

PEEL: Police legitimacy 2015

An inspection of South Yorkshire Police



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Overview – How legitimate is the force at keeping people safe and reducing crime?

Overall judgment¹



Good

Throughout 2015, HMIC's PEEL legitimacy inspection programme has assessed the culture within South Yorkshire Police, and how this is reflected in the force's public engagement, use of Taser and compliance with the Best Use of Stop and Search scheme.

South Yorkshire Police had effectively promoted an ethical culture and standards through its FIRST principles (fairness, integrity, respect, standards and trust), which it used to guide officers and staff. The force effectively uses a wide range of approaches to engage with the diverse communities it serves.

While South Yorkshire Police is complying with most aspects of the Best Use of Stop and Search scheme, it is not complying with the requirement to record and publish the full range of outcomes required by the scheme, including the connection, if any, between the outcome and the item searched for. Taser use is fair and appropriate.

This is the first time HMIC has graded forces on their legitimacy, so no year-on-year comparison is possible.

Summary

South Yorkshire Police had effectively promoted an ethical culture and standards through its FIRST principles (fairness, integrity, respect, standards and trust), which it used to guide officers and staff. These principles were updated following the introduction of the Code of Ethics,² and a decision was made to run them both in tandem. The force introduced a health, wellbeing and resilience plan in 2013, and to support this, the force operated a wellbeing calendar, with focus being placed on a different area of wellbeing at different times of the year.

¹ Outstanding, Good, Requires improvement or Inadequate – see Annex A.

² *Code of Ethics – A Code of Practice for the Principles and Standards of Professional Behaviour for the Policing Profession of England and Wales*, College of Policing, London, July 2014. Available from: www.college.police.uk/What-we-do/Ethics/Documents/Code_of_Ethics.pdf

When HMIC looked at how well the force understands and engages with all the people it serves, we found that South Yorkshire Police understands the importance of legitimacy and the role effective public engagement has in ensuring people have confidence in the police.

The force effectively uses a wide range of approaches to engage with the diverse communities it serves. A new force website is being developed to provide more information to the public and help record public views. The force provides sufficient feedback to the public and appropriately encourages the public to participate in policing activities.

Stop and search and Taser are two ways that the police can prevent crime and protect the public. However, they can be intrusive and forceful methods, and it is therefore vital that the police use them fairly and appropriately. HMIC found that while South Yorkshire Police is complying with most aspects of the Best Use of Stop and Search scheme, it is not complying with the requirement to record and publish the full range of outcomes as required by the scheme, including the connection, if any, between the outcome and the item searched for. Taser use is fair and appropriate.

To what extent does practice and behaviour reinforce the wellbeing of staff and an ethical culture?



Good

HMIC found that South Yorkshire Police had effectively promoted an ethical culture and standards through its FIRST principles (fairness, integrity, respect, standards and trust), which it used to guide officers and staff. These principles were updated following the introduction of the Code of Ethics, and a decision was made to run them both in tandem. Those we spoke to mainly told us that they understood the principles and this helped guide their behaviour. Staff we spoke to were aware of the Code of Ethics and its close relationship to the FIRST principles.

The force introduced a health, wellbeing and resilience plan in 2013,

How well does the force understand, engage with and treat fairly the people it serves to maintain and improve its legitimacy?



Good

South Yorkshire Police understands the importance of legitimacy and the role effective public engagement has in ensuring people have confidence in the police.

The force effectively uses a wide range of approaches to engage with the diverse communities it serves. A new force website is being developed to provide more information to the public and help record public views. The force provides sufficient feedback to the public and appropriately encourages the public to participate in policing activities.

The force has a good understanding of local people using surveys, information from social

To what extent are decisions taken on the use of stop and search and Taser fair and appropriate?



Requires improvement

While South Yorkshire Police is complying with most aspects of the Best Use of Stop and Search scheme, it is not complying with the requirement to record and publish a range of outcomes, including the connection, if any, between the outcome and the item searched for. Additionally, we found that in 18 of the 100 stop and search records we examined there were insufficient grounds recorded to justify the search. For these reasons, we consider that South Yorkshire Police falls below the standard required for a 'Good' force.

The force recognises that black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) individuals are

and to support this, the force operated a wellbeing calendar, with focus being placed on a different area of wellbeing at different times of the year.

HMIC found some differences between how police officer and police staff complaint and misconduct processes were handled, which had the potential to lead to unfair treatment. The force was taking steps to align the police staff and officer processes to ensure that the approach was fair.

media and traditional community meetings and face-to-face contact. The force is effective in supporting and encouraging staff to act fairly and respectfully and most officers and staff of South Yorkshire Police treat people fairly and with respect. Call-handlers and front-counter staff that we observed were polite, courteous and professional.

The force acknowledges that more could be done and challenges lie ahead, as it goes through a period of major change. However there are effective ways of engagement in place and the force recognises that it needs to retain these to maintain and enhance its legitimacy in the eyes of the people of South Yorkshire.

over-represented in stop and search statistics, and it plans to seek independent academic research to provide a better understanding of this disproportionality. The force is also establishing an independent scrutiny panel including black, Asian and minority ethnic people and young people who will be able to examine a selection of stop and search records.

Taser officers are well trained and oversight of the deployment of Taser is well managed. There is a clear rationale for the numbers and distribution of Taser-trained officers and an effective review process is instigated when a Taser is used.

Officers mainly understand the National Decision Model, and decisions about the use of Taser are generally fair and appropriate.

Force in numbers



Ethnic diversity

Percentage of BAME in workforce 31 March 2015



Percentage of BAME in local population, 2011 Census



Gender diversity

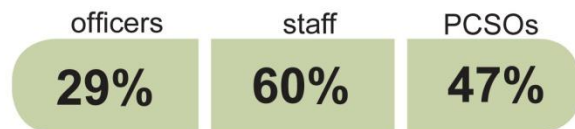
Percentage of females in overall workforce 31 March 2015



Percentage of females by role, South Yorkshire Police



Percentage of females by role, England and Wales force average

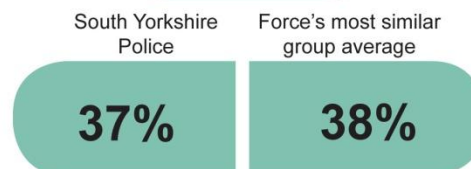


Public complaints

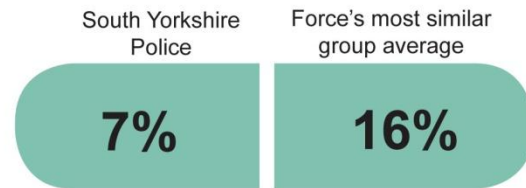
Number of allegations made by the public that have been finalised 12 months to 31 March 2015



Proportion of finalised allegations investigated 12 months to 31 March 2015



Proportion of finalised allegations upheld after investigation 12 months to 31 March 2015

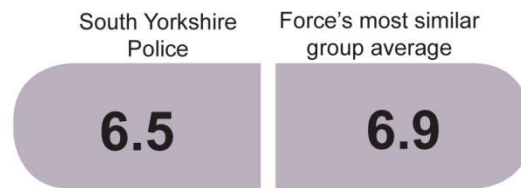


Stop and search

Number of stops and searches carried out 12 months to 31 March 2015



Stops and searches per 1,000 population 12 months to 31 March 2015



Change in number of stops and searches 12 months to 31 March 2014 to 12 months to 31 March 2015

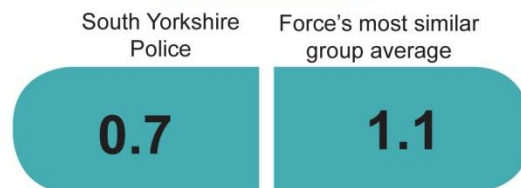


Tasers

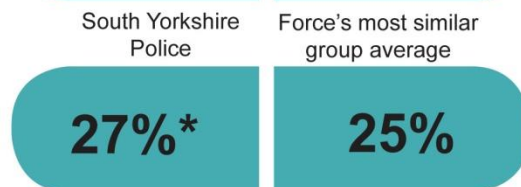
Number of times a Taser was used 12 months to 31 December 2014



Number of times a Taser was used per 10,000 population 12 months to 31 December 2014



Taser 'discharged' (as proportion of overall use) 12 months to 31 December 2014



Data: for further information about the data used in this graphic see annexes B and D in this report and annex B in the national legitimacy report.

* These data are based on small numbers and so comparisons with the average should be treated with caution.

Introduction

Throughout 2015, HMIC has assessed the extent to which police forces are legitimate in how they keep people safe and reduce crime. This is one strand of the PEEL (police effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy) all-force inspection programme.

A police force is considered to be legitimate if it has the consent of the public, and if those working in the force consistently behave in a way that is fair, reasonable, effective and lawful. The force must also generate the trust and co-operation of the public.

To reach a judgment on each force's legitimacy, HMIC examined three areas:

Spring 2015 inspection

- To what extent does practice and behaviour reinforce the wellbeing of staff and an ethical culture?

Autumn 2015 inspection

- How well does the force understand, engage with and treat fairly the people it serves to maintain and improve its legitimacy?
- To what extent are decisions taken on the use of stop and search and Taser fair and appropriate?

This report provides the main findings for South Yorkshire Police.

Methodology

During our inspection we interviewed relevant senior leaders, collected data and documentation from forces, surveyed the public to seek their views of the force, held focus groups for those at different grades and ranks, and undertook unannounced visits to individual police stations to gather evidence and speak with officers and staff.

