

Strategic Policing Requirement

Kent Police

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Introduction

The *Strategic Policing Requirement* (SPR) was issued in July 2012.¹ This document sets out the Home Secretary's view of the national threats that the police must prepare for and the appropriate national policing capabilities that are required to counter those threats. The SPR respects the operational independence of the police service, advising what, in strategic terms, it needs to achieve, but not how it should achieve it.

The particular threats specified in Part A of the SPR, and referred to as the national threats in this report, are:

- terrorism;
- civil emergencies;
- organised crime;
- public order threats; and
- large-scale cyber incidents.

Part B specifies the policing response that is required nationally, in conjunction with other national agencies, to counter these threats. This policing response is described in the SPR as follows:

*“the combined national **capacity** of all police forces to respond to these threats, expressed in terms of the outcomes sought – these are drawn, wherever possible, from publicly available national government strategies. Police and crime commissioners and chief constables must have regard to this aggregate capacity when considering the respective **contributions** they will make to it;*

*the **capabilities** that police forces, often working collaboratively, need to maintain in order to achieve these outcomes; the requirement for **consistency** among forces for certain key specialist capabilities where the resources from more than one police force need to be integrated with, or work effectively alongside, each other. In some instances this requirement for consistency may need to involve other key emergency services and agencies; and*

*the **connectivity** arrangements by which resources from several police forces may effectively be co-ordinated or mobilised, together and with those of other*

¹ In accordance with section 37A Police Act 1996. Available from www.gov.uk/government/publications/strategic-policing-requirement

agencies – such as the Security Service and, from 2013, the National Crime Agency. The combination of consistency and connectivity forms the basis for interoperability between police forces and with other partners.”

We report the findings from this inspection of Kent Police which took place during September 2013 against each of these requirements.

The breadth of requirements that are set out in the strategic policing requirement are outside the scope of a single inspection. Therefore, it has been necessary to plan a series of inspections over three years so that the police response to all the national threats can be examined individually and in-depth over that period.

This year, HMIC has examined how well police forces have established arrangements to respond to strategic policing requirement threats and has conducted in-depth examinations of the police response to two of the national threats: the threat to public order; and the threat of a large-scale cyber incident.

We have produced the following three national reports, available at <http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic>:

- The Strategic Policing Requirement: An inspection of the arrangements that police forces have in place to meet the requirement;
- The Strategic Policing Requirement: An inspection of how police forces in England and Wales deal with threats to public order; and
- The Strategic Policing Requirement: An inspection of how police forces in England and Wales deal with threats of a large-scale cyber incident (including criminal attack).

This report sets out what we found when we examined the arrangements that Kent Police had in place to meet the strategic policing requirement and follows the format of the first of the national reports listed above.

Capacity and contribution

Terrorism

The chief constable understands his role in tackling the threat of terrorism; and the force, together with the counter-terrorism network, has the capacity it needs to contribute to the national counter-terrorism effort.

The force considers threats and risks from international terrorism and domestic extremism within its counter-terrorism control strategy.

The South East counter-terrorism unit² is part of the national network of dedicated counter-terrorism policing units providing functions such as the gathering of intelligence and evidence to help prevent, disrupt and prosecute terrorist activities. An example of how the counter-terrorism network has assisted in the provision of local counter-terrorism capacity was an investigation into a suspicious fire within the Kent Police area, believed linked to domestic extremism, undertaken by the South East counter-terrorism unit.

There is effective international cooperation between the force and the intelligence units in Belgium, France and the Netherlands. A joint intelligence unit, located at the border with France, has been established and is resourced with officers from special branch (South East counter terrorism unit), National Crime Agency border policing command, security and intelligence services and the Department of Work and Pensions.

Civil emergencies

The force, together with the Kent Resilience Forum, has the capacity to respond to civil emergencies locally and to contribute to responding to national emergencies.

The chief constable chairs the Kent Resilience Forum. The force has considered likely threats that it may face from civil emergencies, but has not produced a strategic threat and risk assessment. Instead, the Kent Resilience Forum community risk register, which is published on the forum's website, describes the risks that the partnership may have to deal with and is shown as requiring a review in 2012.

To support the Kent Resilience Forum, an executive group meets quarterly and has various subordinate working groups taking action on its behalf including risk assessments, plans and capabilities and training and exercising.

