



Promoting improvements
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PEEL: Police legitimacy 2016

An inspection of Hertfordshire Constabulary



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Introduction

As part of our annual inspections of police effectiveness, efficiency, legitimacy and leadership (PEEL), Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) assesses the legitimacy of police forces across England and Wales.

Police legitimacy – a concept that is well established in the UK as 'policing by consent' – is crucial in a democratic society. The police have powers to act in ways that would be considered illegal by any other member of the public (for example, by using force or depriving people of their liberty). It is therefore vital that they use these powers fairly, and that they treat people with respect in the course of their duties.

Police legitimacy is also required for the police to be effective and efficient: as well as motivating the public to co-operate with the police and respect the law, it encourages them to become more socially responsible. The more the public supports the police by providing information or becoming more involved in policing activities (such as via Neighbourhood Watch or other voluntary activity), the greater the reduction in demand on police forces.

To achieve this support – or 'consent' – the public needs to believe that the police will treat them with respect and make fair decisions (while taking the time to explain those decisions), as well as being friendly and approachable.¹ This is often referred to as 'procedural justice'. Police actions that are perceived to be unfair or disrespectful can have extremely negative results for police legitimacy in the eyes of the public.

Police officers and staff are more likely to treat the public with fairness and respect if they feel that they themselves are being treated fairly and respectfully, particularly by their own police force. It is therefore important that the decisions made by their force about the things that affect them are perceived to be fair.² This principle is described as 'organisational justice', and HMIC considers that, alongside the principle of procedural justice, it makes up a vital aspect of any assessment of police legitimacy.

¹ *It's a fair cop? Police legitimacy, public cooperation, and crime reduction*, National Policing Improvement Agency, September 2011. Available at:
http://whatworks.college.police.uk/Research/Documents/Fair_cop_Full_Report.pdf

² *Fair cop 2: Organisational justice, behaviour and ethical policing*, College of Policing, 2015. Available at:
http://whatworks.college.police.uk/Research/Documents/150317_Fair_cop%20FINAL_REPORT.pdf

One of the most important areas in which internal organisational justice and external procedural justice principles come together is the way in which police forces tackle corruption. How this is done needs to be seen to be fair and legitimate in the eyes of both the police workforce and the general public.

HMIC's legitimacy inspection assessed all of these areas during 2016. More information on how we inspect and grade forces as part of this wide-ranging inspection is available on the HMIC website (www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/peel-assessments/how-we-inspect/). This report sets out our findings for Hertfordshire Constabulary.

Reports on Hertfordshire Constabulary's efficiency and leadership inspections are available on the HMIC website (www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/peel-assessments/peel-2016/hertfordshire/). Our reports on police effectiveness will be published in early 2017.

Force in numbers



Workforce

Total workforce as of 31 March 2016

3,396

Total workforce breakdown as of 31 March 2016



Ethnic diversity

Percentage of BAME in workforce 31 March 2016

overall workforce

4.7%



Percentage of BAME in local population, 2011 Census

12.4%



Gender diversity

Percentage of females in overall workforce 31 March 2016

44%

England and Wales population, 2011 Census

51%

Percentage of females by role 31 March 2016





Public complaints

Number of public complaints per 1,000 workforce 12 months to 31 March 2016



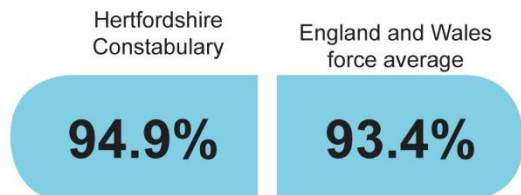
Grievances

Number of grievances per 1,000 workforce raised and finalised 12 months to 31 March 2016



Victim satisfaction

Victim satisfaction with their overall treatment by the police 12 months to 31 March 2016



For further information about the data in this graphic please see annex A

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

Overall judgment³



Good

Hertfordshire Constabulary has been assessed as good in respect of the legitimacy with which it keeps people safe and reduces crime. Our findings this year are consistent with last year's findings, in which we judged the force to be good in respect of the legitimacy.

The force treats the people it serves, and its workforce, with fairness and respect. It seeks and acts on feedback to improve the services it provides and listens to the views of its workforce. It does good work on identifying and enforcing standards of behaviour. However, HMIC has concerns about the force's ability to ensure that its entire workforce behaves ethically and fairly because of limited capacity in its anti-corruption and vetting unit (ACU).

Overall summary

Hertfordshire Constabulary and its workforce have a good understanding of the importance of treating people they serve with fairness and respect. The force's values are set out in a code of practice and they are understood and put into practice by the workforce.