Prior to inspection fieldwork we also reviewed a small number of Taser deployment forms and stop and search forms; and listened to calls for service from members of the public.

This work was informed by research on the two principal characteristics of a legitimate organisation – organisational justice and procedural justice.

Organisational justice³

Every day, people respond to the actions and decisions made by their organisation that affect them or their work. Research shows that an individual's perceptions of these decisions (and the processes that led to them) as fair or unfair can influence their subsequent attitudes and behaviours.

In a policing context, staff who feel they are treated fairly and with respect by their force, are more likely to go on to treat the public with whom they come into contact fairly and with respect. This will increase the public's view that the police act legitimately.

Procedural justice

Research⁴ has shown that for the police to be considered legitimate in the eyes of the public, people need to believe that the police will treat them with respect, make fair decisions (and take the time to explain these decisions), and be friendly and approachable. It also indicates that the way officers behave is central to policing as it can encourage greater respect for the law and foster social responsibility.

There is also an economic benefit for a force which is seen as legitimate by the communities it serves. The more the public provides support to the police through information or intelligence, or becomes more active in policing activities (such as Neighbourhood Watch or other voluntary activity), the less the financial burden on police forces.

³ *It's a fair cop? Police legitimacy, public cooperation, and crime reduction*, Andy Myhill and Paul Quinton, National Policing Improvement Agency, London, 2011. Available from: http://whatworks.college.police.uk/Research/Documents/Fair_Cop_Briefing_Note.pdf

⁴ *Ibid.*

To what extent does practice and behaviour reinforce the wellbeing of staff and an ethical culture?

Introduction

As organisational justice has a direct relationship to procedural justice (we treat others as we are treated), it is critical that the culture inside police forces is an ethical one, where challenge and continual improvement are encouraged. It is also crucial that all officers and staff feel that they and others are treated fairly and consistently (for example, when an allegation is made against them by a member of the public or a colleague). Even if a system or process is fair, if people do not believe that it is, then organisational justice will not have been achieved.

Officers and staff who feel they are treated fairly and with respect by their force, are more likely to go on to treat the public with whom they come into contact fairly and with respect. This will increase the public's view that the police act legitimately.

In spring 2015,⁵ HMIC made an assessment of police force culture. The inspection asked:

1. How well does the force develop and maintain an ethical culture?
2. How well does the force provide for the wellbeing of staff?
3. How well has the Code of Ethics been used to inform policy and practice?
4. How fairly and consistently does the force deal with complaints and misconduct?

In addition, HMIC also considered the number of females and black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) people at different ranks and grades, to determine the extent to which the diversity of the force reflects that of the communities it serves.

Gender and black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) breakdown in South Yorkshire Police

A breakdown of the full-time equivalent (FTE) workforce⁶ in South Yorkshire Police as at 31 March 2015 is shown below.

⁵ The inspection took place between March and June 2015.

⁶ Workforce comprises officers, staff and police community support officers (PCSOs).

Figure 1: Breakdown of full-time equivalent (FTE) workforce in South Yorkshire Police, 31 March 2015

FTE	Total	Of which	
		Female	BAME*
Total workforce	4,772	2,068 (43%)	140 (3%)
Total officers	2,587	769 (30%)	86 (3%)
Constables	2,060	652 (32%)	70 (3%)
Sergeants	358	84 (23%)	10 (3%)
Inspecting ranks	140	26 (18%)	6 (4%)
Superintendents and above	30	8 **	0 **
Staff	1,870	1,169 (62%)	40 (2%)
PCSOs	314	130 (41%)	15 (5%)

Note that numbers may not add up to totals because of rounding.

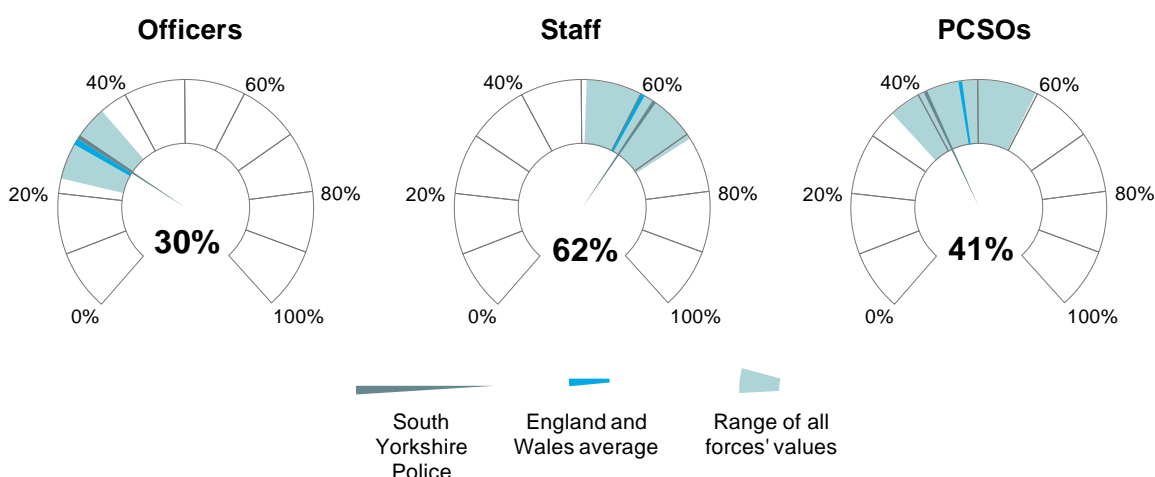
* Individuals are not required to record their ethnicity. As a result, BAME totals and percentages exclude officers/staff/PCSOs where the ethnicity is not stated.

** Where totals are very small, percentages have not been included.

Source: Home Office Police Workforce statistics

The figure below shows how the percentages of female officers, staff and PCSOs in South Yorkshire Police compared with the averages of all forces in England and Wales. It shows they were broadly similar for officers, higher for staff yet lower for PCSOs.

Figure 2: The percentage of female officers, staff and PCSOs in South Yorkshire Police compared with the force average for England and Wales, 31 March 2015

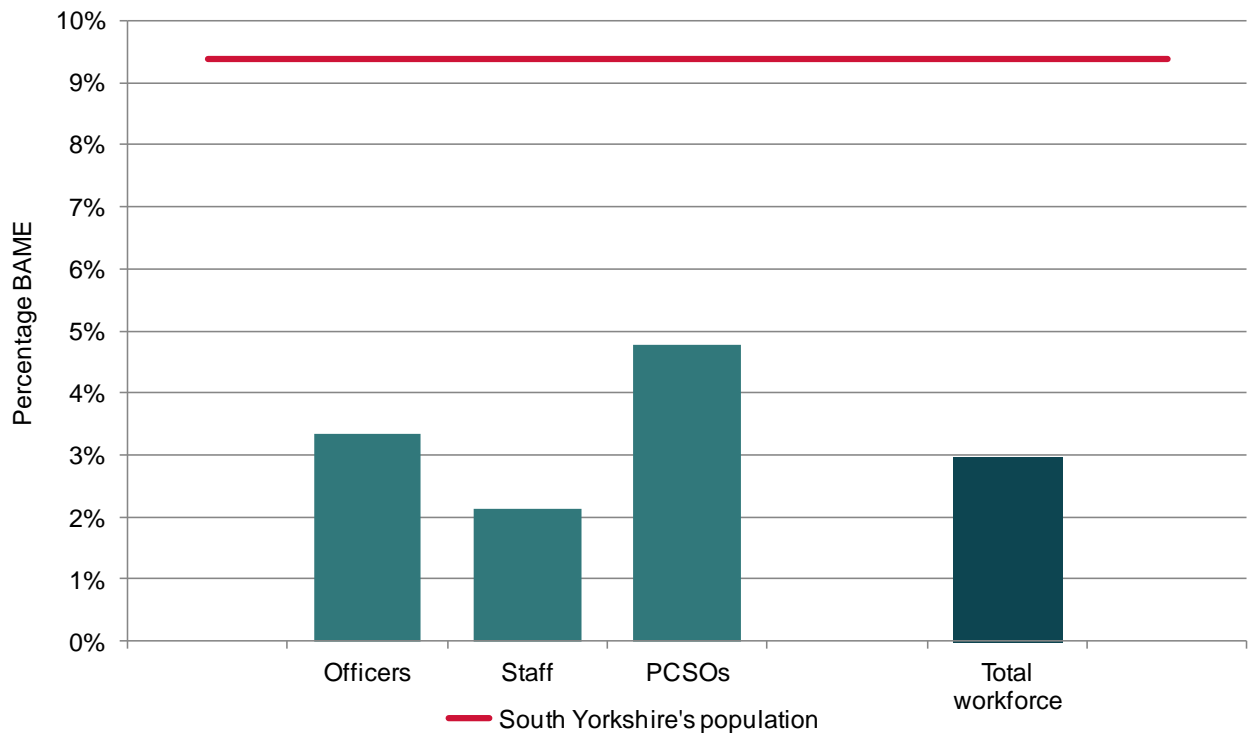


Source: Home Office Police Workforce statistics

We compared the percentages of (i) BAME officers, (ii) BAME police staff and (iii) BAME PCSOs in each force with the overall proportion of BAME people in the force's local population. In South Yorkshire, around 9 percent of the local population were BAME. The figure below shows these comparisons.

There was a statistically significant under-representation of BAME people in South Yorkshire Police's overall police workforce, as well as separately for officers, staff and PCSOs.

