

Royal Air Force Police

An inspection of the Royal Air Force Police's
performance management process

March 2019

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Summary

1. Section 4 of the Armed Forces Act 2011 places a statutory duty on Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) to inspect and report to the Secretary of State (Defence) on the independence and effectiveness of investigations carried out by the Royal Air Force Police (RAFP). This is the second statutory inspection of the RAFP by HMICFRS. The terms of reference for this inspection were to examine the performance management process for RAFP investigations.
2. In our first inspection, we recommended that the RAFP should establish a comprehensive system to monitor the effectiveness of investigations. Since that inspection, it has created new management roles, remodelled meeting structures, and established a unit to monitor investigations regularly. This inspection focused on the effect of those changes, in particular the oversight arrangements, the management information RAFP uses, and how it gets that information.
3. We found that there are effective processes to set priorities and manage resources, but that the reporting of activity against objectives needed improvement.
4. Appropriate meeting structures have been established to monitor and oversee activity, but no one series of meetings covered all performance matters.
5. Since our last inspection in 2016, the RAFP has improved how it monitors and supports victims of crime. It has conducted victim surveys to improve the support it offers. A crime manager now oversees all investigations, and the force has established a crime management unit to ensure consistency in crime recording. However, the force could still do more.
6. We were impressed by how the RAFP uses its performance meeting structure to map its current and future demand against the available resources and their distribution. We found good examples of the force not only identifying immediate demands but also forecasting future demand, as well as identifying operational factors likely to influence future resourcing decisions.
7. However, we found that the RAFP's lack of specialist analytical capability, and the quality of its IT platforms, are significant barriers to its ability to develop more sophisticated performance measures.
8. The Provost Marshal (RAF) meets the Chief of the Air Staff (CAS) once a quarter, and the Assistant Chief of the Air Staff (ACAS) every month. At these meetings, Provost Marshal (RAF) gives briefings on new and continuing

investigations, investigations that have been completed and are awaiting trial, and those that have resulted in sentencing.

9. Air Command welcome the enhanced performance information that Provost Marshal (RAF) now provides. We have learned that, as well as monitoring the force's performance, ACAS also uses information packs to highlight crime and security issues to base commanders, to ensure they take local action to support RAFP activity.
10. Finally, we found the RAFP's Technical Evaluation (TechEval) quality assurance programme forms an effective part of the force's performance management regime. The process is designed to ensure that current investigative and policing policy is being followed, and that the effectiveness of its investigations is monitored and assessed. However, this programme was not applied annually across all policing flights.¹
11. We did not find any significant deficiencies in the performance process, so we have no recommendations. However, our inspection has found several areas for improvement:

¹ A unit of RAF police. A flight is located at each RAF base.

Areas for improvement

- The Royal Air Force Police should ensure that performance measures, outputs and performance indicators, are assigned to all its objectives.
- The Royal Air Force Police should develop a performance monitoring meeting that covers the whole range of its priorities and objectives.
- The Ministry of Defence should deploy a suitably qualified and experienced crime registrar to take responsibility for ensuring compliance with crime-recording rules.
- The Royal Air Force Police should initiate an audit of REDCAP, to assure the integrity of its crime data.
- The Royal Air Force Police should revise its policies to ensure that REDCAP records are updated when an offence classification changes during an investigation.
- The Royal Air Force Police should deploy a suitably qualified and experienced performance analyst to take responsibility for data capture and the production of performance management information.
- The Royal Air Force Police should conduct annual Tier 3 Technical Evaluations across all policing flights.
- The Royal Air Force Police's Professional Standards Department should incorporate the review of specific documents that describe flights' plans, policies and performance, as part of its preparation for Tier 3 Technical Evaluations.
- The Royal Air Force police should conduct annually Tier 3 TechEvals that cover the full scope of the Technical Evaluation Self-Assessment Questionnaire.
- The Royal Air Force Police should establish a mechanism for Provost Marshal (RAF) to hold Squadron Leaders to account for progress against action plans following Tier 3 Technical Evaluations.

1. Introduction

About HMICFRS

- 1.1. HMICFRS independently assesses police forces and fire & rescue services in the public interest. In preparing our reports we ask the questions which the public would ask, and publish the answers in accessible form, using our expertise to interpret the evidence.
- 1.2. HMICFRS is independent of government and the police. HM Inspectors of Constabulary are appointed by the Crown – they are not employees of the police service or government.
- 1.3. HMICFRS decides on the areas to be inspected, and the depth and frequency of investigations, on the basis of our judgments about the public interest.
- 1.4. In making these judgments, we consider the risks to the public, the risks to the integrity of policing, service quality, public concerns, the operating environment, the burden of inspection, and the potential benefits to society from changes made as a result of the inspection.
- 1.5. HMICFRS's annual inspection programme is subject to the approval of the Home Secretary in accordance with the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011.

About the Royal Air Force Police

- 1.6. The Royal Air Force Police, to which we also refer in this report as 'the RAFP' and 'the force', is led by a Royal Air Force officer of group captain rank, who holds the title Provost Marshal (RAF) and is the chief officer of the RAFP. He is responsible solely to the Chief of Air Staff, who sits on the Defence Council, for the conduct and direction of all RAFP investigations. These investigations are to be conducted independently of the chain of command.
- 1.7. The RAFP has over 1,200 personnel and is responsible for the security and safety of RAF aircraft, bases and personnel. RAFP personnel are deployed to RAF bases in the United Kingdom and across the world.
- 1.8. The RAFP in the United Kingdom comprises: the RAFP national headquarters; regional headquarters covering each of the north, midland and southern regions of the United Kingdom (each of which is led by a squadron leader); and the Special Investigation Branch. Regional headquarters comprise smaller units called 'flights' and each RAF base will have a flight of RAFP.

Our commission

- 1.9. Section 4 of the Armed Forces Act 2011, which came into force on 4 June 2014, places a statutory duty on HMICFRS to inspect and report to the Secretary of State (Defence) on the independence and effectiveness of investigations carried out by each service police force: the Royal Navy Police; the Royal Military Police; and the Royal Air Force Police.

Terms of reference

- 1.10. This is the second statutory inspection of the RAFP by HMICFRS. The terms of reference for this inspection were: to review the RAFP's performance management process.