The force seeks feedback using a range of methods, including meetings, surveys and engagement activities, and through its website. We found several examples of the force responding effectively to feedback; for example, it has improved its recording of incidents where members of the public are stopped and searched. However, the force could benefit from more emphasis on analysing feedback to identify areas for improvement.

Although the force is doing some good work on identifying and enforcing standards of behaviour, HMIC has concerns that about the force's ability to ensure that its workforce behaves ethically and fairly. Its ability to identify, monitor and understand risks to the integrity of the organisation is limited by a lack of capacity in the ACU.

The force is in an alliance with Bedfordshire Police and Cambridgeshire Constabulary. The alliance's joint professional standards department (PSD), which includes the ACU, is implementing an improvement plan, drawn up after a serious

³ HMIC judgments are: outstanding, good, requires improvement and inadequate.

gross misconduct court case collapsed over concerns about the quality of the investigation. The plan affects all three forces in the alliance. The force and alliance need to ensure that there are enough staff with the capability, with additional support, both to implement the new PSD/ACU improvement plan successfully and to handle daily business effectively.

During our inspection we found that the force had implemented too few of the recommendations we made in our police integrity and corruption report in 2014,⁴ which included recommendations for improving the capacity and capability of these units.

The force recognises the abuse of authority for sexual gain (taking advantage of a position of power to exploit vulnerable victims of crime) as serious corruption and has taken action to communicate this to its workforce. To reassure the public and other organisations of the robust stance taken by the force, it organised briefings for the media to explain how it is handling a series of nine unconnected misconduct cases involving sexual impropriety and/or abuse of authority by members of the workforce.

Hertfordshire Constabulary is good at treating its workforce with fairness and respect. It uses a wide range of methods to identify and understand the issues that affect the workforce, including surveys, regular engagement with staff representative groups and online messaging. The force has an open culture and staff representative groups told us that they felt informed and engaged. It is improving and expanding its workforce wellbeing services, but some people we spoke with expressed concerns that high workloads, combined with a lack of opportunity to take leave, were leading to stress-related conditions.

The force manages individual performance through performance assessments (known as PDRs), which have to be completed every year. Although PDRs were generally completed, the members of the workforce we spoke with did not value the process. In addition, the force does not systematically assess the contents of all PDRs for effectiveness and fairness.

At the time of our inspection, the alliance was aiming to conduct an all-staff survey in June 2016, which should improve the force's understanding of how the workforce feels it is treated.

⁴ *Police integrity and corruption – Cambridgeshire Constabulary*, HMIC, 2014. Available at: www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/publications/police-integrity-corruption-force/

Cause of concern

The risks that HMIC identified in 2014 and the lack of progress of the recommendations, until recently following the collapse of a court case, is of serious concern.

Recommendations

Hertfordshire Constabulary, together with the other forces in the alliance, namely Bedfordshire Police and Cambridgeshire Constabulary, should:

- review the capacity and capability of its professional standards department and anti-corruption unit to ensure they can manage their work effectively;
- establish and operate effective processes for identifying and managing individuals at risk of corruption;
- ensure it complies with all aspects of the current national guidelines for vetting; and
- improve its workforce's understanding of all corruption prevention policies.

Areas for improvement

- Annually, the force should produce a local counter-corruption strategic assessment and control strategy, to identify risks to the force's integrity.
- The force should review the arrangements that allow staff and officers to take annual leave to minimise excessive carry-over of leave.

To what extent does the force treat all of the people it serves with fairness and respect?

College of Policing research suggests that, in the eyes of the public, police legitimacy stems primarily from the concept of ‘procedural justice’: the expectation that officers will treat the public respectfully and make fair decisions (explaining them openly and clearly), while being consistently friendly and approachable.⁵

While HMIC recognises that police legitimacy stems from much broader experiences of the police than direct contact alone, our 2016 inspection focused specifically on public perceptions of fair treatment. Our inspection aims to assess: how far the force can demonstrate the importance it places on maintaining procedural justice; and the extent to which it seeks feedback to enable it to prioritise and act on those areas that have the greatest negative impact on public perceptions of fair and respectful treatment (e.g. stop and search, surveillance powers or use of force). This should include how the force is approaching those groups that have the least trust and confidence in the police.

To what extent does the force understand the importance of treating the people it serves with fairness and respect?

It is important for the police to understand that it is procedural justice – making fair decisions and treating people with respect – that drives police legitimacy in the eyes of the public, over and above police effectiveness at preventing and detecting crime.⁶ HMIC assessed the extent to which the importance of procedural justice was reflected in the force’s vision and values, and the extent to which it was understood by the workforce.