² The South East counter-terrorism unit includes Thames Valley, Hampshire, Surrey, Sussex and Kent police.

Kent Police has a framework for conducting an assessment of its preparedness. Quarterly civil contingency meetings are held to assess the force's ability to respond against each criterion; its first meeting took place in October 2013.

The force has arrangements to request mutual aid – the provision of resources from other police forces – and any specialist skills required for dealing with civil emergencies. For the police forces in the South East region, mobilisation of specialist resources is co-ordinated by the South East regional information and coordination centre, which is hosted by Kent Police. The centre also supports the National Police Coordination Centre, which mobilises resources across the country.

A tactical operations and planning team has been established by Kent Police that has provided support to the resilience forum. This team has been used to deal with a number of incidents which have required responses from the force and other organisations, such as a road traffic collision involving in excess of 100 vehicles on the Isle of Sheppey in 2013.

All of the forces in the region have sufficient numbers of trained staff to deliver basic chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear capabilities.

While Kent resilience is considered to be effective, changes are due to be implemented in 2014, which will include the establishment of a Kent Resilience Team. This team will ensure the resilience forum operates efficiently and effectively while new processes are being introduced.

Serious organised crime

Kent Police has appropriate capacity to meet threats from serious organised crime, either with its own trained staff, or through the South East Regional Organised Crime Unit.

An assistant chief constable provides clear leadership of the force's response to serious organised crime. Serious organised crime is considered in the Kent Police strategic threat and risk assessment.

In order to deal with serious crime effectively, the serious crime directorate, a collaboration between Kent and Essex Police forces has been formed. The management of staff within the serious crime directorate is shared across both forces, but the investigative teams are based within their own force areas and then moved to meet demand.

Kent Police applies the nationally approved methods to disrupt organised crime groups. There is a clear way of making sure that appropriate measures are taken against these groups in accordance with the force's assessment of the potential threats, risks, harm and demands that they pose.

The force can respond to these threats using its own resources, or it can request assistance from the South East region or other forces across the country.

The force is developing the regional organised crime unit in accordance with nationally issued guidance on regional organised crime unit development. There is a structure to decide the allocation of resources to investigate, disrupt and prosecute organised crime groups.³ Organised crime groups that have been identified are discussed at local, fortnightly task-allocation meetings and actions from these meetings are allocated across the force.

Public order

The chief constable understands his role to provide police support units ⁴ to deal with public order incidents across force boundaries and to make a contribution to the national requirement.

At the time of our visit, the chief constable was the national policing lead for public order.

Kent Police had completed a public order strategic threat and risk assessment, dated May 2013.

For each force, HMIC compared the number of police support units they declared they had, with the number of police support units that they told us they needed to respond to local outbreaks of disorder. The Force National Mutual Aid requirement is 11 PSU for which it trains 16 PSU. The Force has determined, based on potential abstraction rates, that the 16 PSU it trains provides sufficient capacity to meet both the national and local requirements for public order trained resources.

The force has sufficient specialist public order trained police officers⁵ and senior officers to command responses to major events and public disorder.

³ The United Kingdom law enforcement approach to tackling serious organised crime is based upon the identification of organised crime groups, assessment of the harm posed by them and their management by disruption, investigation and prosecution.

⁴ Police support units are the basic formation used by the police service for the policing of major events. The composition of a police support unit is standardised across all of the 43 police forces in England and Wales and consists of one inspector, three sergeants and 18 police constables, plus three drivers trained and equipped to carry out public order tactics to national standards, with three suitably equipped personnel carriers. Formations of a sergeant and six constables are referred to as serials.

⁵ In addition to public order trained police officers, forces have specialists who are trained in a number of capabilities. These include liaison with protestors to facilitate peaceful protest and the removal of uncooperative protestors causing obstructions.

The use of mutual aid is another indicator of the extent to which police forces either have or do not have sufficient trained public order resources. Data provided by forces on their provision and receipt of mutual aid for 2011/12 and 2012/13 show that Kent was one of 31 forces that were net providers for public order policing mutual aid.

Large-scale cyber incident

The force's plans to respond to the threat of a large-scale cyber incident were still under development at the time of our inspection.

At the time of our visit to Kent Police, the force had started a threat assessment in relation to cybercrime as well as identifying where the force might not be able to meet demands, but these documents were incomplete.

Cybercrime was not highlighted in the force's strategic threat and risk assessment.