Methodology

- 1.11. This inspection took place in April 2018.
- 1.12. We examined reports, and other documents provided by the RAFP, which described the force's performance management process.
- 1.13. We visited RAF bases at Honington, Cranwell, High Wycombe and Marham, observed management meetings, and shadowed the RAFP's Professional Standard Unit (PSU) personnel as they conducted a Technical Evaluation visit to the Special Investigation Branch. We conducted a series of interviews with RAFP and other RAF personnel.
- 1.14. We are grateful to all those who contributed to this inspection, both RAFP personnel and others, for their time and support.

2. Measuring RAFP's performance against its priorities and objectives

Defining priorities and objectives

- 2.1. Any performance regime needs defined organisational priorities and objectives.
- 2.2. In policing, operational priorities should be based on an assessment of risk and harm, in line with the National Intelligence Model Code of Practice.²
- 2.3. During this inspection, we found the RAFP sets its priorities on the basis of an accurate and comprehensive assessment of threats and risks. These are set out in a strategic assessment collating information from the RAFP, the RAF in general, and external sources including government agencies. From this strategic assessment, the RAFP develops a control strategy outlining its priorities. This control strategy is approved at one of the quarterly strategic tasking and co-ordinating meeting and reviewed and changed or re-ratified as appropriate at subsequent meetings. We found that priorities reflected the greatest risks and threats of harm as defined in the force's strategic assessment. We were also pleased to find the force's control strategy linked the RAFP's activity back to the priorities set by the Chief of the Air Staff, the head of the RAF.
- 2.4. Underpinning each priority is a set of control strategy objectives designed to focus policing activity and reduce identified threat and risk. These objectives, which are very detailed, are developed by RAFP personnel, and put to the Provost Marshal (RAF) for approval in a series of informal presentations.
- 2.5. The priorities and objectives at the time of the inspection are listed below:

² [National Intelligence Model Code of Practice](#), Home Office National Centre for Policing Excellence, 2005

Figure 1: RAFP's priorities and objectives

Tier 1 priorities	
Priority	Objectives
Terrorism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver intelligence-led deterrence and disruption operations at unit level, cued by understanding of potential hostile reconnaissance. • Deliver threat awareness and security education. • Develop understanding of threat to RAF operations from terrorism. • Provide suitably qualified and experienced personnel (SQEP) advisors and investigators to support RAF and joint counter-terrorist activity. • Provide specialist advice to support next generation basing and capability delivery.
Espionage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assure, test and inform whole-force security processes to ensure confidentiality of information to required Defence and national standards. • Support whole-force security provision. • Tailor threat reporting to understand the threat to RAF operations from espionage. • Provide SQEP counter-intelligence investigators to RAF and Defence.
Sexual offending	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver sexual offending awareness campaign at all stages of service. • Maintain SQEP investigators. • Develop supporting sexual offending Investigative policy as part of Defence's coordinated response to offending.
Substance misuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide intelligence collection on supply and patterns of substance misuse in the RAF.

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- Deliver support to compulsory drugs testing (CDT) as a means of deterrence and detection of substance misuse in the RAF.
 - Provide substance misuse awareness training at all stages of service.
 - Deliver intelligence lead deterrence and detection operations at a Unit level.

Tier 2 priorities

Domestic extremism

- Provide Intelligence collection on protest activity against RAF.
- Intelligence on affiliations and associations with organised criminal or activist groups by members of RAF workforce.
- Provide SQEP investigators for both security and criminal activities.
- Focus counter intelligence and operations.
- Provide focused intelligence and investigations in respect of extreme right-wing activity.

Theft and fraud

- Provide intelligence collection on theft and fraud activity in RAF.
- Maintain SQEP investigators for fraud.
- Lead crime reduction campaigns internally.
- Engage across Defence and service policing to contribute to departmental response to fraud.

Domestic abuse

- Provide SQEP investigators and General Police capability aligned to domestic violence.
 - Provide intelligence on indicators of abuse to service and civil agencies.
 - Support RAF Community approach to domestic abuse.
 - Provide dedicated victim support to any investigation.
-

Alignment of performance measures and indicators to priorities and objectives

- 2.6. The RAFP has begun work to map performance measures and performance data against its priorities. This is a significant development, but the force concedes that it remains a work in progress.
- 2.7. The performance measures and data mapping are articulated in two matrices. The first of these, entitled 'RAF Police Control Strategy Output Mapping' lists a range of outputs relating to each priority, how these are measured and in which meeting they would be reported. However, the measures are not mapped against the force's control strategy objectives that underpin each priority. This makes it more difficult for RAFP to assess its performance against the full range of objectives.
- 2.8. The second matrix, entitled 'RAF Police Front Line Data Mapping', sets out a range of performance indicators (and where reports on how far they have been achieved can be found) in respect of each of the force's priorities and against its security³ and people capacity obligations. However, the document does not show how the indicators listed relate to the force's control strategy objectives. While both matrices are used to monitor performance, it is not clear how the second relates to the first and whether what is being done results in the desired effect.

Area for improvement

- The Royal Air Force Police should ensure that performance measures, outputs and performance indicators, are assigned to all its objectives.

Reporting performance against priorities and objectives

- 2.9. The matrices show that each priority's performance measures and indicators are reported at a range of different meetings (the main meetings are discussed later in the report). During the inspection, we were unable to find any mechanism that collates all the performance information relating to each objective and priority. Without this, the force cannot continually monitor whether it is delivering against each element of its objectives or priorities.
- 2.10. The data-mapping matrix identifies a selection of indicators for each priority as key performance indicators (KPIs), and the output matrix assigns targets to a selection of the performance measures. At the time of the inspection, the

³ RAFP is obliged to provide general security for RAF bases and additional resources depending on particular squadrons/aircraft visiting or stationed at bases.

choice of KPIs had not been finalised. The force intends to monitor a selection of the KPIs at the monthly investigation tasking and co-ordination group meeting once the final suite of KPIs has been agreed, but during our visit this was not yet happening.

- 2.11. Although we found several meetings discussing elements of performance, there is no overarching meeting bringing all performance matters together in one place to show progress towards achieving the priorities.

Area for improvement

- The Royal Air Force Police should develop a performance monitoring meeting which covers the whole range of its priorities and objectives.

