

18 July 2013

## **Metropolitan Police has made good progress in response to the spending review, but faces a challenge to implement a significant change in a short timeframe, finds HMIC**

*HM Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) assess that the Metropolitan Police Service faces a more difficult task to save money. However, given its higher expenditure on pay and other costs there are opportunities to deliver cost savings. The force understands the issues facing it, and has a comprehensive and well managed change programme in place to deliver the savings required, while minimising as far as possible the impact on frontline policing.*

In a report published today, HMIC has found:

### **Progress in making savings**

- The Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) has identified that it needs to save £769.4m over the four years of the spending review (i.e. between March 2011 and March 2015). The force has planned how it will save £737m of the £769.4m required by March 2015. It therefore still has £32.4m to find in savings. This outstanding gap is only a small proportion of the MPS's total spending and we expect this to be closed by identifying new savings and through under-spending in the remaining two years.
- As a proportion of its overall budget (21%), this savings requirement is higher than most other forces. Therefore, HMIC considers that the MPS faces a particularly difficult challenge.

### **Workforce changes and protecting the front line**

- The force is reducing police officer numbers by limiting recruitment and holding vacancies; as a result, by the end of the spending review period, there will be 1,374 fewer police officers in the MPS. This means the number of police officers is planned to reduce by 4% between March 2010 and March 2015; this is a smaller reduction than in most other forces.
- There is evidence that the MPS is successfully protecting frontline posts as it makes these cuts: between March 2010 and March 2015, the proportion of police officers in frontline crime-fighting is planned to increase from 86% to 93%. This compares to an overall increase across England and Wales from 89% to 93%.
- The force has also made some police staff redundant and not replaced others as they have left (e.g. through retirements and resignations); as a result, by the end of the spending review period, it is planned that there will be 1,244 fewer police staff in the MPS. This means the number of police staff is planned to reduce by 9% between March 2010 and March 2015; this is a smaller reduction than in most other forces.

### **Impact on the public**

- Over the first two years of the spending review, recorded crime (excluding fraud) fell by 7%, which is lower than the figure for England and Wales (13%).
- Victim satisfaction is 76.2%; this is considerably lower than other forces.

## Future challenges

- HMIC was reassured by the level of detail that underpins the MPS's saving plans and the leadership's ability and determination to deliver change. However, given the magnitude of the task and time available, against an incredibly challenging backdrop of policing the capital, HMIC considers the ability of the force to deliver the change presents a risk. Any further budget reductions will add to this risk.

HM Inspector of Constabulary for the London and National Team, Stephen Otter, said:

*“The Metropolitan Police Service has a more difficult financial challenge than many other forces yet has developed a comprehensive change programme which reduces costs and restructures the organisation to better fight crime.*

*“HMIC was reassured by the level of detail that underpins their saving plans and the leadership's ability and determination to deliver change. However, given: the high level of savings that are required; the fact that the MPS has only just developed its savings plans as a result of policing the Olympics; the size and complexity of the force; and the capital city and national challenges it faces, HMIC considers that there is still a high level of risk associated with the force delivering its change programme.*

*“HMIC will continue to monitor the force for the remainder of the spending review period.”*

The full report for the Metropolitan Police Service, along with the national thematic review, can be found at [www.hmic.gov.uk](http://www.hmic.gov.uk)

## Notes to Editors:

1. The thematic report 'Policing in Austerity: Rising to the Challenge' can be found at [www.hmic.gov.uk](http://www.hmic.gov.uk)
2. Victim satisfaction for this force has a confidence interval of  $\pm 0.7\%$
3. HMIC's July 2012 report 'Policing in austerity: One year on' and July 2011 report 'Adapting to Austerity' along with supporting materials can be found at [www.hmic.gov.uk](http://www.hmic.gov.uk)
4. In October 2010, the government announced that the central funding provided to the police service would reduce by 20% in the four years between March 2011 and March 2015.
5. Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) is an independent inspectorate, inspecting policing in the public interest, and rigorously examines the efficiency and effectiveness of police forces to tackle crime and terrorism, improve criminal justice and raise confidence. HMIC inspects all 43 police forces in England and Wales together with other major policing bodies.
6. For further information, HMIC's press office can be contacted during office hours from 8:30am – 5:30pm Monday – Friday on 0203 513 0600.
7. HMIC's out-of-hours press office line for urgent media enquiries is 07836 217 729.