Following a denial of service attack⁶ on the force in 2012, a plan had been developed to inform the force's response to a cyber attack although this plan had not been tested.

Testing is conducted by the force information security manager to test whether the force's systems can be compromised. A formal schedule for testing has not been developed. Staff demonstrated an understanding of the implications of a cyber attack. The force had prepared business continuity plans⁷ to enable the force to continue functioning in the event of disruptions to services, including its IT systems. These include a plan illustrating what should be done in the event of a cyber attack.

⁶ A denial of service attack is an attempt to make a computer or network of computers unavailable to its users.

⁷ Business continuity plans set out how the force will operate following an incident and how it expects to return to normal business in the quickest possible time afterwards.

Capability

Terrorism

Kent Police has, or has access to, the necessary capability to conduct complex investigations into terrorism. It has the systems in place to manage the training of special branch officers to maintain the necessary skills to provide specific counter-terrorism capability.

The force and the South East counter-terrorism unit work together to ensure that all available information is gathered and analysed. This provides intelligence that informs regional and national understanding of terrorist and domestic extremism threats.

The counter-terrorism unit provides most of the capability needed to undertake complex investigations, respond to critical incidents (including command and control) and provide specialist equipment and training to national standards.

The force uses a secure conferencing system to facilitate daily management meetings with the other forces in the South East region. Details about terrorism intelligence and the forces' responses are discussed and shared securely. It has sufficient trained staff locally to support all four strands of the counter-terrorism CONTEST⁸ strategy. A detective chief superintendent or an assistant chief constable from Kent Police attends the regional CONTEST board which is chaired by a senior Thames Valley Police officer.

Civil emergencies

The force is meeting the SPR requirement to provide capability to meet civil emergencies which span the borders between Kent and surrounding forces.

Events that could threaten human welfare are recorded in the Kent Resilience Forum community risk register.

The Civil Contingencies Strategy Board has reviewed the force's capabilities to respond to civil emergencies against the College of Policing's capability framework. This work is designed to assess whether forces have appropriate capabilities and help them formulate plans for improvement.

The head of emergency planning has prepared resilience plans for the Kent Resilience Forum and the force assesses its capacity and capability against the roles identified in these plans. The Forum conducts a training and exercise programme

⁸ CONTEST – the government's counter-terrorism strategy. The four strands are: pursue, prevent, protect and prepare.

that regularly validates the force's capability to co-ordinate responses, with other agencies, to events threatening human welfare (such as nuclear incidents or industrial accidents). Kent Police maintains records of training provided to staff.

The training and exercising working group of the local resilience forum for members has developed a debriefing procedure. This proved effective in reviewing joint arrangements following the response to the road traffic collision on the Isle of Sheppey. A full debrief report has been shared with the force chief officer group and the members of the Kent Resilience Forum.

Serious organised crime

Kent Police has the capabilities required, either internally or through officers provided by the regional organised crime unit, to meet threats from serious organised crime.

HMIC found that, in the South East region, chief constables have agreed their plans for the further development of the regional organised crime unit. The force holds task-allocation meetings every two weeks to agree on what is dealt with by the different levels of response (local, regional or national). Matters that require immediate attention are dealt with in similar daily meetings.

The force has reviewed its capability to deal with serious organised crime. Staff are trained to national standards and have appropriate equipment to fulfil their roles. Training requirements are reviewed annually. Records of staff skills are kept by the joint Kent and Essex Police force's human resource directorate and there is a way of making sure that it can maintain its capability as staff move on.

Public order

Kent Police has the capabilities required to respond to public order threats.

Kent Police trains its staff in accordance with national standards, including the use of tactics to end incidents of disorder before they become unmanageable. The force is accredited nationally to train senior officers in the region who have been selected to lead police responses to public disorder and major events.

The force has reviewed the number of officers with skills that it needs to perform specific roles and assessed that this is sufficient.

Kent Police has established procedures, to use during planned operations, to understand how those involved in disorder are using social media. This means that the use of social media (such as that which occurred during the 2011 disorders by people to communicate where disorder was taking place) can be monitored. It can also use its constant intelligence management capability to perform this role in the event of spontaneous outbreaks of disorder. This contributes to national intelligence

gathering and enables incident commanders to deploy their resources using the best available information.