Figure 3: Percentage of BAME people within South Yorkshire Police's workforce (as at 31 March 2015) compared with its local population



Sources: Home Office Police Workforce statistics and Office for National Statistics 2011 Census

Police forces in England and Wales have experienced large reductions in their total workforce since the government's October 2010 spending review.⁷ HMIC also examined how the percentages of BAME officers and staff, and females within the workforce had changed over this period.

Across all police forces in England and Wales, total workforce numbers decreased by 15 percent between 31 March 2010 and 31 March 2015. However, the percentages of BAME people and females within the overall workforce increased during the five-year period. Most notably, the proportion of female officers increased over 2 percentage points to 28 percent, and the proportion of BAME officers increased by nearly 1 percentage point to just under 6 percent. In contrast, the proportion of BAME PCSOs decreased by nearly 2 percentage points to just over 9 percent.

⁷Spending Review 2010, HM Government, October 2013. Available from: www.gov.uk/government/publications/spending-review-2010

The figure below shows how these volumes and proportions have changed in South Yorkshire Police over the spending review period.

Figure 4: Change in South Yorkshire Police’s workforce (overall volume and the percentage of female and BAME people), 31 March 2010 to 31 March 2015

	Total change		Percentage point change	
			% female	% BAME
Total workforce	-912	(-16%)	+1	0
Officers	-366	(-12%)	+3 ●	0
Staff	-534	(-22%)	0	0
PCSOs	-13	(-4%)	-2	0

Note that numbers may not add up to totals because of rounding.

● Denotes there has been a statistically significant change in the proportion (see Annex B for details).

Source: Home Office Police Workforce statistics

There were no statistically significant changes in the percentages of either females or BAME people within South Yorkshire Police's overall workforce between 31 March 2010 and 31 March 2015. However, there was a statistically significant change in the percentage of female officers – around a 3 percentage point increase.

Overall, compared with other forces, as at 31 March 2015, the percentage of females within South Yorkshire Police's workforce was broadly similar for officers, higher for staff yet lower for PCSOs. By ethnicity, there was an under-representation in BAME officers, staff and PCSOs and there was no change in the proportion between 31 March 2010 and 31 March 2015 for any of these groups.

How well does the force develop and maintain an ethical culture?

It is critical that the culture inside police forces is an ethical one, where challenge and continual improvement are encouraged and where staff feel that they and others are treated fairly and consistently. If it is not, the service provided to the public may be equally unfair and inconsistent. HMIC therefore considered the extent to which people at all levels and all ranks (or equivalent) were creating and maintaining an ethical culture.

HMIC found that South Yorkshire Police had effectively promoted an ethical culture and standards through its FIRST principles (fairness, integrity, respect, standards and trust), which it used to guide officers and staff. These principles were updated following the introduction of the Code of Ethics, and a decision was made to run them both in tandem.

Those we spoke to mainly told us that they understood the principles and this helped guide their behaviour. Across the force area we saw a number of posters that reinforced the messages regarding an ethical workforce. These messages were well understood by the staff to whom we spoke.

The force ran a staff survey in 2014 where staff revealed feelings of: a lack of career progression and development; not being valued and; not being able to influence the decisions that affect them. These issues were causing low morale across the force. Chief officers were analysing the responses in an attempt to fully understand and address them. The force has condensed this activity into three main themes: leadership; communication; and staff support and development.

HMIC was told about avenues for staff to challenge behaviours and decisions, both of colleagues and of senior officers. Chief officers participated in roadshows with a question and answer element to them. Staff told us that a degree of challenge and question at these events is accepted and welcomed by the chief officers.

There were confidential reporting lines available within the force to report wrongdoing. Those who report wrongdoing were supported through the process and policing divisions allocated appropriate welfare support officers. The force operated the 'bad apple' system for whistleblowing, which gives staff the opportunity to report concerns about wrongdoing anonymously or in confidence to the professional standards department.

The promotion process had been redesigned to support fairness and integrate ethical practice, following staff feedback. The first two stages of the process, paper sift and in-tray exercise had been anonymised and the in-tray score was now used in the final decision about whether a candidate was successful. The in-tray exercise and interview involved questions with ethical considerations.

To monitor the ethical culture within the force, the police and crime commissioner introduced an ethics panel. While this panel was very new, having only met twice, it was being used to monitor ethical practice across the force and to track the understanding of the Code of Ethics.

Overall we were satisfied that South Yorkshire Police was working to develop and maintain an ethical culture.

How well does the force provide for the wellbeing of staff?

Police forces need to understand the benefits of having a healthier workforce – a happy and healthy workforce is likely to be a more productive one, as a result of people taking fewer sick days and having a greater investment in what they do. This inspection was concerned with what efforts were being made in forces to consider, and provide for, the wellbeing needs of their workforce.

The force provided additional support to promote the wellbeing of its workforce to address concerns on wellbeing from the staff survey run by the force in 2014. The chief constable had made a personal commitment to support the wellbeing of the workforce, and we found this was reflected in force policies and practice.

The force introduced a health, wellbeing and resilience plan in 2013, and to support this, the force operated a wellbeing calendar, with a different focus being placed on areas of wellbeing at different times of the year. For example, a mental health awareness week takes place in May each year. Also, periodically, each district offered free health screening and advice to officers and staff.

The force was in the process of recruiting additional counselling staff for the occupational health unit to reduce waiting times and increase access to the service. Referrals to the occupational health unit could be made by the staff member themselves or by their line managers. If the unit could not contact the staff member, they contacted their immediate supervisor. The staff we spoke to were very positive about the service provided by occupational health.

The force had put in place assistance to support staff applying for voluntary redundancy, such as training on writing CVs, interview techniques and other appropriate skills to prepare them for when they leave the organisation in light of the introduction of voluntary enhanced redundancy.

The force operated the trauma risk management system, with officers and staff across the force trained to provide support, advice and counselling to those officers and staff who have dealt with difficult or challenging incidents. This system operated across the force, around the clock, and was well known and understood by staff. Access to the system was through referral by line managers, the force incident manager, and following discussions at the daily management meeting. We were told there was a good uptake of the initial communication and assessment, and often further contact and support was not necessary as the intervention provided had been effective. Staff were very positive about the trauma risk management process.

Overall we were satisfied that the force took the wellbeing of its workforce seriously.

How well has the Code of Ethics been used to inform policy and practice?

In April 2014, the College of Policing launched the Code of Ethics.⁸ This sets out nine policing principles that should be applied by all officers and staff: Accountability; Integrity; Openness; Fairness; Leadership; Respect; Honesty; Objectivity; and Selflessness. These principles should be used to underpin the decisions and actions taken by officers and staff.

This inspection considered the extent to which officers and staff were aware of the Code of Ethics, and how the force was working to make the code part of day-to-day practice.

South Yorkshire Police integrated the College of Policing's Code of Ethics into its daily business, running in parallel with the existing framework of the FIRST principles. Staff we spoke to were aware of the Code of Ethics and its close relationship to the FIRST principles.

HMIC were told the force consulted with staff before agreeing how to deliver training on the code. The force decided they would not use computer-based training, preferring face-to-face training. This was delivered to frontline officers, including police officers, police community support officers (PCSOs) and their supervisors, through the 'street skills' training days. However, there was no face-to-face training on the Code of Ethics for police staff, other than PCSOs, or for those officers who did not attend the street skills training. There were plans to offer a structured and supported training programme, which will cover those police staff and officers who do not attend street skills. However, this training did not appear to be as detailed as that provided to frontline officers and PCSOs. Information on the Code of Ethics was available to all members of staff on the force intranet.

Overall we were satisfied that the force was effectively using the Code of Ethics to inform policy and practice

How fairly and consistently does the force deal with complaints and misconduct?

Complaints made by the public against police officers, police staff, contracted police staff, and force procedures are recorded by individual police forces. Each complaint may have one or more allegations attached to it. For example, one complaint that an officer was rude and that they pushed an individual would be recorded as two separate allegations.

⁸ Code of Ethics – A Code of Practice for the Principles and Standards of Professional Behaviour for the Policing Profession of England and Wales, College of Policing, London, July 2014. Available from: www.college.police.uk/What-we-do/Ethics/Documents/Code_of_Ethics.pdf

Each allegation can be dealt with, or resolved, in a number of ways. Some complaints, such as rudeness or incivility, may be dealt with through the local resolution process. The way these complaints are resolved should be adapted to the needs of the complainant – for example, they may involve an apology or an explanation of the circumstances in writing or in person. If the complaint is more serious, and assessed as not suitable for local resolution, it must be investigated by an appointed investigating officer who will produce a report detailing findings against each allegation. Under certain circumstances, some complaints do not proceed. These use processes known as disapplication or dispensation (for example, if the matter is already the subject of a complaint or if the complaint is repetitive or vexatious), discontinuance (for example, if the complainant refuses to co-operate or it is not reasonably practicable to investigate the complaint) or if they are withdrawn by the complainant.⁹

In the 12 months to 31 March 2015, South Yorkshire Police finalised 1,024 allegations from public complaints that were made against its officers and staff. Of these, 37 percent had been investigated and 48 percent had been locally resolved. These proportions were broadly in line with the average of South Yorkshire's most similar group of forces.¹⁰