Senior Management Team meeting

- 2.12. A review of the force's performance against its priorities is one of the standing agenda items at the RAFF's quarterly Senior Management Team (SMT) meeting. The data-mapping matrix shows that over 75 percent of the indicators are reported at this forum. We saw three performance dashboard slides created for this meeting, summarising performance in respect of sexual offences, substance misuse, and security and counter-intelligence.
- 2.13. The sexual offences and substance misuse slides presented at SMT list the control strategy objectives and contain a range of charts and quantitative data. However, they do not show how this data relates to the force's objectives.
- 2.14. The security and counter-intelligence slide provides data about the RAFF's terrorism, domestic extremism and counter-intelligence priorities, but does not list the force's objectives.
- 2.15. While these slides provide Provost Marshal (RAF) with some information about the force's performance in relation to its priorities they could be improved in four areas.
- 2.16. First, the SMT meeting does not review the RAFF's performance in relation to domestic abuse, theft and fraud, despite these being Tier 2 priorities for the force. Although the data-mapping matrix states that all 18 indicators for domestic abuse, and nine of the 11 indicators for fraud and theft, are reported in the SMT, we found that in practice none are reported at there. We were told that domestic abuse, theft and fraud data is presented at SMT meeting on an exception basis, and performance issues are highlighted as part of the ongoing monitoring by the force's Crime Management Unit (CMU). However, we found arrangements for this do not exist at present, as CMU does not routinely collect domestic abuse data.

- 2.17. Secondly, as highlighted above, the SMT meeting does not review the RAFFP's performance in relation to the full range of its sexual offences, substance misuse, espionage, domestic extremism and counter-intelligence objectives.
- 2.18. Thirdly, some of the data presented at the SMT meetings lacks sufficient context to inform a judgment about performance. Some data, such as the number of persons receiving substance misuse training, is presented in isolation without reference to any target, trend or benchmark. There are also examples of inappropriate benchmarks being used. For example, the proportion of persons involved in substance misuse or sexual offending, is benchmarked against the entire UK population rather than against a population with similar demographics, that is, one composed mainly of young men.
- 2.19. Finally, the data presented in this part of the SMT meeting relates to outputs, the measure of a certain activity such as the number of patrols, rather than outcomes, the preventative or enforcement effect of that activity.
- 2.20. We found that the RAFFP's lack of specialist analytical capability, and the poor quality of its IT platforms, make it difficult for it to develop more sophisticated performance measures, including measurements of outcomes. We accept, however, that, as crimes levels are comparatively low, trends, patterns and peaks are more difficult to analyse.

Quarterly Performance Pack

- 2.21. The RAFFP produces a 'quarterly performance pack' to inform the senior management team. The one-page dashboard at the front of this does not link directly to any priorities or objectives. Instead it shows the force's overall detection rates and the number of cases closed. The pack also contains pages related to four of the force's six priorities. The slides relating to sexual offences, substance misuse, and security and counter-intelligence largely use the same metrics as the SMT meeting slides. Additionally, there is a page on theft and fraud; however, as with the SMT meeting slides, the pack does not provide information relating to the full range of the force's objectives.

National Intelligence Model meetings

- 2.22. The RAFFP's other key meetings allowing oversight of performance are the National Intelligence Model tasking and coordinating (TCG) meetings which take place at strategic and tactical level. These are not meant to be performance meetings per se; instead they define priorities and direct and monitor targeted police activity.
- 2.23. Apart from policing, the other main role of the RAFFP is to provide security at RAF bases in the UK and overseas. The delivery of a range of planned

security operations is a central feature of this work. These include specific operations that:

- deter and disrupt terrorist activity;
- counter attempted espionage;
- test security controls at RAF bases;
- provide reassurance to the greater RAF community; and
- deter and detect substance abuse.

2.24. We were impressed with the level of oversight shown by senior managers at the TCG meetings. At these, squadrons report the delivery of operations against the plan and problems they have met.

3. Monitoring crime and investigatory performance

3.1. We found that new structures introduced since our last inspection have enabled the RAFF to understand better the demand it faces for investigations and where to prioritise use of resources. However, the force still cannot assess how effective its investigations are and where improvements need to be made.

3.2. In 2016, HMICFRS conducted an inspection of the leadership of the Royal Air Force Police in relation to its investigations. We found that:

“... as part of the RAFF’s reporting mechanisms, it supplied a weekly performance monitoring pack to all its senior officers. This included data relating to the progress of serious or complex investigations on Royal Air Force stations and special investigation and intelligence branch cases over 100 days old.

“However, while we found that meetings and documents were used to manage investigations, we did not find evidence of performance monitoring to assess the effectiveness of investigations.

“In the RAFF, we did not find a systematic and regular process for the collection of management and performance information, through which the RAFF could identify indicators of success and use them to monitor performance. For example, while the RAFF held information on crime detections, numbers of arrests, and levels of complaints, we did not see the RAFF bringing these together and using them as a means of monitoring the effectiveness of its investigations.”⁴

3.3. The report made the following recommendation:

“By 1 December 2016, the Provost Marshal (RAF) should establish a comprehensive system for monitoring the effectiveness of investigations. This should include, but not be restricted to:

- how well the RAFF supports victims of crime;
- how well it records crime and allocates investigations;
- whether it uses investigative tactics appropriately;
- how well it supervises and assures the quality of its investigations;

⁴ [*An inspection of the leadership of the Royal Air Force Police in relation to its investigations*](#), HMIC, 2017

- whether it provides training to national standards; and
- how well it learns lessons from past experience.”⁵

3.4. We set out below how the force monitors its performance on crime and investigations, and then consider how far it has implemented our 2016 recommendation.

Weekly crime management information

3.5. Since 2016, the RAFP has established the Crime Management Unit (CMU), which produces a weekly performance pack.

3.6. The pack details the crimes reported at each base and the progress of current investigations and informs a weekly crime management meeting. It includes a breakdown of investigation and conviction rates for substance abuse and sexual offences.

SMT meeting

3.7. SMT meetings receive an RAFP Investigations Performance Progress Report. This compares current performance data concerning investigations with previous quarters and annual averages. Comparisons are made for investigations raised or started, their outcomes and how they have been managed. In addition, cumulative figures are highlighted to illustrate decreases in investigations, comparisons with other service police and the rate at which more serious crimes are referred to Home Office police forces to investigate.