HMIC tested, without notice, the force's capability to mobilise and conduct mutual support across boundaries to outbreaks of public disorder. Control room staff in Kent demonstrated effective ways of responding to the scenario given in the test.

We found that there were plans to establish command, control and communications support to respond to incidents. An inspector trained in commanding police responses to public order incidents was available immediately. A senior officer was also available who would co-ordinate longer-term responses. One fully equipped contingent of officers would be available within 60 minutes and there were plans to secure further fully equipped officers from elsewhere in the force area. Control room staff were aware of the standard operating procedures and the regional memorandum of understanding⁹ for cross-border mobilisation which set out how a force should obtain assistance from other forces in the region. Staff had access to contingency plans through the force's command and control systems and they were available in hard copy in locked cabinets in the control room.

We inspected one of the force's police support unit carriers and found it to be fully functioning and equipped to national standards.

Large-scale cyber incident

Kent Police, like most forces, is not yet able to identify or understand fully the threats, risks and harm posed by cybercrime. The force is not yet taking full advantage of opportunities being made available to train its workforce to deal with cybercrime.

At the time of the inspection visit, Kent Police was working to improve its understanding of cyber issues and its response to a cyber attack.

The force does not work with academic institutions and private industry that focus on the recruitment of people with information, communication and technology skills. Nor has it asked for assistance from volunteer information, communication and technology professionals. The force recognises that this would improve the force's skills in this area.

The College of Policing has developed eight computer-based training courses to improve the police service's knowledge and skills to deal with cybercrime. Data have been provided and analysed to understand the proportion of the workforce who have sought the training up to the beginning of December 2013.¹⁰ Tables that show the

⁹ Memorandum of Understanding between the ACPO South East Region forces.

¹⁰ Information provided by the College of Policing dated 10 February 2014 – completion figures for communication data and cybercrime modules (period ending 31 January 2014).