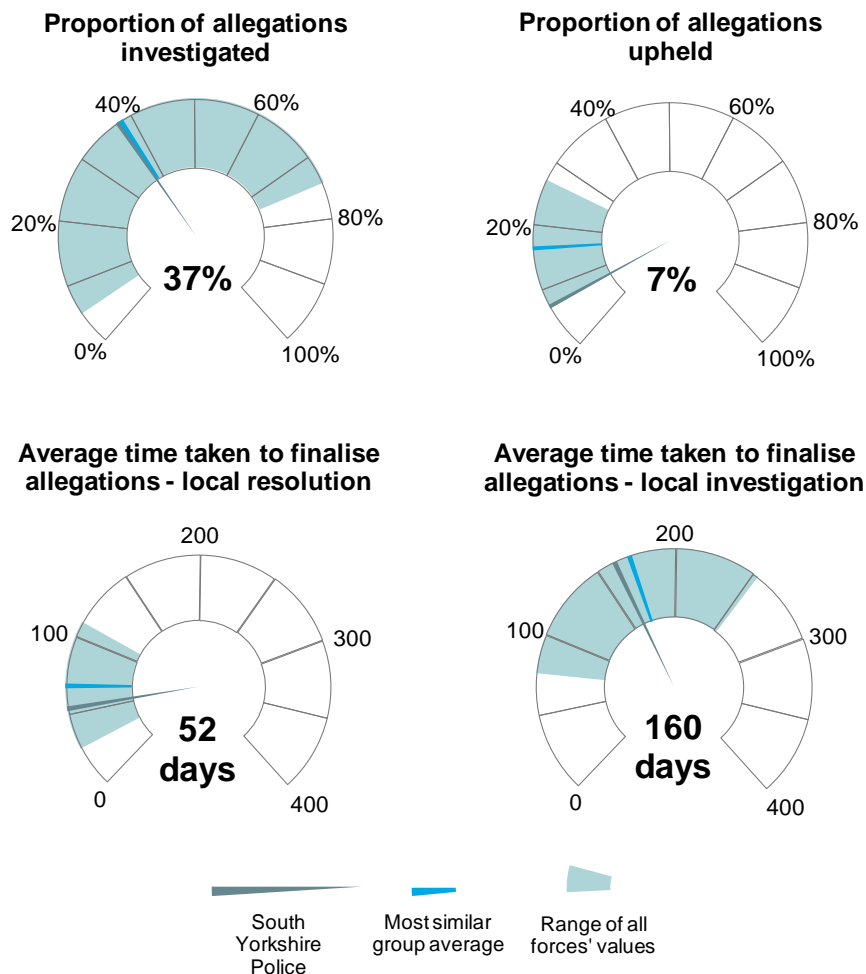
In the 12 months to 31 March 2015, the average time South Yorkshire Police took to complete a local resolution was 52 days, less than the average of its most similar group of forces (67 days). Over the same period, the average time a local investigation took to complete was 160 days, broadly in line with the average of its most similar group of forces (170 days).

After local investigation, South Yorkshire Police closed 382 allegations in the 12 months to 31 March 2015. Of these, 7 percent were upheld, where it was concluded that the service provided by the police officer or police staff or the service as a whole did not reach the standard a reasonable person could expect. This was less than the average of South Yorkshire's most similar group of forces of 16 percent. The following figure shows how these values compare.

⁹ For a more complete outline of the definitions and potential outcomes resulting from public complaints, please see the Independent Police Complaints Commission's website: www.ipcc.gov.uk.

¹⁰ Most similar groups (MSGs) are groups of local areas that have been found to be most similar to each other using statistical methods, based on demographic, economic and social characteristics which relate to crime. See Annex B for more information.

Figure 5: Proportion of allegations investigated, proportion upheld, time taken to finalise allegations by local resolutions and investigations by South Yorkshire Police, 12 months to 31 March 2015



Source: Independent Police Complaints Commission

Overall, in the 12 months to 31 March 2015, South Yorkshire Police finalised 37 percent of allegations by investigation. The proportion of allegations it upheld after local investigation was less than the average of its most similar group of forces. Compared to its most similar group of forces, South Yorkshire took less time to complete local resolutions and a similar amount of time to complete local investigations.

Are officers and staff, particularly those with protected characteristics, treated fairly following a complaint or allegation against them?

While it is very important that public complaints and allegations of misconduct or corruption are taken seriously, it is also important that those subject to these allegations or complaints are treated fairly and consistently, and that there is no bias or discrimination involved in any aspect of the decision-making process.

Building on the findings of HMIC's Police Integrity and Corruption inspection,¹¹ this inspection considered if public complaints and misconduct investigations were dealt with in a timely and consistent manner. The inspection also considered whether investigations were conducted fairly and whether officers and staff, particularly those with protected characteristics,¹² felt that they would be treated fairly following a complaint or allegation against them.

Before the fieldwork stage began, HMIC conducted a file review of 60 public complaints and internal misconduct allegations, to assess whether they had been considered fairly and consistently. We examined further the outcomes of the review during our fieldwork.

While not necessarily representative of all cases, in the small number of files we looked at we did not find any evidence of any bias in how the force dealt with complaints

In South Yorkshire Police the professional standards department managed the police complaints and misconduct process. Police staff complaints and misconduct were managed through a police staff conduct unit that sat within the professional standards department. This unit was made up of human resource department staff, and was led by the head of conduct (a police staff post). While different ways of working existed for officers and staff, the force told us it was making efforts to more closely align these approaches. We were told the two different processes were both overseen by the head of the professional standards department, with the intention of promoting a consistent and fair approach.

Our review of a sample of misconduct cases showed that the police staff conduct unit's processes were very different from the approach to police officer misconduct. During the inspection we also noted different recording and investigation processes for complaint-handling between police officer discipline and police staff discipline. Several examples suggested a lack of transparency on police staff misconduct files, although we were told this was an indication of inadequate recording, rather than a systemic failing. However, in order to ensure the complaints and misconduct system is fair these discrepancies in approach should be addressed.

¹¹ *Integrity Matters – An inspection of arrangements to ensure integrity and to provide the capability to tackle corruption in policing*, HMIC, London, 2015. Available from: www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/publications/integrity-matters/

¹² Under the Equality Act 2010, it is against the law to discriminate against anyone because of: age; being or becoming a transsexual person; being married or in a civil partnership; being pregnant or having a child; disability; race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin; religion, belief or lack of religion/belief; sex; or sexual orientation. These are called 'protected characteristics'.

We found that the force recognised the pressures on staff from the investigation of complaints concerning child sexual exploitation. In part this was caused by the force’s decision to refer all complaints, which could be linked to the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation in Rotherham (1997 – 2013),¹³ to the Independent Police Complaints Commission. However, we were told that although staff broadly understood why the decision had been made, it had affected negatively the morale of staff working within the public protection department, as some complaints that would otherwise not normally have been referred to the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC), were now being referred to the IPCC.

Overall HMIC concluded that the ways of working used to deal with complaints and misconduct allegations may have led to inconsistencies in the way complaints were being investigated and resolved and to perceptions that the force was not treating staff fairly, although we saw no evidence of bias or discrimination in the files we considered.

Summary of findings



Good

HMIC found that South Yorkshire Police had effectively promoted an ethical culture and standards through its FIRST principles (fairness, integrity, respect, standards and trust), which it used to guide officers and staff. These principles were updated following the introduction of the Code of Ethics, and a decision was made to run them both in tandem. Those we spoke to mainly told us that they understood the principles and this helped guide their behaviour. Staff we spoke to were aware of the Code of Ethics and its close relationship to the FIRST principles.

The force introduced a health, wellbeing and resilience plan in 2013, and to support this, the force operated a wellbeing calendar, with focus being placed on a different area of wellbeing at different times of the year.

HMIC found some differences between how police officer and police staff complaint and misconduct processes were handled, which had the potential to lead to unfair treatment. The force was taking steps to align the police staff and officer processes to ensure that the approach was fair.

¹³ *Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation in Rotherham (1997 – 2013)*, Alexis Jay OBE, Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council, August 2014. Available from:

www.rotherham.gov.uk/downloads/file/1407/independent_inquiry_cse_in_rotherham

How well does the force understand, engage with and treat fairly the people it serves to maintain and improve its legitimacy?

Introduction

The negative effect of poor police and community relations on public perceptions should not be underestimated. People who already have a poor opinion of the police are more likely to perceive their contact with the police as a negative experience. On the other hand, perceptions of fair decision-making and positive public interaction and engagement can improve perceptions and increase trust, leading to improved or enhanced police legitimacy. This, in turn, helps efforts to reduce crime by encouraging greater respect for the law and fostering social responsibility, by making people more likely to help the police and not break the law.

Community engagement should influence every aspect of policing. For engagement to be effective, the organisation should focus on the needs of citizens and be committed to ensuring that the results from engagement work are integrated into service design and provision, and that communities participate in that provision.

In autumn 2015, HMIC made an assessment of the extent to which police forces understand and engage with the people they are there to serve. Based on the College of Policing's Authorised Professional Practice on Engagement and Communication,¹⁴ the inspection asked:

1. How well does the force understand the people it serves and the benefits of engaging with them?
2. How well does the force engage with all the people it serves?
3. To what extent are people treated fairly and with respect when they come into contact with police officers and staff?

Before the fieldwork stage of the inspection, HMIC commissioned Ipsos MORI to survey the public in each force area, specifically seeking their views about their force. While the findings of the survey may not represent the views of everyone living in the force area, they are indicative of what the public in that police force area think.

¹⁴ *Authorised Professional Practice on Engagement and Communication*, College of Policing, 2015. Available from: www.app.college.police.uk/app-content/engagement-and-communication/?s

How well does the force understand the people it serves and the benefits of engaging with them?

HMIC's inspection considered the extent to which forces understand the relationship between positive public engagement and increased public confidence in the police. We also assessed the extent to which, at local and force levels, the force understands the needs and concerns of the people it serves.

