF role profiles exist for all roles that include supervision. Terms of reference for domestic violence officers are published on the intranet, along with supporting guidance.

The occupational health unit has the capacity for domestic violence officers to self refer or be referred by supervision, and referral is encouraged.

Performance management meetings between the PPU detective inspector and the area command management team ensure that management information informs improvement. A quality assurance process involving neighbourhood inspectors is in place to improve performance locally. The PPU audit and inspection programme uses a range of qualitative and quantitative assessments as the basis for judging domestic violence performance, measuring corporacy and consistency and informing improvement.

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The force policy on domestic violence includes an instruction on completing the relevant CCN where children are or aren't present at the scene of a domestic violence incident. There are specific final incident codes where there is concern for a child. Force policy states that where there are children who reside with either the suspect or the victim, a CCN is submitted regardless of whether the children were present at the incident. Notifications are submitted to CAIU and then forwarded to children's services. An audit check can identify when a CCN has not been submitted.

A funded target-hardening scheme is undertaken for victims of domestic abuse, and this has proved to be a very effective means of providing tangible and meaningful support to victims.

Work in progress

Development is planned of the PVP performance and policy group sitting quarterly, chaired by the chief officer PVP lead and comprising the area command crime superintendent, headquarters PPU superintendent and detective chief inspector. This group will provide further evidence of portfolio lead involvement in directing strategic priorities, managing performance and linking in with the activity of LSCBs, and it will feed into the operational performance group.

The development of PVP performance data is continuing work in progress.

The LCJB has introduced a working party to ensure compliance with the victim code of practice; it is acknowledged that this remains work in development.

Three of the six area commands have created investigative domestic violence units, with officers being redeployed from other area command functions. This process is reported to have improved the investigation of domestic violence incidents and violent crime detection rates. It should be noted that their effectiveness has not been formally evaluated, although statistics are to be collated that will assist in clarifying the effectiveness of the units. As investigative domestic violence units are not a force requirement, the other three area commands have elected to manage domestic violence incidents using front-line staff. A PSR recommendation is that the force should evaluate the effectiveness of the units with a view to adopting a corporate approach.

A problem profile for domestic violence, assessing risky days, times, geographical areas and offender profiles, has been produced. An area for development is to now integrate this into the activity of neighbourhood officers.

Subject to the review of the MARAC pilot, consideration is to be given to the adoption of MARAC procedures force-wide.

A vulnerable person's nominal index IT user project commenced in March 2007 and will ensure further integration with other force systems. At present the domestic violence database is a standalone system.

The command and control system has facilities to flag domestic violence-related issues to officers, but operational staff have raised concerns that this can be up to two weeks out of date. Civil injunctions are also included, but the approach to their inclusion is inconsistent. The force is aware of issues concerning the timeliness of the domestic violence database updates and risk assessments. These issues should be addressed by the creation of a new database integrating the process with the other force systems. This is work in progress: a

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user specification has been created and the work is to be completed in March 2008. In the meantime, communication centre staff members have received awareness training, which will be subject to audit. The issue regarding the civil injunctions is currently being reviewed. All area command databases are now up to date and properly resourced. Work is ongoing to ensure that all databases are 'owned' by PPUs to ensure ongoing quality and compliance. Policy and procedure are being developed by headquarters PPU to ensure that data regarding civil orders is correctly and promptly recorded and flagged to front-line staff.

A harm reduction strategy is being set in place that will include reduction in repeat victimisation as an objective; and a homicide review is taking place with a view to learning lessons from domestic incidents.

Areas for improvement

National comparisons show that Northumbria performs relatively poorly on domestic violence repeat victimisation. The force points to its reliable and robust recording policies and practices and quality assurance processes as a major reason for this position. Members of staff state that it is much easier to complete the ten-point update required for all domestic violence cases than to justify why an incident should not be so categorised. Members of staff consider that this is leading to over-reporting of domestic violence. The force should ensure that the underlying position in relation to domestic violence and repeat victimisation performance is clearly understood.

A similar situation applies in respect of the development of specialist domestic violence courts, and the force needs to ensure that its current arrangements for victim and witness care are fully in line with the No Witness No Justice agenda and the victims code of practice.

Protecting Vulnerable People – Public Protection

GRADE	GOOD
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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.