Figure 1: Digital communications, Social Media, Cyber and Policing¹¹

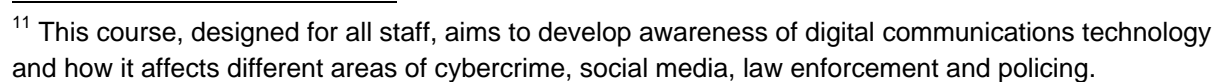
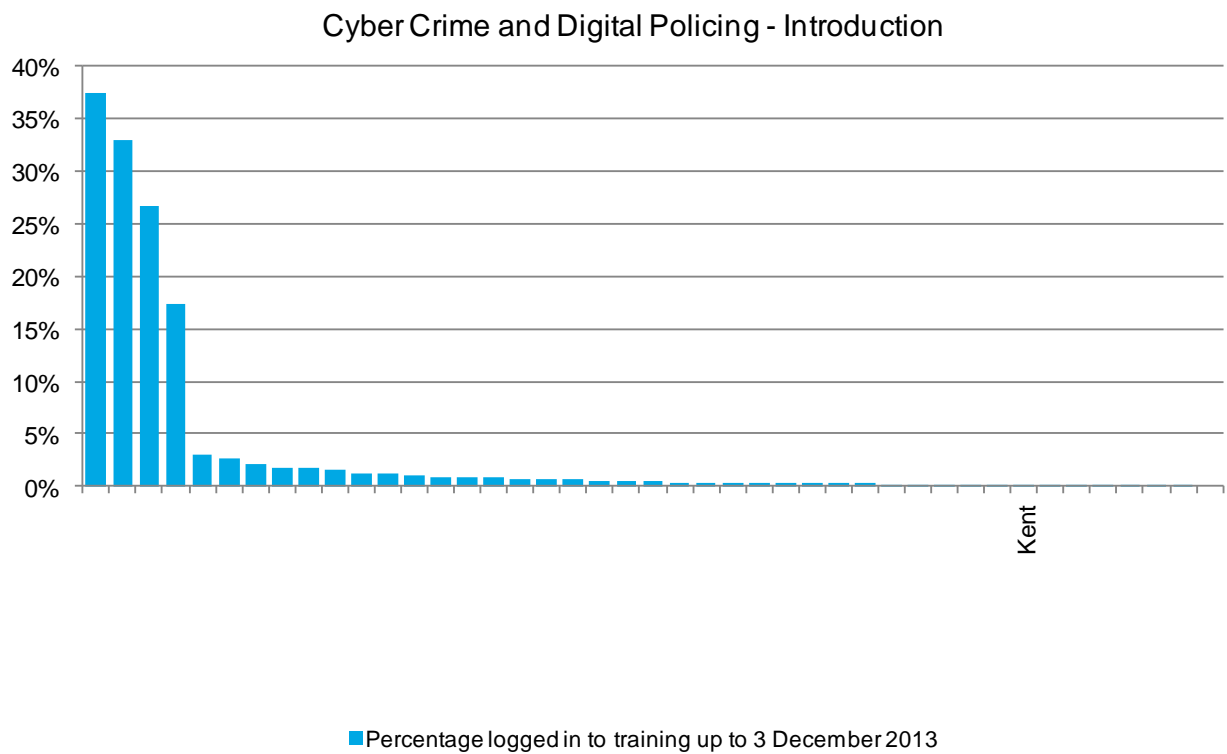
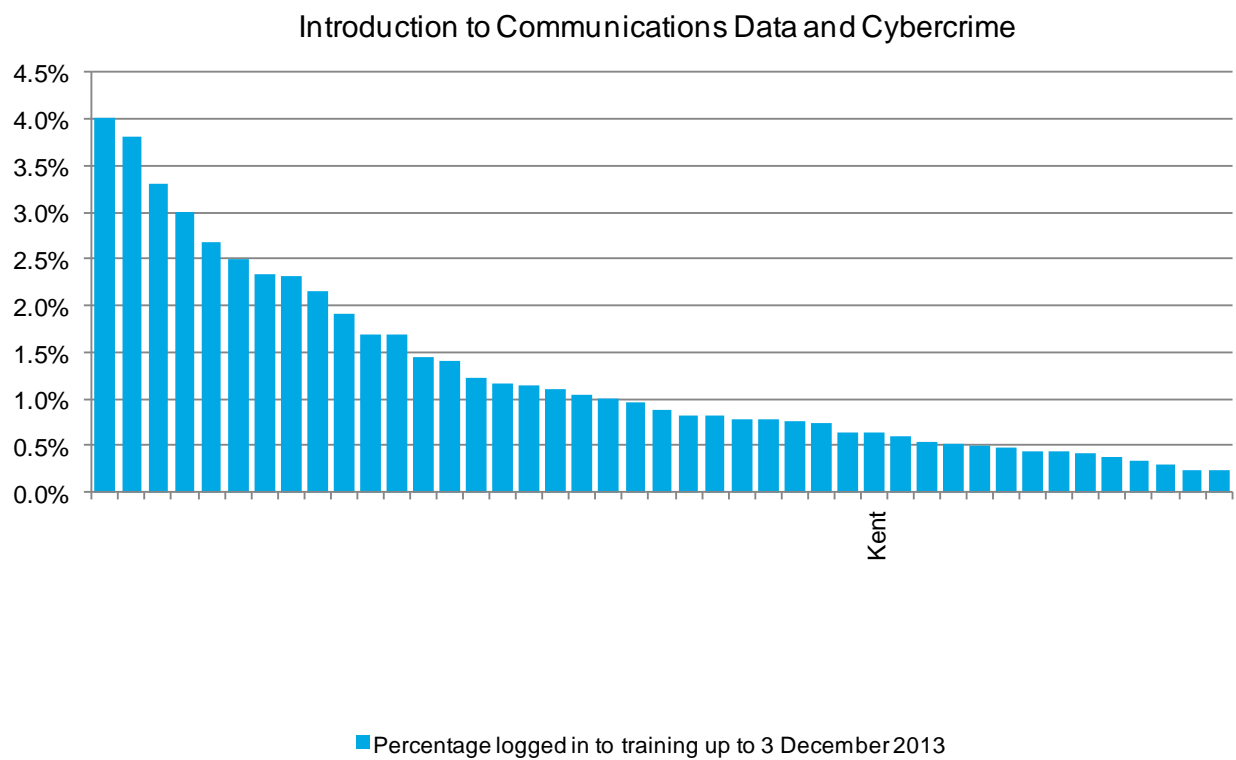


Figure 2: Cybercrime and Digital Policing – Introduction¹²



¹² This course is designed for all police officers, special constables and other individuals in a law enforcement community. It is aimed at helping them develop a general awareness of the types of emerging threats and risks from criminals exploiting technology. The training is linked to relevant legislation and also covers cybercrime prevention.