3.8. The presentation of high-level data of this kind is new since our 2016 inspection. The conviction and detection sections of the report provide a broad overview of investigative effectiveness, although not to the level of detail we recommended in 2016 (see below). At the SMT meeting we attended there was no discussion about the factors influencing the detection, referral, conviction and screening rates. However, we know that the force now has processes in place to monitor some of these. For example, CMU’s day-to-day activity includes reviewing decisions to ‘screen out’ cases.⁶ We found no evidence, though, that like RAFP routinely monitors the reasons for screening out as other forces do, nor whether it considers whether certain squadrons screen out more crimes than others.

⁵ *Op. cit.*, HMIC, 2017

⁶ Police forces quality assure reports of crime to ensure they are accurately recorded. Some reports fail to meet the criteria for recording and are classified as ‘no-crime’. Others that meet the criteria but have few lines of enquiry and have limited opportunities for detection are filed. Both processes ‘screen-out’ the cases from police investigators.

Quarterly performance pack

- 3.9. We have referred above (para 2.1) to the quarterly performance pack. Although this highlights significant figures on the timeliness of investigations and on detection rates, it does not measure investigative performance. Instead it provides data on volumes of investigations, broken down by location, crime type and offender profile. The force can use this information to focus resources to prevent or detect crime, but it cannot use it to assess the effectiveness of investigations in the way we recommended in our last report.

Strategic Tasking and Co-ordination Group Meeting

- 3.10. The Strategic Tasking and Coordination Group (STCG) meeting reviews numbers of sexual offence and substance misuse investigations and thefts of military equipment but does not report on the quality of investigations.

Investigation Tactical Tasking and Co-ordination Group Meeting

- 3.11. The Investigation Tactical Tasking and Co-ordination Group (ITCCG) meetings map demand against the resources available for investigation and monitor the workload and availability of sources of support for investigators. Such sources include digital forensic examiners, covert investigative support, dedicated source units managing covert intelligence sources, and military working dogs. The ITCGC meetings also receive operational reviews and debriefs on major investigations, and these give some continuing oversight of intelligence-led activity. 'Performance Management' appears on the agenda of all meetings, but, at the time of our inspection all this meant was a list of investigations that had lasted more than 100 days. We know the force is expecting to supplement this with a range of KPIs once they have been finalised (see above).
- 3.12. At the meeting we observed, we saw comparisons of workloads (volumes of investigations) at each RAF station. These drew attention to high crime areas and wider demands on RAFP squadrons. However, we did not see this information used to focus activity or redirect investigatory resources to where the demand is greatest, as we would expect to see in Home Office police forces.

Operational Tactical Tasking and Co-ordination Group Meeting

- 3.13. The Operational Tactical Tasking and Co-ordination Group (OTCG) meeting maps the amount of investigatory work on hand against available resources to ensure sufficient capacity and capability is available to support investigations. It also reports what squadrons are doing to achieve objectives, for instance the number of sexual offending awareness presentations delivered.

Technical Evaluation

- 3.14. The RAFFP has its own internal assurance mechanism, called technical evaluation (TechEval). This examines individual RAFFP flights to ensure they are complying with current policing and investigative policy according to AP 1722.⁷ It also assesses the effectiveness of its own investigations. (We provide a full evaluation of the TechEval process at part 2 of this report). A central element of the TechEval process is an investigation file review, in which the contents of files are assessed against a standardised checklist. This review could be enhanced to provide the RAFFP's senior managers with a more comprehensive picture of the quality of investigations. In addition to its current remit, it could cover all aspects of investigation policy and make qualitative assessments on a range of issues, including whether cases were discontinued appropriately.
- 3.15. If findings from the file reviews were collated centrally, this could facilitate the production for senior management of a range of data on the quality of the force's investigations.

Developing a comprehensive system for monitoring the effectiveness of investigations

- 3.16. We detail below the force's progress in developing methods to measure the six specific areas highlighted in our 2016 recommendation. We also suggest elements that could be incorporated into an enhanced file review.

Monitoring support for victims of crime

- 3.17. We are pleased to find that the RAFFP has made progress in developing methods for monitoring how well it supports victims of crime. In 2018, the force launched a victim satisfaction survey. This is a new development, and at the time of the inspection there had been a low rate of responses to the survey. We were pleased to hear the force has plans to increase uptake by promoting the survey more actively. We learned that the survey results will be reviewed in the force's SMT meetings and form part of the performance framework.
- 3.18. Victims' entitlements are outlined in national code of practice.⁸ These include: receiving updates on the progress of the investigation; the opportunity to make a personal statement;⁹ referral to specialist support organisations; and

⁷ AP1722 – RAF Police Tactics, Techniques and Procedures (unpublished)

⁸ [Code of Practice for Victims of Crime](#), Ministry of Justice, 2015

⁹ Referred to as a Victim Personal Statement.

being provided with an enhanced service if they are a victim of serious crime or were persistently targeted or vulnerable or intimidated.

- 3.19. We could not find evidence that compliance with the full scope of the code is being monitored. For example, the sexual offences section of the RAFF's output mapping matrix states that CMU records when staff spoke to victims, and that this is reported at SMT meetings. However, no such report was made at the SMT meeting we attended.

RAFF's processes for monitoring how well it records crime and allocates investigations

- 3.20. The second part of the 2016 recommendations was for the RAFF to improve performance management concerning the recording and allocation of crimes.
- 3.21. We found that the RAFF does not have formal audit processes in place to ensure that crimes are recorded accurately, in line with the Home Office Crime Counting Rules. It has, instead waited for the service police to appoint a crime registrar to take on this remit.
- 3.22. Crime is recorded on the REDCAP computer system.¹⁰ This is centrally based at Southwick Park in Hampshire, a joint service police establishment staffed by Royal Navy Police, Royal Military Police and RAFF. During our inspection of the Royal Military Police in 2015, we found that:
- “while there is policy on crime recording and a computer system to support it, there is no common standard to guide RMP staff. Furthermore, there is insufficient oversight of the system; for example, there is no crime registrar as exists in Home Office police forces to ensure compliance with crime-recording rules.”¹¹
- 3.23. Our 2016 report recommended that the RAFF should improve performance management on the recording of crimes and allocation of investigations.
- 3.24. We found this year that the RAFF still does not have formal audit processes in place to ensure that crimes are recorded accurately, in line with the Home Office Crime Counting Rules. It has, instead waited for the service police to appoint a crime registrar to take on this remit.
- 3.25. No crime registrar has yet been appointed.