HMIC found that South Yorkshire Police consistently understands the link between legitimacy and effective public engagement. HMIC spoke to staff at every level of the organisation, as well as representatives of partner agencies, and it was clear that there is a good understanding of the needs of local people and of the importance of engagement to building public trust in the police.

The force has a satisfactory understanding of the people it serves. It uses surveys such as 'Your Voice Counts', and monthly user satisfaction surveys, local media and national surveys, such as, the England and Wales Crime Survey, to develop an understanding of local people and their policing needs. In addition, information is built up through local contacts and neighbourhood level engagement.

Local officers mainly demonstrate sensitivity and an ability to identify and manage tensions. Social media, in particular, enables the force to monitor community tension and this intelligence informs community impact assessments (these are used following incidents where confidence in the police might be compromised), which we found are used effectively throughout the force. At force level, assessments are used to inform policing operations, such as that put in place for a recent march by the group 'Britain First'. At local level there were many examples of assessments being prepared and used by neighbourhood staff; an example was found in Rotherham concerning a local murder.

The force listens to communities affected by crime and anti-social behaviour and takes action. Community impact statements, which explain the effect anti-social behaviour has on residents, are used to support applications for orders that can be enforced by the police to improve their quality of life. A good example was found in Doncaster, where the neighbourhood inspector submitted community impact statements to support criminal proceedings, and applications for criminal behaviour orders.

The force's current approach to understanding the public and engaging with them is effective. The challenge for the organisation is to ensure that this engagement is maintained as the force moves from dedicated safer neighbourhood teams to local policing teams, which, in addition to community engagement, are responsible for responding to priority and immediate calls from the public, crime investigation and prisoner handling.

Two of the four policing districts in South Yorkshire Police have moved to the new model. Officers in one of these local policing teams told us of their concern that they are unable to engage with the public at the level intended because of the demand to respond to urgent calls.

However, overall HMIC is satisfied that South Yorkshire Police understands the benefits for police legitimacy that can be gained by engaging positively with local people.

Of the 641 survey responses from the area covered by South Yorkshire Police, 44 percent agree that the police understand the crime and anti-social behaviour issues within their force area and 16 percent disagree. The remainder neither agree nor disagree or do not know. Although not directly comparable because of the small force sample size, of the responses from all forces across England and Wales, 49 percent agree versus 14 percent who disagree.

How well does the force engage with all the people it serves?

For the police to find the most cost effective and efficient ways of communicating with the public, they should tailor their methods of engagement in a way that meets the needs and preferences of those they serve. The police should ensure they overcome any barriers to successful engagement (for example, social exclusion, location, low confidence in the police) to seek the views of all the people they serve and keep them informed.

From the survey, fewer than 10 percent of respondents report that they have, within the previous 12 months, been asked about their views on crime and anti-social behaviour issues that matter most to them where they live. Similarly, in most forces, fewer than 20 percent of respondents have been told, within the previous 12 months, how their force is tackling these issues.

Our inspection looked at the different ways that forces engage their communities. HMIC found that South Yorkshire Police engages effectively with the people it serves. The diverse nature of the area and the people served means that engagement has to be comprehensive and varied; consequently, there is no one prescriptive model for engagement across the force. There is a tailored approach appropriate to the needs of each community and a wide range of techniques are used, including: social media; events designed to attract hard-to-reach groups; and face-to-face contacts with minority communities, such as the Slovak and Roma community in the Page Hall area of Sheffield.

Social media, including Facebook and Twitter, is being appropriately used at neighbourhood level to complement conventional face-to-face contact, such as police and community together' meetings.

We found that neighbourhood inspectors routinely use social media, giving one neighbourhood in Sheffield almost instant access to over 25,000 residents.

Engaging with the full range of diverse communities in South Yorkshire is a particular challenge for the force, but we were impressed by the innovation and commitment of staff. In the community safety department one member of staff speaks a number of languages and is able to contact community leaders directly. Leaflets are produced and distributed in a range of languages such as Urdu and Nepalese, often containing supplementary information about issues such as stop and search encounters. The force recognises that engaging with women within some communities is a particular challenge and the force are exploring ways, with partners, of meeting these women to better understand their policing needs.

At a local level, staff make effective use of local newspapers and radio to engage with the public. During the inspection one neighbourhood inspector appeared on BBC Radio Sheffield to explain what the police had done about a problem with youths throwing stones at buses. There was evidence of senior officers attending mosques and community groups to provide feedback; for example, an assistant chief constable attended a meeting with young Muslims to give feedback about the police response to a recent march in the area.

The force is developing a new website, which will allow far greater access to information and the ability to provide instant feedback to the force.

HMIC found that the force actively encourage volunteers to become involved in police activities. Street pastors in Doncaster and Barnsley, lay visitors to custody in Barnsley and volunteers accredited to give crime prevention advice are a few of the roles. A successful campaign to recruit special constables achieved significant representation from black, Asian and minority ethnic people.

HMIC is satisfied that South Yorkshire Police is engaging well with the people it serves

From the survey, 26 percent of the respondents from the area covered by South Yorkshire Police speak highly of the police in their local area while 18 percent speak critically. The remainder have mixed views or do not know. Although not directly comparable because of the small force sample size, of the responses from across all forces in England and Wales, 32 percent speak highly and 16 percent speak critically.

To what extent are people treated fairly and with respect when they come into contact with police officers and staff?

Public bodies (including the police) are required to consider all individuals when carrying out their work, and understand how different people will be affected by their activities. The duty requires the police to show evidence of this in their decision-making.

This inspection looked at whether all members of the public (including those with protected characteristics) are treated (and perceive that they are treated) fairly and with respect by the police. We also assessed the extent to which officers understand the National Decision Model,¹⁵ the framework by which all policing decisions should be made, examined and challenged. The Code of Ethics is a central component of the National Decision Model.

The police have thousands of interactions with the public on a daily basis. Research indicates that the quality of the treatment received during encounters with the police is more important to individuals than the objective outcome of the interaction. Before we began our fieldwork activity, we listened to around 40 calls made from members of the public to the 101 (non-emergency) and 999 (emergency) numbers to assess the quality of the treatment received. To determine the overall quality of the call, we considered criteria such as whether the call-handler remained polite, professional and respectful throughout the call, whether he or she took the caller's concerns seriously, appropriately assessing the risk and urgency of the call, and how well he or she established the caller's needs, managed the caller's expectations and explained what would happen next.

Although not necessarily representative of all calls responded to by South Yorkshire Police, from the 40 calls assessed, HMIC was generally satisfied that the call-handlers were polite, respectful and effective. They were good at assessing the risk and urgency of the call, and there were some high-quality examples where call-handlers demonstrated tact, diplomacy and patience, especially to more vulnerable callers.

During our fieldwork we also observed front-counter staff in their interaction with visitors at police stations, and were very impressed by the patience, understanding and willingness of the staff to help members of the public in some very difficult circumstances. There was a wide range of people of different nationalities who required assistance in the two locations observed. In one interaction the conversation had to take place through an interpreter; the member of staff remained calm, professional and helpful.

¹⁵ *College of Policing – Authorised Professional Practice on National Decision Model*, College of Policing, December 2014. Available from: www.app.college.police.uk/app-content/national-decision-model/?s

HMIC was impressed by the way the National Decision Model is consistently understood and used in South Yorkshire Police. Almost everyone we spoke to both knows about the NDM and how to put it into practice in their daily work, in both operational and non-operational situations. We were given examples of its use from the management of marches, to the handling of routine calls in the control room.

The force takes appropriate steps to support its staff in treating people fairly and with respect. The force runs street skills training every ten weeks for all operational staff, at which updates, reminders, and information on legislation are provided. At these training sessions staff are reminded of the need to treat the public with fairness and respect. This is reinforced through messages on the intranet and video blogs from the deputy chief constable. Everyone we spoke to was aware of the need to treat people fairly and respectfully.

Having considered the emergency and non-emergency calls, the approach taken by front-desk staff and the fieldwork findings, HMIC was satisfied that officers and staff in South Yorkshire Police mainly treat people fairly and with respect.

From the survey, 48 percent of respondents from the area covered by South Yorkshire Police agree that the police in their local area treat people fairly and with respect versus 10 percent who disagree. The remainder neither agree nor disagree or do not know. Although not directly comparable because of the small force sample size, across all forces in England and Wales, the figures are 54 percent and 7 percent respectively.

Summary of findings



Good

South Yorkshire Police understands the importance of legitimacy and the role effective public engagement has in ensuring people have confidence in the police.

The force effectively uses a wide range of approaches to engage with the diverse communities it serves. A new force website is being developed to provide more information to the public and help record public views. The force provides sufficient feedback to the public and appropriately encourages the public to participate in policing activities.

The force has a good understanding of local people using surveys, information from social media and traditional community meetings and face-to-face contact. The force is effective in supporting and encouraging staff to act fairly and respectfully and most officers and staff of South Yorkshire Police treat people fairly and with respect. Call-handlers and front-counter staff that we observed were polite, courteous and professional.

The force acknowledges that more could be done and challenges lie ahead, as it goes through a period of major change. However there are effective ways of engagement in place and the force recognises that it needs to retain these to maintain and enhance its legitimacy in the eyes of the people of South Yorkshire.

To what extent are decisions taken on the use of stop and search and Taser fair and appropriate?

Introduction

Fairness, and the perception of fairness, is crucial to police legitimacy. It is therefore important that fairness is demonstrated in all aspects of policing, including the use of police powers. Some of the most intrusive powers available to the police are those involving stopping and searching people and the use of Taser.¹⁶

In autumn 2015, HMIC assessed the use of Taser and stop and search powers (specifically, compliance with the Best Use of Stop and Search scheme¹⁷ and how well reasonable grounds were recorded) to determine whether officers were using their powers fairly and in accordance with legal requirements and Authorised Professional Practice.