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- 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

The removal of support for the Cross-Regional Information Sharing Project (CRISP) is seen as a significant disabler in that the ability of a global search engine to search across a number of databases on a single query. The removal of support for this tool will effectively open up the level 3 gap. The belief is that IMPACT won't replace the facility, and the police national database is seen as the longer-term solution. The strength of CRISP was that it provided a separate data warehouse that provided instant access to relevant and useful data. The force believes that the removal of CRISP will create actual and opportunity costs.

An area of concern is that INI checks don't provide the point of arrest information. Information is available to the subsequent enquiry and the risk assessment, but actions at the first point of contact are not led by point of arrest information but rather by the unchallenged information provided by the person. The lack of smartness increases vulnerability.

The Violent and Sex Offenders Register (ViSOR) is seen as the hub of activity and is useful in the way it supports the management of offenders, but as a tool for producing useful management information it has a number of shortcomings. There is a need for national guidance. Level 1 cases should show defensibility as to why and how a person is being managed. The ViSOR risk management plan attachment is limiting and can't hold an appropriate amount of data. The current design features, while good for operators, are poor in respect of effective supervision and management. These are national issues that are not confined to Northumbria.

Strengths

Draft ACPO guidance has been adopted. Force policy, procedures and guidance are published and were reviewed in March 2007. Local awareness-raising activity has been carried out within each area command, and training is to be delivered to all response, neighbourhood and CID area command staff in public protection issues. The area command PPU has operational accountability, and control is devolved, with responsibility for developing and monitoring strategic policy retained at the centre.

Multi-agency strategy and objectives are in place via the MAPPA business plan. Joint agency MAPPA unit supervisor meetings facilitate effective communication and the development of joint strategy.

All area command PPUs produce management information for local performance management meetings between the PPU detective inspector and the area command SMT. The joint police and probation MAPPA annual report provides an overview of performance in public protection. Additionally, the headquarters PPU makes qualitative and quantitative performance assessments as part of an inspection regime to monitor performance on a

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monthly rolling programme. The results are fed back to the area command SMTs to inform performance improvement.

All local councils have established adult protection committees, similar to the LSCBs. These inter-agency management committees determine policy, co-ordinate investigations and other activity between agencies, facilitate joint training and monitor and review progress. Northumbria Police representation is facilitated by the area command PPU detective inspector.

The ACC (crime) represents the force on the MAPPA SMB. The detective superintendent (crime) also sits on the MAPPA SMB and the MAPPA steering group and attends both the regional and the national conferences. There is active involvement of chief officers in setting force strategic priorities, which inform PPU strategic priorities, which in turn are recorded in the crime department business plan. Key strategic priorities for 2006/07 were to implement draft NCPE guidance on the management of sex and violent offenders and potentially dangerous persons (PDPs) in the community; to develop a performance management framework; to devise an intelligence plan; to build a communications strategy; and to roll out the INI programme. Additionally, the MAPPA business plan sets a joint strategic development priority for the force, probation and the prison service. In 2006/07, this strategic priority was to achieve dedicated MAPPA co-ordination and administration capacity, and progress is recorded via SMB minutes and in the MAPPA annual report. Progress on key policing priorities is recorded in the crime department business action plan and via a series of performance and policy group meetings from detective inspector to chief officer level.

All area command PPUs produce management information for local performance management meetings between the PPU detective inspector and the area command SMT. The joint police/probation MAPPA annual report provides an overview of performance in public protection. Additionally, the headquarters PPU makes qualitative and quantitative performance assessments as part of an inspection regime to monitor performance of PPUs on a monthly rolling programme. The results are fed back to area command SMTs to inform performance improvement.

Probation is co-located with the headquarters PPU at force headquarters, where there is effective partnership working and information sharing. Probation has recently employed a MAPPA manager to drive this area of business and to provide support across the area commands. It is recognised that level 1 MAPPAs are not being scrutinised to the same degree as other levels, and it is felt that improved involvement at area commands will help address this issue.

Published policies and procedures show evidence of a structured approach to the management of registered sex offenders and other offenders who are subject to MAPPA procedures. Supervisors at area command PPUs endorse and review all risk assessments and risk management plans. Supervisors in four of the area commands have responsibility for domestic abuse issues as well as the risk management of sex and violent offenders; this does not, however, impact upon their effectiveness and indeed serves to strengthen cross-discipline activity within the PPUs. Police and probation service members of staff based at headquarters ensure effective audit and quality control.