¹⁰ REDCAP is the name of a computer system that is used to record of reports of crime that fall within the jurisdiction of the service police.

¹¹ [*An inspection of the leadership of the Royal Military Police in relation to its investigations*](#), HMIC, 2015

Area for improvement

- The Ministry of Defence should employ a suitably qualified and experienced crime registrar to take responsibility for ensuring compliance with crime-recording rules.

3.26. We did not conduct a crime data audit as part of this inspection. Nonetheless, during our interviews we found incorrect data recorded on REDCAP, and discrepancies between the crime figures derived from REDCAP and the number recorded locally by specialist units. For example, the number of rape investigations that the Specialist Investigation Branch has conducted during the past three years is more than the total number of rape offences recorded on REDCAP for this period.

Area for improvement

- The Royal Air Force Police should initiate an audit of REDCAP, to assure the integrity of its crime data.

3.27. When an investigation is opened on REDCAP, it is assigned an offence classification. During an investigation, it may become clear that this initial classification is incorrect, and a different offence was committed. If this is noticed soon after the initial classification is logged on REDCAP, RAFP personnel can change the record. However, after this initial window, RAFP must contact Southwick Park to ask for a change. We found that, while some personnel were requesting Southwick Park to amend the classification, RAFP's policies do not require this, and it was not being done routinely. Consequently, the information used by the force to monitor the offence rates for different offence classifications can be misleading.

Area for improvement

- The Royal Air Force Police should revise its policies to mandate personnel to ensure that REDCAP records are updated when an offence classification changes during an investigation.

Supervision of investigations

3.28. In our 2016 report, we recommended that "by 1 December 2016, the Provost Marshal (RAF) should introduce and operate a mechanism to ensure that all relevant RAFP personnel have the appropriate supervisory skills to lead

and review investigations effectively in a way that provides assurance to senior officers.”¹²

- 3.29. During this inspection, we found that Specialist Investigation Branch investigates those cases the RAFP considers most serious. These investigations are supervised by senior RAFP officers who have relevant experience and who have received appropriate training.
- 3.30. However, we were disappointed to find no requirement for the policing flight officers who supervise investigations to have any experience of conducting investigations themselves. Although all such personnel should have received training on investigation and supervision, this should not replace actual experience. Moreover, we found that in some instances personnel were taking this role without having received the training.
- 3.31. Since our last inspection, the force has introduced squadron-level crime managers. They review cases that have lasted 28 days and have a role in overseeing the investigations and the actions of the supervisors across the squadron. They also provide advice and guidance to investigators. This is a useful initiative and can help maintain the quality of investigations. However, it is essential that personnel in these roles have the right experience and skills. At the time of the inspection only two crime managers had been appointed only one of whom had experience of carrying out investigations.
- 3.32. TechEval investigation file reviews include a check that interview plans have been signed off by a supervisor, but this is the limit of how TechEval monitors the quality of supervision. There is scope for a broader examination of the quality of supervision, and an enhanced file review could, for example, show whether there was effective supervision:
- in the investigation plan;
 - of initial enquiries; and
 - of the investigation as a whole.

RAFP’s processes for monitoring how well it uses investigative tactics

- 3.33. We could not conduct a representative investigation file review during this inspection, but we did examine the RAFP process for such audits. The current TechEval investigation file review checks that there is an investigative strategy for each case. An enhanced file review could go further. For example, it could make a judgment on whether all reasonable lines of enquiry (i.e. CCTV, identification of key witnesses, social media research, etc.) had been

¹² [*An inspection of the leadership of the Royal Air Force Police in relation to its investigations*](#), HMIC, 2017

completed and whether there were delays in conducting them. It could also make a qualitative assessment of the investigation plan.

Monitoring training standards

3.34. The capability of supervisors and investigators is key to the effectiveness of investigations. Well-trained staff can deliver comprehensively investigated cases to the prosecuting authorities. We found that courses provided by the joint service police establishment at Southwick Park train investigators to national police standards in volume crime investigation and serious crime investigation. However, as mentioned above not all staff involved have the requisite training. The extent to which they do is a measure of how well the force provides training and should be reported regularly at a senior level. In the meetings we attended, however, we did not find any reporting about gaps in capability.

RAFP's processes for monitoring how well it learns lessons from past experience

3.35. In our last report, we found the RAFP conducts case file reviews of serious investigations, debriefs significant operations, and learns lessons from technical evaluations. During this inspection, we found that many of these processes had matured, but we saw no evidence that they had led to a system of regular meetings which consider and co-ordinate all lessons learnt and ensure they are recorded in the organisational memory. We were told, however, that work was going on to achieve this.

Monitoring other aspects of performance

3.36. The RAFP uses its performance meeting structure to map current and future demand against its resource profile. We found good examples of how it took account of the impact of likely future demand, as well as immediate demands such as the service justice review, when considering how operational factors were likely to affect future resourcing decisions.

3.37. The SMT meeting sets out the current staffing level at all ranks and grades and draws attention to any shortfalls. It also provides an update on the levels of recruitment and retention necessary to sustain the capacity and capability of the RAFP over the medium term, as well as to allow for organisational restructuring. We were also pleased to find that the SMT meeting discussed issues affecting the wellbeing of the workforce, from personal circumstances affecting work through to team opportunities to enhance health and motivation.

3.38. Future performance in preventing and detecting crime depends a good deal on the force getting effective intelligence. Useful analyses of intelligence

reporting, highlighting where specific threats were identified, were provided at the STCG meeting. We were pleased to find that force uses its intelligence analyses to inform its broader understanding of risk and uses a MORILE¹³ framework to help direct its activity.

- 3.39. However, at the tactical (as opposed to the strategic) tasking and co-ordination meetings we attended, we found that the operational intelligence updates given were not relevant to immediate circumstances and included outdated information rather than current operational intelligence.