Figure 3: Introduction to Communications Data and Cybercrime¹³



¹³ This course is aimed at investigators and demonstrates the skills needed for a basic level of understanding of the uses of communications data in law enforcement, including guidance on cybercrime prevention.

Consistency

Public order

The arrangements to train public order officers and procure public order equipment are consistent across all forces in the South East region.

Public Order equipment is purchased through a collaborative procurement unit for both Essex Police and Kent Police and can be shared with the other forces in the South East region. This unit also provides support to Kent Fire and Rescue Service with arrangements to share a control room and some IT systems. Procurement in the force is overseen by an assistant chief officer.

Kent Police train public order officers locally and are regularly visited by other Forces to use their facilities and join their exercises. The force participates in regional public order exercises.

The force uses nationally agreed procurement standards for its public order protective shields. Staff trained in public order expressed confidence that their equipment was up to date and compatible with that used by other forces. They are able to effectively operate with other forces' public order workforces.

Responding to chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear incidents

Kent Police is able to operate effectively with other emergency services to respond to chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear incidents.

There have been no operational deployments of staff to chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear incidents over the past year but Kent Police conducts regular formal training exercises with the Port of Dover. The most recent exercise took place in July 2013.

The force's staff train with the Kent Fire and Rescue Service who are located in the same force control room and it is planned that their command and control functions will be delivered from the same venue. Chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear equipment complies with national specifications.

Connectivity

Terrorism

The force and its neighbouring forces in the South East region have effective ways to co-ordinate and mobilise resources to deal with incidents of terrorism. These are supported by secure IT and radio communications.

Kent Police participates in daily national counter-terrorism network meetings at which threats are discussed and the police service's response is determined. The counter-terrorism unit also co-ordinates regional daily meetings, where representatives from forces in the region discuss threats that are developing and agree actions to respond to them. The force has clear arrangements to ask for assistance from the counter-terrorism network.

There is a regular programme of counter-terrorism response testing through regional table-top exercises involving partner organisations and Kent Police emergency planning team. There are effective ways of debriefing following these exercises and identifying areas for improvement.

The force uses the Airwave radio system to communicate effectively with other police forces in the South East region and with the regional organised crime unit.

Civil emergencies

Kent Police is able to communicate with other Kent Resilience Forum members in the planning of responding to civil emergencies.

Emergency services in Kent work with the national joint emergency services interoperability programme and the force works well with the other emergency services.

The force uses information about the way it deploys its personnel to both real incidents and to exercises for the purpose of learning and development.

Serious and organised crime

The force communicates effectively with other forces in the region and with the regional organised crime unit about the mobilisation of resources, sharing of equipment and tactics, and communication with other partners. Also, it is participating actively, through the regional organised crime unit, in the national tasking arrangements.

The region has an effective way of prioritising organised crime issues that require operational activity; allocating tasks to officers at either a force or regional level; and co-ordinating activity across the region. There was evidence that resources are prioritised to deal with the most serious organised crime groups.

The force's procurement unit purchases the equipment used in operations to tackle organised crime groups. This unit collaborates with the other forces in the South East region to ensure that they can share equipment.

The force is able to share intelligence securely with the regional organised crime unit.

Public order

We found that the chief constable of Kent Police is co-operating with the arrangements for cross-boundary mobilisation of officers to deal with public order incidents.

The South East regional information and coordination centre co-ordinates regional mobilisation of public order resources. Forces have agreed a regional mobilisation protocol which has been effective in a number of instances including the recent support the force provided to the Police Service of Northern Ireland, the 2011 disorders in London and assistance to Sussex Police.

In the past two years, the force has received no assistance in the form of police support units¹⁴ from other forces but has provided 22 police support units to others.

Cyber connectivity

Kent Police has not been faced with a large-scale cyber incident that would require a joint response. The workforce was aware, however, of where they could get help if it was needed.

The force has not had to investigate or deal with the consequences of a serious cyber attack. Senior management in the force recognise that, if they were faced with such a challenge, they would ask for the national expertise of the National Cyber Crime Unit of the National Crime Agency or the South East Regional Organised Crime Unit.

¹⁴ This analysis excluded three major policing operations – the 2011 widespread disorder experienced in England in August 2011, the London Olympics 2012 and the removal of the residents at Dale Farm, Essex in 2012 (Operation Cabinet) – as they were exceptional incidents that skewed the results.