Appropriate IT procedures are in place to ensure that risk management officers (RMOs) are informed of relevant investigations. Local procedures ensure liaison between RMOs and investigating officers.

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Processes exist to ensure that a MAPPA serious case review is held on all occasions where an offender who is the subject of MAPPA is alleged to have committed a further serious offence.

Audit and inspection and quality control measures are in place, and each area command PPU is inspected by the headquarters PPU on a monthly rolling programme.

There are strong relations between the force and the probation service, with six members of staff from the probation service based at Northumbria Police headquarters. Police and probation have been co-located in the police headquarters MAPPA unit since its inception in November 2003. An agreement in principle has been reached whereby the senior practitioners would be located in the police area command PPUs alongside the risk management officers. Funding has been agreed for a pilot at the South Tyneside PPU.

A responsible authority steering group has been established, and this includes prison service representation.

Resilience is ensured by the adoption of a MAPPA manager who sits on all the MAPPA strategy groups. The post holder is a probation service resource, as probation provides the lead on co-ordination. The force contributes office space and running costs.

Mechanisms are in place to ensure that all MAPPA offenders are risk assessed and have risk management plans in place. Risk assessments are endorsed at detective sergeant level as a defensible decision and are reviewed by area command PPU supervision within set timescales (very high risk – monthly; high risk – every three months; medium risk – every six months; and low risk – every 12 months). MAPPA procedures are replicated for offenders who are subject to non-MAPPA procedures.

The CIS marker system ensures that new information is electronically flagged to RMOs, which acts as a trigger for reviewing risk.

There is evidence of linking risk assessments to community impact assessments. The structure of MAPPA meetings now includes a provision for the identification of risk regarding children and domestic violence.

Northumbria can evidence a number of areas of innovative activity in this area. These include the use of offender management officers (OMOs) within the area commands; Operation Longsight; certificates of voluntary disclosure; and polygraph testing of sex offenders.

The Newcastle area command PPU incorporates an 'extra-familial' unit that investigates allegations of rape, sexual assault not within the family, sexual assault where the injured person is aged under 17 years, long-term missing persons and internet-based sexual offending.

A template has been devised in respect of child protection conference minutes to ensure that a referral to MAPPA is considered.

TCG processes at level 1 and level 2 are utilised to manage dangerous offenders' prison releases and to target key offenders. The TCG process is also used to task specialist resources, eg surveillance. The headquarters PPU has developed an intelligence plan to ensure that all PPU issues are mainstreamed within the NIM, which is being implemented through the PPU and FIID.

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The risk management officer updates the warning marker screen on the CIS with a 'ViSOR' warning marker, which is highlighted on the front screen of the CIS record. A MAPPA warning is also added to all MAPPA offender CIS records.

Information-sharing protocols are very good, with all statutory partners sharing relevant information. This makes it easier to carry out necessary risk assessments, having considered all of the information available about an individual and their circumstances. There was some concern that the National Health Service was unable or unwilling to share information in the same way as other partners, and this was seen as a blockage.

Systems exist to ensure that relevant referrals across the disciplines take place and are managed effectively on a case-by-case basis. Procedures are in place to ensure that intelligence is shared by routine feeding into CIS, and this is quality assured during the headquarters PPU inspection process. MAPPA, ViSOR and sex offender warning markers are in use.

ViSOR provides a hub at the centre of MAPPA acting as a central point of contact; it is a focal point for development as well as operations. Local points of contact also operate from the centre. Northumbria did not employ the interim solution and employed a ViSOR inputter to manage back-record conversion and ongoing ViSOR data maintenance. The allocation of members of staff dedicated to inputting varies across the area commands, but, operating on a risk-based approach, the force is satisfied that it is fit for purpose.

Appropriate training is provided to officers dealing with sex or violent offenders to equip them to undertake their role:

- RM2000 training – training delivered locally by Professor Grubin;
- MAPPA awareness-raising activity – sessions delivered by headquarters MAPPA unit police and probation staff on a rolling programme. Sessions are co-ordinated by the local MAPPA strategy groups;
- ViSOR training – the force has five ViSOR trainers; and
- Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) external courses on risk management – the CEOP courses are considered desirable, and all area commands have provided funding.