The inspection asked:

1. To what extent does the force ensure that it complies with the Best Use of Stop and Search scheme?
2. To what extent does the force ensure that Tasers are used fairly and appropriately?

To what extent does the force ensure that it complies with the Best Use of Stop and Search scheme?

Background

The primary role of the police is to uphold the law and maintain the peace. Unfair, unlawful or unnecessary use of stop and search powers make this task harder, with one of the direct consequences being a reduction in public trust and police legitimacy, and people being more likely to break the law and less willing to co-operate with the police. The purpose of stop and search powers is to enable officers to dismiss or confirm suspicions about individuals carrying unlawful items without exercising their power of arrest. The officer must have reasonable grounds for carrying out a search.

¹⁶ *College of Policing: Authorised Professional Practice on armed policing – legal framework and Taser*. Available from: www.app.college.police.uk/app-content/armed-policing/conducted-energy-devices-taser/

¹⁷ *Best Use of Stop and Search Scheme*, Home Office, 2014. Available from: www.gov.uk/government/publications/best-use-of-stop-and-search-scheme

In our 2013 inspection on stop and search,¹⁸ HMIC concluded that few forces could demonstrate that use of stop and search powers was based on an understanding of what works best to cut crime and rarely was it targeted at priority crimes in their areas. Forces had reduced the amount of data collected, to reduce bureaucracy, but this had diminished their capability to understand the impact of the use of stop and search powers on crime levels and community confidence.

The report was clear that, for a stop and search encounter to be effective and lawful, a police officer must have reasonable grounds for suspicion (based on specific and objective information) that a person is in possession of a stolen or prohibited item. Those grounds should be fully explained to the person being stopped and searched, and the person should be treated with fairness, courtesy and respect. In such circumstances, finding the item and arresting the offender or, alternatively, eliminating the suspicion and avoiding an unnecessary arrest are both valid and successful outcomes.

Following HMIC's 2013 inspection, on 26 August 2014 the Home Office published guidance to police forces on implementing the Best Use of Stop and Search scheme.

The principal aims of the scheme are for the police to establish greater transparency and community involvement in the use of stop and search powers, and make sure that the powers are used in an intelligence-led way to achieve better outcomes for the public.

All police forces in England and Wales have signed up to the Home Office's Best Use of Stop and Search scheme. This inspection considered the extent to which forces are complying with the scheme.

Use of stop and search in South Yorkshire Police – Stop and search by volume

In the 12 months to 31 March 2015, South Yorkshire Police carried out 8,823 stops and searches. The table below shows this number per 1,000 population for South Yorkshire Police and the average of its most similar group of forces, as well as the change from the 12 months to 31 March 2014. The figures indicate that the force's use of stop and search powers is currently in line with the average of its most similar group of forces.

¹⁸ *Stop and Search Powers – are the police using them effectively and fairly?*, HMIC, July 2013. Available from: www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/media/stop-and-search-powers-20130709.pdf

Figure 6: Number of stops and searches per 1,000 population carried out by South Yorkshire Police compared to the average of its most similar group (MSG) of forces, 12 months to 31 March 2015, and the percentage change from the 12 months to 31 March 2014

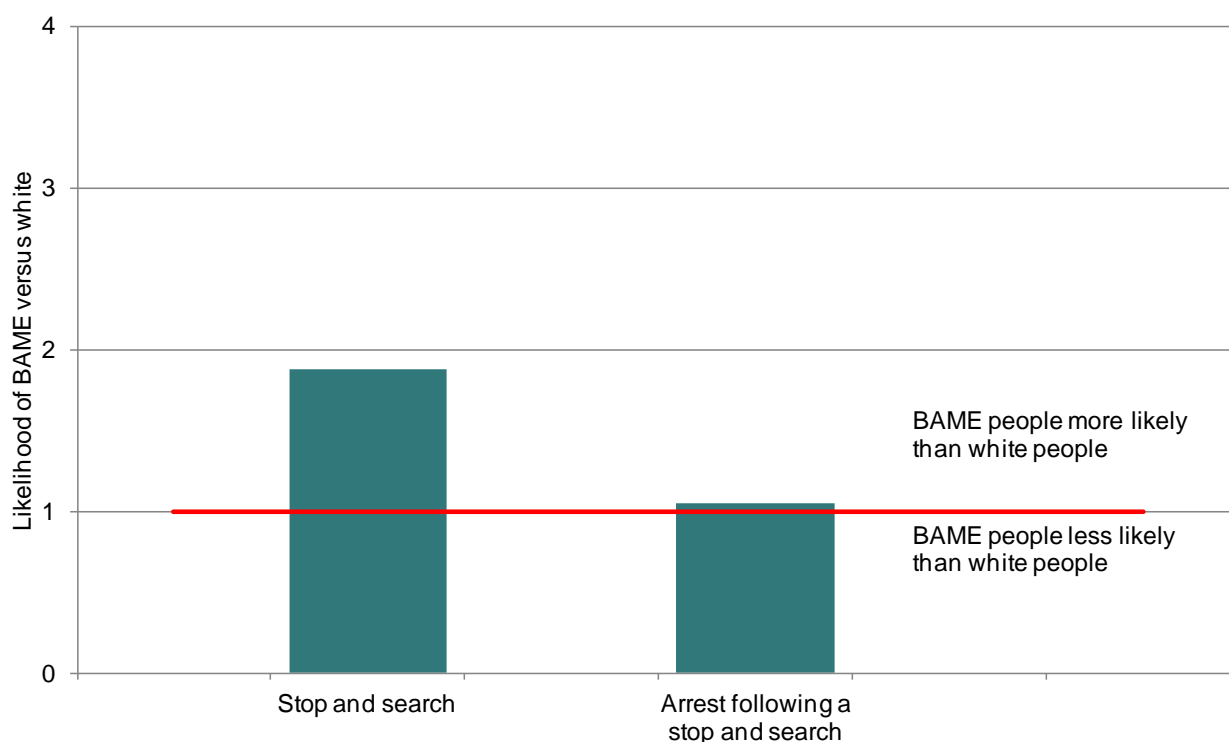
	Stops and searches per 1,000	Change from previous year
South Yorkshire	6.5	-61%
South Yorkshire's MSG average	6.9	-39%

Sources: Home Office Stop and Search data, Police Powers and Procedures 2014/15 and Office for National Statistics mid-2014 population estimates

Use of stop and search South Yorkshire Police – Stop and search by ethnicity

HMIC looked at the published data on stops and searches by ethnicity and compared them with the most recent local population data by ethnicity (the 2011 Census). The data suggested that BAME people were statistically more likely to be stopped and searched by South Yorkshire Police than white people. However, of the individuals who had been stopped and searched, there was no statistical difference in the likelihood of arrest by the force between BAME people and white people.

Figure 7: A comparison between the likelihood of BAME and white people being stopped and searched and, separately, arrested following stop and search by South Yorkshire Police, 12 months to 31 March 2015



Sources: Home Office Stop and Search data, Police Powers and Procedures 2014/15 and Office for National Statistics 2011 Census

Caution needs to be taken before drawing assumptions from these data, especially where they might appear to suggest that forces are unfairly targeting particular ethnicities in their use of stop and search powers. Although that is one possible explanation, there are a number of other factors which could result in any disparity, including:

- the 2011 ethnicity figures no longer being representative of the force's local population;
- the difference between the ethnicity of the street population available to be stopped and searched at any given time with the general force population;
- stops and searches being carried out on people who are not resident in the area (and so are not counted as part of the population);
- disparity in the crime rates between different ethnicities;
- disparity in the number of repeat stops and searches carried out on individuals by ethnicity; or
- difficulties with the recorded data by ethnicity (while forces always record ethnicity when arresting a person as a result of being stopped and searched, they do not always record it when the encounter does not involve an arrest).

It is important that forces understand their data along with reasons for any apparent disparity to ensure that their use of the powers is fair.

Recording reasonable grounds for suspicion

In our 2013 inspection, we were concerned to see that, of the 8,783 stop and search records we examined across all forces in England and Wales, 27 percent did not include sufficient reasonable grounds to justify the lawful use of the power. For South Yorkshire Police, the 2013 inspection showed that 41 of 200 records reviewed (21 percent) did not have sufficient reasonable grounds recorded.

For this inspection we reviewed 100 stop and search records provided by the force. As in the 2013 inspection, we reviewed the records to determine if reasonable grounds were recorded. All 100 records we reviewed had been endorsed by a supervisor. We found that 18 of the 100 records (18 percent) did not have reasonable grounds recorded.

This suggests that too many officers, and some supervisors given the task of reviewing records, do not understand fully what constitutes reasonable grounds.

While the forms we reviewed may not be representative of all stop and search records completed by the force, the result indicates that still far too many records do not have reasonable grounds recorded.

Compliance with the Best Use of Stop and Search scheme

There are several aspects to the Best Use of Stop and Search scheme. As part of this inspection, HMIC considered the extent to which the force complied with each aspect of the scheme. Our analysis is set out in the table below.

South Yorkshire Police was an early adopter of the Best Use of Stop and Search scheme, but it is not yet complying with all of the scheme's requirements.