¹³ MoRiLE is the 'management of risk in law enforcement' process developed by the National Police Chiefs' Council. This tool assesses the types of crimes that most threaten communities and highlights where the force does not currently have the capacity or capability to tackle them effectively.

4. Data capture and interpretation

- 4.1. We found the RAFF's lack of specialist analytical capability and the poor quality of its IT platforms are significant barriers to the force's ability to develop more sophisticated performance measures.
- 4.2. The computer systems used by the RAFF and other service police forces to record incidents (COPPERS) and crime (REDCAP) were not designed to produce management information. There is no way to download such information from them. Similarly, the force does not have a data warehouse, or business intelligence programmes to automate the production of data relating to other areas of its activity such as base security.
- 4.3. Consequently, data to support the force's performance management must be downloaded manually from several systems and, in the case of REDCAP and COPPERS, must be extracted record by record. This creates a burden on the Force Intelligence Bureau (FIB) which produces the performance charts. We learned that it takes a member of FIB four days to update the data on a 12-page presentation for one of the tasking and co-ordination meetings.
- 4.4. The force knows that funds are not available to develop an IT solution to gather performance data better.
- 4.5. The performance measures and indicators used by the RAFF were developed in-house, by staff from the Office of the Provost Marshal (RAF). The charts and analysis used in performance packs, and the benchmarks used to evaluate performance, were developed by the same staff. Since our last inspection, the force has made progress in developing measures, indicators and analyses, but the people we spoke to conceded they are not accredited performance analysts and lack any experience in this area. Employing a suitably qualified and experienced police performance analyst would help the force develop a sophisticated and robust set of performance measures and indicators, including outcome measures. It should also enhance the force's performance analysis, and could reduce the burden on FIB personnel, thus enabling them to focus on their core intelligence role.
- 4.6. We are aware that at the moment no civil servants can be recruited, so the RAFF cannot currently employ a civilian performance analyst. However, once this restriction is lifted, the force should try to fill this capability gap. In the interim, FIB should examine whether other personnel have the skills and experience for this role.

Area for improvement

- The Royal Air Force Police should deploy a suitably qualified and experienced performance analyst to take responsibility for data capture and the production of performance management information.

5. Reporting performance to Air Command

- 5.1. Air Command at the Ministry of Defence oversees RAFP and reviews its performance at regular meetings.
- 5.2. The Provost Marshal (RAF) meets the Chief of the Air Staff (CAS) quarterly and the Assistant Chief of the Air Staff (ACAS) every month. At these meetings, Provost Marshal (RAF) gives briefings on new and on-going investigations, investigations that have been completed and are awaiting trial, and those that have resulted in sentencing.
- 5.3. To supplement these briefings, the RAFP's has developed standardised performance packs. These provide CAS and ACAS with a range of data relating to crime rates and aspects of the force's performance. The packs do not cover all the force's priorities, make no mention of investigation quality, and focus on outputs rather than outcomes. However, as they were designed specifically to report on the issues of interest to Air Command, they fulfil their objective.
- 5.4. We understand that Air Command welcomes the enhanced performance information that Provost Marshal (RAF) now provides. We have learned that, as well as monitoring the force's performance, ACAS also uses the information packs to highlight crime and security issues to base commanders. This helps to ensure they take local action to support RAFP activity.
- 5.5. The force also provides crime, security, and other performance information directly to RAF base commanders. We spoke with a base commander and he was very positive about the service received from the RAFP. He described the regular meetings and updates he is given about investigations and operations, and he was aware of crime trends and other policing problems on his base.

6. Technical evaluation process

- 6.1. The RAFP's Technical Evaluation (TechEval) quality assurance programme is part of the force's performance management regime. It is designed to ensure that current investigative and policing policy is being followed and to enable the force to monitor and assess the effectiveness of its investigations.
- 6.2. Managed by the RAFP's Professional Standards Department (PSD), TechEvals benchmark the RAFP's units against the minimum standards set out in:
- the RAF Police Code of Conduct (AP 1722);¹⁴
 - the RAFP policy notes;¹⁵
 - the Service Police Codes of Practice;¹⁶
 - the MoD Manual of Security;¹⁷
 - the Defence Records Management Policy and Procedures (JSP 401);¹⁸
 - the MoD Building Performance Standards (JSP 315);¹⁹
 - the REDCAP aide memoire;²⁰ and
 - Services to be provided by the Armed Forces to the Victims of Crime (JSP 839).²¹

¹⁴ Unpublished

¹⁵ Unpublished

¹⁶ [The Service Police Codes of Practice](#), Ministry of Defence, 2017

¹⁷ Unpublished

¹⁸ Unpublished

¹⁹ [JSP 315: Building Performance Standards](#), Ministry of Defence, 2018

²⁰ Unpublished

²¹ [JSP 839 – Victims' Services](#), Ministry of Defence, 2015

Frequency and structure of the RAFP's TechEvals

6.3. Annual TechEvals are compulsory for all the RAFP's flights and consist of a three-tier process:

Tier 1: The inspected flight completes a self-assessment matrix, designed and issued by the PSD.

Tier 2: The RAFP squadron headquarters responsible for the flight conducts a local evaluation to test and assure the evidence provided in the Tier 1 self-assessment.

Tier 3: The PSD conducts an independent review of the flight.

6.4. A slightly different process, omitting Tier 2, is used to assess RAFP's Special Investigation Branch (SIB), as this has more investigative experience.

6.5. During our inspection, we found that the PSD's other commitments made it difficult for it to conduct Tier 3 TechEvals, and that not all policing flights had been subjected to a Tier 3 inspection during the last 12 months. Consequently, the current TechEval process does not give Provost Marshall (RAF) an annual independent assurance that all its flights are complying with the full range of standards inspected under the TechEval regime.

6.6. RAFP should therefore ensure that all its formations are subject to annual Tier 3 evaluation and that the findings of such inspections are provided to the PSD.

Area for improvement

- The Royal Air Force Police should conduct annual Tier 3 Technical Evaluations across all policing flights.