Northumbria is training 24 additional members of staff to enable the force to search the INI for sexual offenders. Training is generally delivered in a way that cuts across the issues.

Identified staff throughout the organisation have direct access to ViSOR, including headquarters MAPPA unit staff, area command PPU staff, offender management officers, control room supervision and dedicated police staff in the force information and intelligence department.

Northumbria has appropriate staffing levels, including supervisory levels, which are in line with force policy. Posts are not multi-functional, nor are they subject to routine abstractions.

Debriefing is available to staff through the occupational health unit. Work is ongoing to arrange occupational health road shows to RMOs relating to the recognition of symptoms of stress.

Joint police/probation MAPPA guidance is now available on the crime department website. Policy exists for attendance at all MAPPA meetings: detective inspector at level 3 meetings; risk management officers or detective sergeant at level 2. All minutes of MAPPA meetings

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are scrutinised by the headquarters PPU to ensure compliance and appropriate police contribution. A formal quality assurance system is in place, managed by probation, for monitoring non-attendance of all agencies at MAPPA meetings. Level 3 meetings are chaired by the probation district manager, level 2 statutory meetings by probation team leaders and level 2 non-statutory meetings by headquarters-based probation senior practitioners.

All MAPPA offenders are subject to a risk management plan, which will consider all relevant information. The frequency of visits may be increased, depending on a full risk assessment. Within the force a non-MAPPA system was developed to run alongside and mirror the MAPPA system. Any agency can refer a PDP into the non-MAPPA, system using similar referral forms as the MAPPA referral forms. All MAPPA and non-MAPPA individuals will be considered through the TCG where appropriate.

Home visits are undertaken by RMOs and OMOs (police staff). The remit of OMOs is to visit low and medium risk offenders. In order to build up their knowledge base, it has also been agreed that they can visit high and very high risk offenders in the company of an RMO. OMOs always conduct visits in pairs.

Where it is considered that the offender should be managed at a higher level, then the RMO should submit a MAPPA referral form to the local probation district manager for consideration of an increase in the level of management. The district manager may convene an information sharing meeting, a risk management meeting or a MAPPA at short notice if risk factors change. Force guidance states that every MAPPA case should be reviewed by the PPU detective inspector in accordance with detailed minimum standards.

MAPPA referral processes are outlined in the Northumbria MAPPA guidance, a document produced by the MAPPA unit to show the processes for referral and management. The document is provided to all duty to co-operate (DTC) agencies. Arrangements are in place to ensure the prompt and accurate identification of relevant offenders under MAPPA in respect of category 1, 2 and 3 offenders. Once a relevant offender has been identified, arrangements are in place to identify the risk management level and manage the risk posed by the offender for level 1, 2 and 3 cases.

PPU issues have been brought into the daily management meetings, with an agenda and actions each day for critical incidents, missing persons and domestic violence incidents.

Work in progress

A harm reduction unit is being established and benchmarked against work being undertaken by Strathclyde Police on violence reduction. A nine-month pilot scheme is being developed in Newcastle, based on a wider and bold interpretation of vulnerability and victimisation across a range of issues. This forms part of the developing vision bringing sophisticated CAI standards to all of the other areas, including the approach to establishing resource standards.

A themed public protection performance and policy group is to be established as a sub-PPG and feeding into the operational performance group. This represents a step forward in further mainstreaming the protection of vulnerable people into the business of the force.

Joint monitoring and auditing is in development. A new post of MAPPA co-ordinator has been created within the headquarters PPU to progress this.

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Staffing levels were developed as a result of research carried out by the force public service and performance review project board in 2004, based on the draft proposals for a 1:50 ratio. A report detailing the findings of the research was submitted to the force resource management group. Staffing is currently under review as a result of the PSR review.

Debriefing is available to staff through the occupational health unit. Work is ongoing to arrange occupational health unit road shows for risk management officers relating to the recognition of symptoms of stress.

The force did not take the interim VISOR solution and so is now back-record converting data. All category 1 offenders are on VISOR, and 50% of category 2 and category 3 offenders have been entered. The records are being converted from paper files. All updates are being placed onto VISOR, and if it is felt significant the detail is also added to the paper copy as a back-up measure should VISOR be unavailable.

Areas for improvement

Processes for decision making between agencies are developing; however, there is still room for further development. An increased number of agencies need to be involved on a formal basis around consistent criteria for decision making. Effective relations to deal with vulnerable adults is seen as a particular area for development. This is an area where work is undertaken only by the police, and CDRP partners feel that this is a significant gap.