The force has a structure to manage, promote and evaluate the scheme, led by the chief inspector in the community safety department. Every stop and search form is examined by a monthly force community safety panel and individual feedback given to officers and their respective supervisors. Stop and search figures are reported to both the independent advisory group and the ethics committee established by the police and crime commissioner. Every complaint about stop and search encounters is also examined by the deputy chief constable. The force also intends to obtain an independent academic evaluation of the use of stop and search powers and to establish an independent scrutiny group. This degree of scrutiny and independent oversight fosters public confidence in the fair use of these powers.

We found that most officers in South Yorkshire understand the National Decision Model and use it extensively in their work, including the use of stop and search powers. They mainly understood the necessary principles of the scheme and put them into practice. However, our review of stop and search records suggests that far too many officers, and their supervisors, do not understand what constitutes reasonable grounds to conduct a search.

Feature of Best Use of Stop and Search scheme	HMIC assessment of compliance
Recording and publishing the outcomes following a stop and search	<p>The force does not comply with this feature of the scheme. The force records some, but not all, of the required outcomes. It does not record the connection between the items searched for and the outcomes and consequently cannot assess the accuracy of the grounds. The force has a stop and search page on its website, which has some useful information and advice, but this does not have statistical information, nor does it have a link to the 'police.uk' website, where some statistical information about the use of stop and search can be found.</p> <p>The force said that it intended to be compliant with this element of the scheme in January 2016, when software on devices used to record stop and search would be upgraded, but at the time of the inspection it was not compliant.</p>

<p>Providing opportunities for the public to observe officers using the power</p>	<p>The force complies with this feature of the scheme.</p>
<p>Explaining to communities how the powers are being used following a 'community complaint'</p>	<p>The force complies with this feature of the scheme.</p>
<p>Reducing the number of people stopped and searched without suspicion under section 60¹⁹ of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994</p>	<p>The force complies with this feature of the scheme.</p>
<p>Monitoring the impact of stop and search – particularly on young people and black, Asian and Minority Ethnic groups</p>	<p>The force complies with this feature of the scheme.</p> <p>The force collects data on the age and ethnicity of people stopped and searched by its officers. The data is reported to the force's independent advisory panel and the police and crime commissioner's ethics committee. The force monitors the impact on black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) people with a particular focus on young BAME people. The force's monitoring has identified that a disproportionate number of black, Asian and minority ethnic people are stopped and searched and has commissioned further research to understand why this is the case. The force also plans to seek independent academic research to provide a better understanding of this issue and also intends to establish an independent scrutiny panel, including black, Asian and minority ethnic people and young people, to examine a selection of stop and search records. This is likely to complement existing advice from the independent advisory panel and the police and crime commissioner's ethics committee.</p>

¹⁹ 'No suspicion' searches are provided for under section 60 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994. Available from: www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1994/33/section/60

To what extent does the force ensure that Tasers are used fairly and appropriately?

Background

Taser is a device designed to temporarily incapacitate a person through use of an electrical current which temporarily interferes with the body's neuromuscular system. This usually causes the person to freeze or fall over, giving officers time to restrain them.

It projects a pair of barbs or darts attached to insulated wires which attach to the subject's skin or clothing. The device has a maximum range of 21 feet and delivers its electrical charge in a five-second cycle which can be stopped, extended or repeated.

Taser is one of a number of tactical options available to police officers when dealing with an incident where there is the potential for harm – to potential victims and/or the public, the police officers themselves, or the subject.

The way a Taser is used by police officers is categorised into a range of escalating actions from drawing the device, through to it being 'discharged' (that is, fired, drive-stunned or angled drive-stunned). A table in Annex D outlines the definitions of the different levels of use.

When police are required to use force to achieve a lawful objective, such as making a lawful arrest, acting in self-defence or protecting others, that force must be reasonable in the circumstances. If it is not, the officer is open to criminal or misconduct proceedings. It may also constitute a violation of the human rights of the person against whom the force was used.

HMIC has not previously inspected how Taser is used either in, or between, forces. This inspection considered whether chief officers understand how Taser is being used across the force area, to satisfy themselves that it is being used fairly and appropriately, and whether Taser-trained officers are acting in accordance with the College of Policing's Authorised Professional Practice and the legal framework each time it is used.²⁰

²⁰ *College of Policing: Authorised Professional Practice on armed policing – legal framework and Taser*. Available from: www.app.college.police.uk/app-content/armed-policing/conducted-energy-devices-taser/

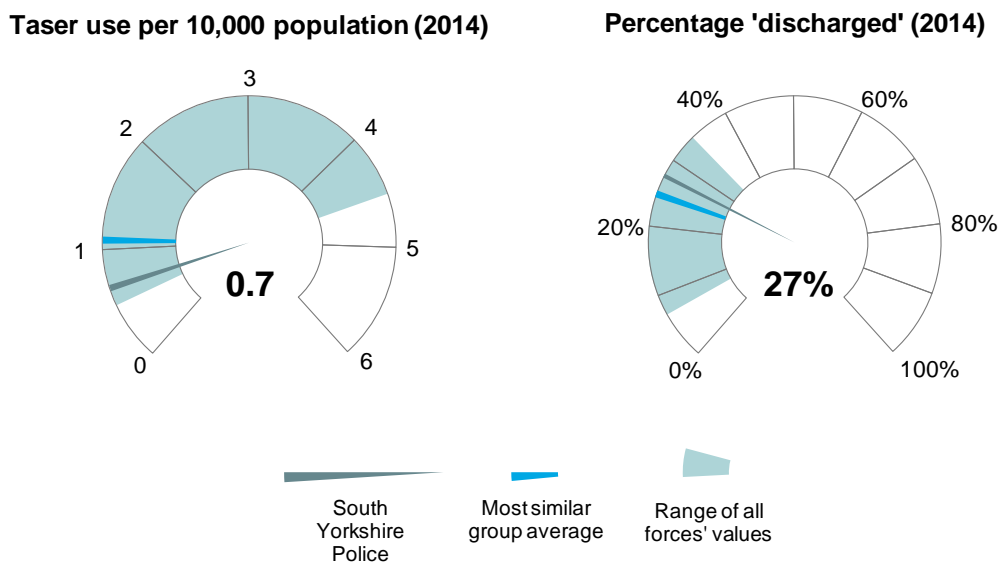
Use of Taser in South Yorkshire Police

Every time a Taser is used in some capacity (this includes a full range of use from being drawn to being 'discharged') a police officer makes a record of its 'highest use' on a Taser deployment form.

Between 1 January and 31 December 2014, Taser was used in some capacity 91 times by South Yorkshire Police, representing 0.7 times for every 10,000 people in the force's area. This was less than the average for South Yorkshire Police's most similar group of forces, which was 1.1 times per 10,000 population.

During the same time period, Taser was 'discharged' on 25 occasions (out of the 91 times it was used in some capacity). This equates to 27 percent of overall use, broadly in line with the force's most similar group average of 25 percent. However, because of the low number of times Taser was used in South Yorkshire Police, comparisons with other forces should be treated with caution. The following figure shows these comparisons.

Figure 8: Use of Taser per 10,000 population and the proportion 'discharged' by South Yorkshire Police, 12 months to 31 December 2014²¹



Sources: Office for National Statistics mid-2014 population estimates and Home Office Police use of Taser statistics

The Taser deployment form is a national document for gathering research information about the operational effectiveness of the Taser device, and any medical implications of its use. If officers fire the Taser, or if they use it in drive-stun or angled drive-stun mode, they are required to complete the full form, including a detailed description of the incident from commencement to resolution. The National Decision Model is used on the form as a structure for officers to record this description. For

²¹ City of London Police data was removed from figure 8 because of the very low number of times Taser was used by the City of London Police in 2014.

any other use, such as 'drawn', 'aimed', 'red-dotted' or 'arced', officers are only required to provide brief details of the incident. A detailed description, structured around the National Decision Model, is not required.

Before the fieldwork stage of the inspection, HMIC conducted a review of 20 Taser deployment forms provided by South Yorkshire Police. Although the findings of this review are not necessarily representative of all Taser forms completed by the force, they do provide an indication of the force's Taser activity. The forms showed that Taser had been fired five times, red-dotted 13 times, aimed once, and drawn once.

Of the five times the Taser had been fired, we found evidence that consideration of other tactics had been recorded in three cases, and that one case was poorly recorded. In the other case, we consider that Taser was not the right tactic to have been used in the circumstances, due to the high likelihood that deploying Taser may have ignited petrol.

Overall officers used Taser to protect themselves or others from a range of weapons, including several kitchen knives, a shard of glass, and petrol and a lighter, as well as two cases where subjects were attempting to use vehicles to injure officers or others.

The 'brief details' and the NDM sections of the forms provided us with evidence to suggest that the use of Taser was fair, lawful, and appropriate in 18 of the 20 cases reviewed. Of the remaining cases, one did not record sufficient information in the 'brief details' section for us to assess.

In the other case, the use of Taser was inappropriate due to the potential for causing significant, and potentially fatal, injuries to the subject (who had poured petrol around the scene, and had thrown some at the officer). In that case, the accompanying records show that the force temporarily suspended the officer's authority to use Taser.

We are therefore pleased that the force has good oversight arrangements in place. The authority to deploy Taser officers to an incident rests with the force incident manager (an inspector) or Taser-trained supervisors and tactical firearms commanders, unless in exceptional circumstances the officers feel they have to self-deploy. All deployments are reviewed by district commanders and the force liaison officer. This level of force oversight helps ensure fair and appropriate use of Taser.

Where officers had been required to complete the NDM section of the form, none of them contained any mention of the national Code of Ethics for the police service which is at the heart of the NDM, and should be considered at each stage, particularly under the 'Powers and Policy' section. This appears to be a national issue and is considered in our national Legitimacy report.