6.7. We were pleased to find that the TechEval process allows for urgent risk-based inspections to be undertaken, as outlined in the TechEval Policy:

“Tier 3 TechEvals may also be directed by Deputy Provost Marshal Operations / Deputy Provost Marshal Investigation, or requested by RAFP Squadron HQs outwith normal programmed activity in order to address specific issues or support the development of a Unit.”²²

²² *Technical Evaluation (TechEval) and Tactical Evaluation (TacEval) Process*, Royal Air Force Police, unpublished

- 6.8. During our inspection, we were provided with detail of a recent example of an urgent short-notice TechEval.
- 6.9. Policing flights and SIB are the only units currently subject to the TechEval regime. However, PSD intends to develop bespoke TechEval procedures for other specialist policing units, such as the Force Intelligence Bureau and Counter Intelligence Operations. We welcome this development, as extending the TechEval's scope in this way would provide Provost Marshal (RAF) with greater assurance about the work conducted by these units.
- 6.10. We examined each tier of the TechEval in more detail.

Tier 1: Self-assessment by the formation subject to TechEval

- 6.11. Tier 1 of the TechEval process assesses the RAFP flights against consistent inspection frameworks. The PSD has produced a TechEval Self-Assessment Questionnaire (TEAQ), which sets out the scope for the evaluation and the key questions it seeks to answer.
- 6.12. The TEAQ is subject to regular review by the PSD. At the time of our inspection, it included more than 280 questions under the following 11 headings:²³
1. administration and policy;
 2. law enforcement;
 3. investigation management (including a section on victim and witness support);
 4. conduct of investigations;
 5. investigation support;
 6. search;
 7. property;
 8. crime reduction;
 9. custody;
 10. training and development; and

²³ An abridged version is used for TechEvals of SIB, which excludes those activities that fall outwith the Branch's remit.

11. interaction with external agencies and specialist departments.
- 6.13. During our inspection, we interviewed senior RAFP officers at RAFP headquarters and squadron headquarters. They agreed the scope of TechEvals is appropriate and covers the full range of policing duties that RAFP personnel are expected to perform.
- 6.14. Although we agree with their assessment, the system does not test personnel's knowledge of, or activity against, RAFP's strategic priorities. However, we know that the PSD has plans to incorporate this element into the next version of the questionnaire.
- 6.15. Flights receive a copy of the TEAQ approximately two months before a Tier 2 TechEval visit and are required to answer the questions, and assess activity against each of them using a four-coloured grading system:
- Red: Critical shortfall in performance
- Amber: Serious shortfall in performance
- Yellow: Minor shortfall in performance
- Green: Satisfactory performance (potential good practice)
- 6.16. A comprehensive guide to completing the self-assessment is issued with the TEAQ to the assessment flights. During our inspection, we interviewed personnel in policing flights and SIB who had recently completed TEAQs. They agreed the questions asked were clear, the grading criteria were straightforward, and they had enough time to complete the questionnaire.
- 6.17. Tier 1 is an integral element of TechEvals. The personnel at policing flights who we interviewed valued Tier 1, as it made them responsible for part of the process and gave them a template against which they could assess their activity.

Tier 2: Local evaluation conducted by the RAFP squadron headquarters

- 6.18. For flights, completion of a TEAQ is followed by a Tier 2 TechEval²⁴ conducted by personnel from the flight's squadron headquarters. We found that in most squadrons, Tier2 TechEvals are led by squadron crime managers with SIB experience. We are aware that the force intends this to be copied across all the RAFP's squadrons. However, as described above, at the time of our inspection not all crime managers had such experience.

²⁴ Special Investigations Branch is not subject to Tier 2 TechEvals.

- 6.19. We found that teams conducting Tier 2 TechEvals review the completed Tier 1 TEAQs before the assessment visit but are not required to obtain other supporting documents in advance. Through their day-to-day contact with policing flights, and oversight of COPPERS and REDCAP entries, crime managers should know flights' local plans and priorities and should have a good understanding of a flights' general performance before conducting the Tier 2 TechEval. Where this is so, as we found in the flights we visited, there is no need to conduct a wider document review during the planning stage.
- 6.20. Tier 2 visits are conducted over two days, during which the squadron headquarters team evaluate the flight against each of the questions in the TEAQ. This involves interviewing personnel, examining documentation and accommodation, and a limited audit of investigation files. These audits follow a standard template set out in the TechEval policy, and examine documents relating to investigations as well as the REDCAP and COPPERS records. We found that they are wide-ranging in their scope and cover a range of subjects, from investigatory strategies, through lines of enquiry to interview plans and treatment of victims.
- 6.21. The Tier 2 TechEvals are not, however, truly independent evaluations of flights' activities and the quality of their investigations. As outlined above, as part of their daily responsibilities crime managers provide oversight of flights' investigations and provide advice and direction to personnel conducting these. There is the risk, therefore, that they are too closely involved with cases to be able to provide objective evaluations. In some cases they would be evaluating their own investigative decisions.
- 6.22. Following a Tier 2 TechEval, the squadron HQ team produces a report and assesses each element of the TAEQ against the four-coloured grading system. The evaluated flight is required to provide squadron HQ with an action plan within four weeks, outlining how it will address any areas graded yellow, amber or red. While this is a good mechanism for encouraging improvement, we found that there are no processes for monitoring progress against action plans until the next TechEval is conducted the following year.
- 6.23. We were pleased to find that the PSD receives, collates and assesses Tier 2 reports. This provides it with the opportunity to identify any recurring themes across the force as well as to identify what the organisations had learned. It also uses the Tier 2 reports to focus the scope of its Tier 3 evaluations of flights.

Tier 3: Independent evaluation by the PSD

- 6.24. Tier 3 of the TechEval process consists of an independent review by the PSD.
- 6.25. Before the two-day evaluation visit, the PSD dip test investigation records. When they visit flights, they evaluate the Tier 2 reports and flights' action plans. However, they do not review flights' strategic documents and policies in advance, and do not use performance data or management information to inform the TechEvals.

Area for improvement

- The Royal Air Force Police's Professional Standards Department should review specific documents that describe flights' plans, policies and performance as part of its preparation for Tier 3 Technical Evaluations.

- 6.26. Tier 3 TechEvals of policing flights evaluate only those areas that were not graded satisfactory in Tier 2 and a small number of those areas assessed to be satisfactory. Consequently, the scope of independent Tier 3 TechEvals is directed by the findings of the less-than-independent Tier 2 evaluations, some of which are conducted by personnel who lack investigation experience.
- 6.27. In order to provide Provost Marshal (RAF) with the regular, robust assurance that the TechEval process is designed to provide, Tier 3 TechEvals should be conducted annually and should examine the full scope of the TechEval TAEQ.