The individual workloads carried within the Newcastle area command MAPPA unit are high. Resilience is low as a result, and although workload is covered during staff absence, home visits are not covered.

Protecting Vulnerable People – Missing Persons

GRADE	GOOD
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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

Policy clearly defines structure and areas of responsibility – from call taker to constables, supervision, senior detective and the area command SMT. The risk assessment process is incorporated and reviewed at all levels. Accountability is managed in practice through a daily review by the Chief Constable and chief officer team of all new high-risk missing person reports and by the force TCG tactical assessment where outstanding missing persons are listed, coupled to review procedures.

Strengths

The ACC (crime) is the identified chief officer with responsibility for missing persons. The post holder leads on all the NCPE workstreams and ensures a co-ordinated approach within the force. Policy and guidance have been redrafted to incorporate the NCPE guidance. The management structure and lines of accountability are clearly outlined. Procedures setting out recording processes, risk identification and assessment, tactical options, supervisory responsibilities and review requirements are published. ACPO guidance has been adopted.

The review of missing persons is an integral part of the NIM review process at morning management meetings and level 1 TCG. Missing persons who are classed as being at high risk or have been missing for more than 28 days are referred to the level 2 TCG and appear on the level 2 tactical assessment. Links are being made between missing persons and the wider vulnerability issues, eg missing sex offenders.

Processes exist to ensure that a review is undertaken by the crime department SIO or area command detective chief inspector where a need is identified by an area command SMT or by the chief officer portfolio lead. Lessons learnt are disseminated throughout the force and

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procedures and guidance are amended where necessary. Appropriate processes also exist for the detective inspector PPU to refer individual cases for review by the LSCB.

Partnership working is evident in liaison between neighbourhood inspectors and the local authority regarding looked-after children who are regularly reported missing to devise preventative strategies and effective care plans.

All area commands have arrangements with the local authority regarding children in care who are reported missing from home – from guidance on when to report to creating preventative strategies and effective care plans. The child rescue alert policy and guidance – a protocol between Northumbria, Durham and Cleveland forces and media agencies in respect of abducted children at immediate risk of harm – is published.

The force is developing a vulnerable person database, but in the meantime it has an IT solution that allows searching across the force to effectively manage missing persons. Regular reviews are undertaken by the area command SMT and SIO crime department. Analysts within the area commands are identifying persistent missing persons in order to develop preventative interventions with partners. IT systems in place include incident logging.

The Newcastle area command has a robust approach to dealing with a neighbouring area command (North Tyneside) and its partners, who have recognised that they could do more to assist the police in respect of regular missing persons. Action taken includes better addressing of the risk factors to reduce further instances. Partners felt uncomfortable that regular missing persons were using the police as a 'taxi scheme'.

Training in this area has been delivered on the back of volume crime training to Neighbourhood Policing members of staff, response officers, investigators and call takers. The links have been made with critical incident managerial arrangements. The area command territorial superintendent takes on the role of silver commander when a missing person enquiry becomes classed as a critical incident. The first officer attending the scene can classify the situation as critical from the outset. PPU detective inspectors review all outstanding missing person enquiries every 48 hours. The Newcastle PPU will take on a full paper-based investigation at this stage.

Written guidance is provided for all operational staff in respect of missing persons in the form of a booklet as well as being on the IIS. All enquiries undertaken are recorded on the system and can therefore be added to and/or reviewed at any time by any member of staff.

Dip sampling of missing person investigations is carried out by the homicide teams.

Risk identification and assessment processes are published and are in place. There is a process of daily review by the relevant SMT, daily review at the morning management meeting, daily review by the silver command for missing persons assessed as high risk, seven-day review by the detective chief inspector and 28-day review by the crime department SIO. Processes exist for an area command to request a review by the SIO earlier than 28 days where appropriate.

A desktop exercise has been carried out in the Northumberland area command concerning missing person investigation from initial report to conclusion. The headquarters crime department SIO has delivered training in risk identification, risk assessment and investigation of missing persons to all area command SMTs and response/neighbourhood inspectors.

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Audit and quality control form part of a daily review process. Dip sampling of the appropriate system is to be undertaken by the headquarters PPU to ensure compliance with policy and corporacy.