During the fieldwork stage of the inspection of South Yorkshire Police we found that the National Decision Model was consistently understood and applied by Taser officers. Officers have a good understanding of relevant legislation and Authorised Professional Practice.

Evaluation of the use of Taser in the force is good. In determining the number of Taser-trained officers, the force took account of the regional and national threat and risk assessments and of the views of commanders in the force. There are 385 Taser-trained officers in South Yorkshire allocated to response crews, armed response vehicles and roads policing units. The force has a good understanding of the potential demand for Taser-trained officers and has used this to ensure they have sufficient numbers of officers available for deployment throughout the force.

We found that the deployment of Taser was well managed and undertaken by highly trained, motivated individuals. However, the use of Taser was not subject to independent scrutiny. We encourage the force to invite independent scrutiny of this tactic.

While the force collected data about the use of Taser, it could not be accessed on the force website. The force is aware of this and is planning to correct this anomaly. The new website will allow the data and information about Taser to be more readily available to the public.

Based on our assessment of the Taser forms and our fieldwork findings, HMIC is satisfied that on the whole Taser is being used fairly and appropriately by South Yorkshire Police.

Summary of findings



Requires improvement

While South Yorkshire Police is complying with most aspects of the Best Use of Stop and Search scheme, it is not complying with the requirement to record and publish a range of outcomes, including the connection, if any, between the outcome and the item searched for. Additionally, we found that in 18 of the 100 stop and search records we examined there were insufficient grounds recorded to justify the search. For these reasons, we consider that South Yorkshire Police falls below the standard required for a 'Good' force.

The force recognises that black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) individuals are over-represented in stop and search statistics, and it plans to seek independent academic research to provide a better understanding of this disproportionality.

The force is also establishing an independent scrutiny panel including black, Asian and minority ethnic people and young people who will be able to examine a selection of stop and search records.

Taser officers are well trained and oversight of the deployment of Taser is well managed. There is a clear rationale for the numbers and distribution of Taser-trained officers and an effective review process is instigated when a Taser is used.

Officers mainly understand the National Decision Model, and decisions about the use of Taser are generally fair and appropriate.

Areas for improvement

- The force should ensure that stop and search records include sufficient reasonable grounds to justify the lawful use of the power, and that officers understand fully the grounds required to stop and search.
- The force should ensure that adequate supervision takes place to ensure that stop and search is conducted lawfully and fairly, and that reasonable grounds are recorded properly.
- The force should ensure that it complies with the Best Use of Stop and Search scheme in respect of recording and publishing outcomes.

Annex A – HMIC judgments

The categories are:

- outstanding;
- good;
- requires improvement; and
- inadequate.

Judgment is made against how legitimate the force is at keeping people safe and reducing crime, it is not an assessment of the overall legitimacy of policing. In applying the categories HMIC considers whether:

- the legitimacy of the force is achieving is good, or exceeds this standard sufficiently to be judged as outstanding;
- the legitimacy of the force requires improvement, and/or there are some weaknesses; or
- the legitimacy of the force is inadequate because it is considerably lower than is expected.

Annex B – Data methodology

Please note the following for the data.

- The sources of the data are provided in each section. For the force in numbers data, please see the relevant section.
- Workforce figures (based on full-time equivalents) were obtained from the Home Office annual data return 502. Most of these are available from the Home Office's published *Police workforce England and Wales statistics*, although figures may have been updated since the publication.
- Police staff includes section 38 designated officers (investigation, detention and escort).
- Data from the Office for National Statistics 2011 Census were used for the number and proportion of BAME people within each force area. While the numbers may have since changed, more recent figures are based only on estimates from surveys or projections.
- HMIC has been made aware of updates from particular forces on their Taser and stop and search data. However, for fairness and consistency, we have presented the data as published by the relevant sources.

Please note the following for the methodology applied to the data.

- Comparisons with most similar group of forces – In most cases, comparisons are made with the average of the force's most similar group (MSG) of forces. These are forces that have been found to be the most similar to the force in question, based on an analysis of demographic, social and economic characteristics which relate to crime. The following forces are in South Yorkshire Police's MSG: West Yorkshire, Lancashire, Northumbria, South Wales, Nottinghamshire, Bedfordshire and Kent.
- Comparisons with averages – For some data sets, we state whether the force's value is 'below', 'above' or 'broadly in line with' the average. To calculate this, the difference to the mean average, as a proportion, is calculated for all forces. After standardising this distribution, forces that are more than half a standard deviation from the mean average are determined to be above or below the average, with all other forces being broadly in line.

In practice this means that, very approximately, a third of forces are above, a third are below, and the remaining third are in line with the average for each measure. For this reason, the distance from the average required to make a

force's value above or below the average is different for each measure so may not appear to be consistent.

- Statistical significance – When commenting on statistical differences, we use a significance level of 5 percent.

Ipsos MORI survey

The national survey was conducted with a sample of 26,057 people aged 16 plus across England and Wales, between 15 July and 6 August 2015. All interviews were conducted online through Ipsos MORI's online panel.

The Ipsos MORI online panel consists of a pre-recruited group of individuals or multiple individuals within households who have agreed to take part in online market and social research surveys. The panel is refreshed continually using a variety of sources and methods.

Respondents to this survey were recruited using an email invitation including a link to the online questionnaire. The survey invitations were managed to achieve robust numbers of interviews in each force area in order to provide indicative results at a force level. Final numbers of responses per force area ranged from 353 to 1,278.

Responses are based on all participants completing the relevant survey question. Results are weighted within the force area to the local age, gender and work status profile of the area, and an additional weight has been applied to the overall total to reflect the population breakdown by force area.

Annex C – The Best Use of Stop and Search scheme

The scheme includes a number of features with the aim of achieving greater transparency, community involvement in the use of stop and search powers and supporting a more intelligence-led approach, leading to better outcomes.

Recording and publishing outcomes

The Best Use of Stop and Search scheme requires forces to record and publish the following outcomes from the use of stop and search powers:

- Arrest;
- Summons/charged by post;
- Caution (simple or conditional);
- Khat or cannabis warning;
- Penalty notice for disorder;
- Community resolution; and
- No further action.

Forces adopting the scheme should therefore be providing the public with a much richer picture of how their use of stop and search powers are enabling them to reduce crime rates. The scheme also requires forces to show the link, or lack of one, between the object of the search (what the officer was looking for) and the outcome. This link helps to show how accurate officers' reasonable grounds for suspicion are by showing the rate at which they find what they were searching for during the stop and search.

Providing opportunities for the public to observe stop and search encounters

A core element of the scheme is the requirement that participating forces will provide opportunities for members of the public to accompany police officers on patrol when they might use stop and search powers.

It is important for the public, particularly young people and people from black, Asian and minority ethnic communities, to be able to see the police conducting their work in a professional way. Equally, it is also important for the police to understand the communities they serve – as this enables more effective policing through community co-operation and exemplifies 'policing by consent'.

By introducing 'lay observation', a process of two-way learning can take place, bringing the police closer to the public.

Implementing a community trigger for complaints

The scheme requires forces to implement a community complaints trigger to signpost the appropriate mechanism for members of the community to raise any concerns or complaints that they have with the way that a stop and search has been carried out by their police force. When the trigger is activated, the scheme requires forces to explain the use of the powers to community scrutiny groups.

Authorising searches under section 60 Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994

Section 60 stop and search powers are among the most controversial of all such powers by virtue of the fact that individual police officers can stop and search a person without the need to have reasonable grounds for suspicion.

Once a section 60 authorisation is in place, officers do not need to have suspicions about a particular individual prior to stopping them; though an officer must explain to an individual who has been stopped that a section 60 authorisation is in place. This can lead to a large number of searches which result in community and police tensions. The scheme introduces a set of requirements that, when combined, will ensure that participating forces improve their use of this type of stop and search power. These include raising the authorisation level from inspector to senior officer (assistant chief constable or above), restricting the time a section 60 authorisation can be in force to 15 hours and communicating the purpose and outcomes of each section 60 authorisation in advance (where possible) and afterwards.

Monitoring the use of stop and search powers

The scheme requires forces to monitor the use of stop and search powers, in particular to determine their impact on black, Asian and minority ethnic people and young people.

Annex D – Types of use of Taser

Type of use Definition²²

Fired	The Taser is fired with a live cartridge installed. When the trigger is pulled, the probes are fired towards the subject with the intention of completing an electrical circuit and delivering an incapacitating effect.
Angled drive-stun	The officer fires the weapon with a live cartridge installed. One or both probes may attach to the subject. The officer then holds the Taser against the subject's body in a different area to the probe(s), in order to complete the electrical circuit and deliver an incapacitating effect.
Drive-stun	The Taser is held against the subject's body without a live cartridge installed, and the trigger is pulled with no probes being fired. Contact with the subject completes the electrical circuit which causes pain but does not deliver an incapacitating effect.
Red dot	The weapon is not fired. Instead, the Taser is deliberately aimed and then partially activated so that a laser red dot is placed onto the subject.
Arcing	Sparking of the Taser as a visible deterrent without aiming it or firing it.
Aimed	Deliberate aiming of the Taser at a targeted subject.
Drawn	Drawing of Taser in circumstances where any person could reasonably perceive the action as a use of force.

Tasers that have been 'discharged' are those that have been fired, angled drive-stunned or drive-stunned.

²² *Police use of Taser statistics, England and Wales: 1 January to 31 December 2014*, Home Office, 2015. Available from www.gov.uk/government/statistics/police-use-of-taser-statistics-england-and-wales-1-january-to-31-december-2014.