Area for improvement

- The Royal Air Force police should conduct on all flights annually Tier 3 TechEvals that cover the full scope of the Technical Evaluation Self-Assessment Questionnaire.

- 6.28. As highlighted earlier in the report, there is scope for the investigation file audits to be enhanced, to provide senior managers with a fuller picture of the quality of investigations in all parts of the force.
- 6.29. During our inspection, we watched the PSD conduct a TechEval visit to Special Investigations Branch (South). During the visit, the PSD team tested staff competency and the evidence contained in the unit's TEAQ. In addition, the evidential property store, where physical evidence is stored, was audited to check compliance.

Fairness of the process

- 6.30. The RAFP personnel we interviewed agreed that Tier 3 and Tier 2 TechEvals are conducted in a supportive way that focuses on improving standards through coaching and mentoring, rather than on criticising bad practice.
- 6.31. At the end of TechEval visits, the PSD team inform the inspected formation of their findings. We were told by personnel who had recently been subject to inspection that they felt confident they could raise issues at this point if they disagreed with the findings or wanted to explain their work further. There are also opportunities for the inspected formation, or its squadron, to challenge the facts and accuracy of the assessment once the inspection report has been completed.

RAFP's police performance inspection reports

- 6.32. Following the PSDs inspection visit to a policing flight, it produces a short, standardised, inspection report.
- 6.33. Inspection reports relating to TechEvals of a policing flight include updated action plans. These detail the topics reviewed at Tier 3 and, for each of those topics, list the Tier 2 and Tier 3 TechEval gradings and any observations and recommendations. We found that these reports provide sufficient information to inform RAFP officers about the flight's performance.
- 6.34. To ensure consistency across inspections, the grade and the report are moderated by the head of PSD.

Monitoring of units' progress against Tier 3 TechEvals

- 6.35. Following the receipt of a Tier 3 TechEval report, the inspected formation, in conjunction with the squadron headquarters, has 20 working days to provide PSD with an action plan that details how it will respond to the observations and recommendations set out in the report.
- 6.36. As with Tier 2 TechEvals, we found no system for the PSD to monitor progress against flights' Tier 3 action plans until the next TechEval is conducted the following year. As a result, the Provost Marshal (RAF) does not have an up-to-date understanding of the capabilities of all flights.

Area for improvement

- The Royal Air Force Police should establish a mechanism for Provost Marshal (RAF) to hold Squadron Leaders to account for progress against action plans following Tier 3 Technical Evaluations.

Lessons learned

- 6.37. We found that common themes identified through Tier 2 and Tier 3 TechEvals are circulated across the force. In instances where TechEvals find problems that need immediate action, policy updates or changes in processes, the PSD circulates Policy Information Notes across the force. The PSD also produces a short quarterly report which outlines the recurring issues found in TechEvals during the preceding period. This is circulated to an appropriate audience, including officers commanding each of the force's squadrons, SIB and RAFP headquarters.
- 6.38. We found that RAFP personnel outside RAFP headquarters knew about issues arising from other flights' TechEvals.

The PSD's capability to conduct TechEvals

- 6.39. We found that those conducting Tier 3 TechEvals are able capability to perform this role effectively. Although there are no formal 'suitability requirements' for a posting in the PSD, the force has ensured that those posted into the department have accredited competency in conducting major investigations, and experience of working in Special Investigations Branch. During the inspection, the other members of RAFP we interviewed agreed the PSD have the knowledge necessary to conduct TechEvals.

7. Conclusion

The terms of reference for this inspection required us to review the performance management process of the RAFP. While performance management is an important function of the leadership of an organisation, good practice in policing has moved away from a target-led approach to one where people are given more autonomy under a variety of management processes.

We referred in our work to the College of Policing model for leadership and to practice that we had seen in Home Office police forces during our other inspections. This model includes priority setting, resource management, and regular meetings to gauge progress.

We conclude that while the RAFP is different from Home Office police forces, it has similar leadership behaviours and functions, as well as common processes to manage performance. Like them, it has processes to set priorities and manage resources, and appropriate meeting structures to monitor and oversee activity. The force is also impressively good at mapping current and future demand, but we nonetheless conclude that it could do more if it had specialist analytical capability and improved IT platforms.

Since our last inspection in 2016, the RAFP has improved how it monitors and supports victims of crime and how it ensures consistency in crime recording. These developments in performance management, together with an engagement with the Chief of the Air Staff (CAS) and with base commanders, ensure both high-level oversight of RAFP performance and local action to support RAFP activity.

Finally, we conclude that the RAFP's Technical Evaluation (TechEval) quality assurance programme is an effective part of the force's performance management regime.

We did not find any significant deficiencies in the performance process, so we have no recommendations. However, our inspection has found several areas for improvement.

Annex 1 – Areas for improvement

1. The Royal Air Force Police should ensure that it has performance measures, outputs and performance indicators assigned to all its objectives.
2. The Royal Air Force Police should develop a performance monitoring meeting that looks across the whole range of its priorities and objectives.
3. The Ministry of Defence should deploy a suitably qualified and experienced crime registrar to take responsibility for ensuring compliance with crime-recording rules.
4. The Royal Air Force Police should initiate an audit of REDCAP, to assure the integrity of its crime data.
5. The Royal Air Force Police should revise its policies to ensure that REDCAP records are updated when an offence classification changes during an investigation.
6. The Royal Air Force Police should deploy a suitably qualified and experienced performance analyst to take responsibility for data capture and the production of performance management information.
7. The Royal Air Force Police should conduct annual Tier 3 Technical Evaluations across all policing flights.
8. The Royal Air Force Police's Professional Standards Department, should incorporate the review of specific documents that describe flights' plans, policies and performance as part of its preparation for Tier 3 Technical Evaluations.
9. The Royal Air Force police should conduct Tier 3 TechEvals annually that cover the full scope of the Technical Evaluation Self-Assessment Questionnaire.
10. The Royal Air Force Police should establish a mechanism for Provost Marshal (RAF) to hold Squadron Leaders to account for progress against action plans following Tier 3 Technical Evaluations.