Return interviews are conducted to capture intelligence that may assist in the risk assessment and investigation for any future instance of a person being reported missing.

Work in progress

An additional sergeant's post is being created in the headquarters PPU to support the development of the inspection process in this area. This will allow the development of a dip sample process to ensure that compliance is consistent and corporate.

The force is developing a vulnerable person database, but in the meantime it has an IT solution that allows searching across the force to manage missing persons. Regular reviews are undertaken by the area command SMT and SIO crime department. Analysts within the area commands are identifying persistent missing persons in order to develop preventative interventions with partners.

The development of a vulnerable person nominal index IT user group was introduced in the force in March 2007.

The command and control system (Tandem) is used to manage missing from home incidents and links into the intelligence system, with access to relevant flags and markers. An area for improvement is the need for a standalone MoPI-compliant database that is based on names rather than the gazetteer address-based system. A system will be in place by December 2007.

A missing persons problem profile has been commissioned. This builds on the creation of a homicide problem profile. Protecting vulnerable people is explicitly stated in the force control strategy.

Areas for improvement

A recommendation of the PSR review is the creation of a formal protocol or service level agreement between all area commands and local authorities regarding the management of children in care who are regularly reported missing.

Any non-routine missing persons get referred to supervision. Vulnerability is decided at the sergeant level. However, staff receive no training in respect of risk assessment (the situation applies equally to acting sergeants).

Developing Practice

TITLE: The Northumberland Tyne and Wear Paediatric Forensic Network Service

PROBLEM:

Provision was needed of forensic examination services for children who have been sexually abused.

SOLUTION:

The Northumberland Tyne and Wear Paediatric Forensic Network Service is a network of paediatric consultants who are available throughout the year between the hours of 9 am and 10 pm to provide forensic examination of children who have been subjected to sexual assault. The network is funded by the police and the strategic health authority, and examinations take place within a dedicated suite at the Royal Victoria Infirmary in Newcastle.

The clinical network is now enhanced by the introduction of a paediatric forensic nurse examiner for a pilot 12-month period. This initiative is funded and managed by the health authority, which will deliver improved healthcare and investigative services, and it may be developed within the local SARC in relation to the provision of services to adult victims of sexual assault.

OUTCOME(S):

The benefits of the scheme are:

- a forensic evidence-gathering service, available at all times, where examination will be appropriate for children;
- provision of appropriate accommodation that is seen as a centre of excellence for examination and that serves to discharge forensic requirements while minimising trauma to the child;
- effective management of the scheme through a series of minuted meetings involving police and health staff; and
- joined-up working within the framework of Working Together to Safeguard Children.

FORCE CONTACT: DCI 7100 Max Black – 07771 824532

TITLE: The End the Silence domestic abuse awareness and enforcement campaign

PROBLEM:

With respect to incidents of domestic abuse within the Northumbria Police area, the campaign was designed to:

- increase the confidence of victims/survivors in reporting incidents;
- protect victims/survivors better;
- deter offenders; and
- increase the arrest rate and positive disposal rate in domestic violence incidents.

October 2007

SOLUTION:

The campaign, which took place in December 2006 and January 2007, incorporated several innovative aspects, as well as raising the profile of domestic abuse among all front-line staff and ensuring that investigative techniques were fully developed to support prosecution where possible.

Developing good practice included:

- the marketing campaign, which utilised press releases, local media outlets, radio phone-in programmes, billboards, leaflet drops, bookmarks at places of public interest, and local public transport and taxi advertising in a hard-hitting campaign that included the taglines “Please make it stop” and “All I want for Christmas is for Daddy to stop hitting Mummy”;
- working together with partners (local authorities and Wearside Women in Need), the police developed an 0800 free phone helpline in the region, providing a single point of contact on a 24/7 basis where domestic abuse victims could get advice and access to service provision;
- the police engaged with the National Centre for Domestic Violence to ensure that all front-line officers were given leaflets for victims that included details of the centre’s 24/7 helpline for free legal advice and assistance to obtain injunctions; and
- the development of form CID 14, to be attached to all prosecution files for domestic abuse-related prosecutions, to better inform CPS about risk factors and domestic abuse history when making decisions regarding charging an offender.

OUTCOME(S):

Change in practice: during the campaign the percentage of offenders arrested for domestic abuse crimes increased by 61% (compared with the corresponding period the previous year), with a 46% decrease in arrests for breach of the peace. The campaign showed an increase in the numbers of domestic abuse victims referred to victim support, from 7% to 21%. The practice of releasing offenders who had been arrested to prevent a breach of the peace without placing them before a court (sometimes referred to as a ‘cooling off’ period) has been significantly reduced (from 1065 persons to 302 persons).

A training programme is to be rolled out to all front-line staff to ensure that the impetus of the campaign continues, and a quality assurance programme has been introduced involving all neighbourhood inspectors to ensure that performance continues to improve.

FORCE CONTACT: DCI 7100 Max Black – 07771 824532

TITLE: Use of offender management officers in the management of low and medium risk sex offenders

PROBLEM:

Provision of resources to effectively manage the 905 registered sex offenders residing within the Northumbria Police area.

October 2007

SOLUTION:

Offender management officers are police staff and are now in place at five of the force's six BCUs (South Tyneside, Gateshead, North Tyneside, Newcastle and Northumberland) to assist in the management of sex offenders. Members of staff are directed by management within the BCU PPU and have received CEOP sex offender training and Risk Matrix 2000 training. They are also ViSOR trained. Members of staff carry out home visits on low and medium risk sex offenders, ensuring that all offenders are visited every six months, and ensure that ViSOR is accurately updated.

OUTCOME(S):

The use of offender management officers provides effective monitoring of low and medium risk offenders, and frees up risk management officer resources to more efficiently manage high risk sex offenders, thereby reducing the risk of further offending.

FORCE CONTACT: DCI 7100 Max Black – 07771 824532

Recommendations

Neighbourhood Policing

Recommendation 1

A community engagement communications plan and toolkit has been agreed with partners. However, there remains a need to develop an engagement strategy that ensures that members of local communities and partners have a consistent opportunity to be involved in identifying neighbourhood priorities; that engagement tactics are tailored to manage expectations; and that effective opportunities are provided to give or receive feedback on the levels of service provided.

Appendix: Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations

A

ABA	acceptable behaviour agreement
ABC	activity-based costing
ABE	achieving best evidence
ACC	assistant chief constable
ACPO	Association of Chief Police Officers
APA	Association of Police Authorities
ASBO	anti-social behaviour order

B

BCS	British Crime Survey
BCU	basic command unit
BLA	baseline assessment
BVR	best value review

C

CAIU	child abuse investigation unit
CCN	child concern notification
CDRP	crime and disorder reduction partnership
CEOP	Child Exploitation and Online Protection
CIS	computerised information system
CLDP	core leadership development programme
CPS	Crown Prosecution Service
CRISP	Cross-Regional Information Sharing Project

D

DCC	deputy chief constable
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F

FLP front-line policing

G

GONE Government Office for the North East

H

HMIC Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary

HOCR Home Office Counting Rules

HR human resources

I

IAG independent advisory group

ICF integrated competency framework

ICIDP Initial Crime Investigators' Development Programme

IIS instructional information system

INI Impact Nominal Index

L

LCJB Local Criminal Justice Board

LMAPS local multi-agency problem solving

LSCB Local Safeguarding Children Board

M

MAPPA multi-agency public protection arrangements

MARAC multi-agency risk assessment conference

MIT major investigation team

MoPI management of police information

MSF most similar force(s)

N

NCPE	National Centre for Policing Excellence
NCRS	National Crime Recording Standard
NIM	National Intelligence Model

O

ODG	operational delivery group
OMO	offender management officers
OPM	operational performance meeting

P

PCSO	police community support officer
PDP	potentially dangerous person
PDR	performance development review
PIP	professionalising the investigative process
PPAF	policing performance assessment framework
PPU	public protection unit
PSG	policy support group
PSR	protective services review
PVP	protecting vulnerable people

Q

QoSC	quality of service commitment
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R

RMO	risk management officer
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S

SARC	sexual offence referral centre
SGC	specific grading criteria

SIAG	strategic independent advisory group
SIO	senior investigating officer
SMB	strategic management board
SMT	senior management team
SPI	statutory performance indicator
SUDI	sudden unexplained death of an infant

T

TCG	tasking and co-ordination group
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V

ViSOR	Violent and Sex Offenders Register
VSS	Victims Support Services

Y

YOT	youth offending team
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