Organisational values

The 2015 HMIC legitimacy inspection found that Hertfordshire Constabulary was developing a good, ethical culture. This process was monitored by the equality, ethics and integrity board, chaired by the deputy chief constable. The chief constable had revised the force’s mission and values. This helped ensure that the Code of Ethics was part of everyday working practice.

⁵ *It’s a Fair Cop? Police legitimacy, public cooperation, and crime reduction*, National Policing Improvement Agency, September 2011. Available at: http://whatworks.college.police.uk/Research/Documents/Fair_cop_Full_Report.pdf

⁶ *Ibid.*

Officers and staff across Hertfordshire Constabulary engaged well with the public and understood how this promotes police legitimacy. This approach was supported by most officers and staff, and leadership was provided by chief officers, who set out the force's values in a code of practice called 'The Herts Way'.

In 2016 we found that 'The Herts Way' has been understood and adopted across the workforce. Those we spoke to readily referred to the nine principles and could explain how they link to the Code of Ethics, encouraging them to treat all people fairly and with respect.

Printed versions of 'The Herts Way' have been given to all staff – a number of whom showed us the copy that they always carried while on duty. The chief officers' roadshows and messages to the workforce have reaffirmed the values, and a video describing 'The Herts Way' is on the force website, along with posters and leaflets which can be downloaded. We saw posters prominently displayed in public and private areas of police buildings. The force carried out an online survey at the end of 2015 to evaluate the extent to which 'The Herts Way' had become embedded. The force told us they received a response rate of 40 percent, yielding sufficient information for judgments to be made. Analysis of those results identified areas for revised communication and refresher training, planned for 2016, to ensure the message continues to be heard.

Building on this work, all new policies make provision for an assessment of the ethical impact, as do existing policies and procedures when they are renewed. This has been well received by groups representing those with protected characteristics⁷ within the force.

How well does the force seek feedback and identify those issues and areas that have the greatest impact on people's perceptions of fair and respectful treatment?

HMIC's 2015 legitimacy inspection found a positive picture of how forces were engaging with communities. This year HMIC's assessment focused specifically on the extent to which forces are working to identify and understand the issues that have the greatest impact on people's perceptions of fair and respectful treatment, including how well they seek feedback and challenge from the people they serve.

⁷ The characteristics that the Equality Act 2010 protects are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation. Available at: www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/section/4

Seeking feedback and challenge

Hertfordshire Constabulary regularly seeks both formal and informal feedback about public perceptions of fair and respectful treatment. In HMIC's 2015 legitimacy inspection, we recognised that the force had sufficient understanding of the communities it serves. This is developed through a range of methods, including meetings, surveys, community impact assessments and a commitment to listening and providing feedback to the public. The breadth and range of methods used are considerable and the public are able to access police services or submit feedback in many ways.

The force has made concerted efforts in recent years to build on the methods it uses to develop well-informed relationships with all sections of the community. There is widespread use of key individual networks (KINs) and, as new or emerging communities are identified, local officers seek to develop a relationship through this method. KINs are used to share specific messages within those groups who might have less trust in the police. For example, they were used to support Syrian families arriving in the county and to communicate with communities from countries with a prevalence of so-called honour based violence.

We spoke to frontline staff who described how they worked as part of the community safety partnership to visit local support groups in order to reach people who lacked the means or opportunity to get police assistance.

Neighbourhood staff are involved in a wide range of engagement activity, from visiting faith groups at their places of worship to holding 'street meets' and surgeries. In Safer Streets operations, 750 households are visited by neighbourhood staff, who tell the occupants about police services and seek their views. This direct, personal form of engagement cuts across all sections of the community and reaches those who would not use online methods of communication. It is intended to break down any barriers between the police and the local community, encouraging trust and confidence. The force also has a dedicated rural team to meet the distinct needs of an often isolated and marginalised community. The rural operational support team adapts neighbourhood policing techniques to the rural environment. It produces a publication called 'Rural Beat' aimed at this community, carries out prevention and enforcement activity aimed at rural needs, and works closely with the RSPCA.

There are also a number of ways for people to share feedback online. The force website has a feedback and non-urgent contact link. Official social media accounts (Twitter and Facebook) give people who do not wish to speak directly to the force an opportunity to raise their concerns.

The force has moved away from using an independent advisory group and seeks advice and challenge from Hertfordshire Equality Council (HEC), an independent organisation that encourages and supports good practice in equality and diversity throughout the county. HEC gathers information and views from local people, groups

and organisations involved in equality and diversity issues. It takes responsibility for presenting those views, and provides scrutiny of the police on their behalf. The force also participates in the equality group – a pan-criminal justice forum which identifies and addresses what the local community needs from the criminal justice system. The group also works to make improvements to criminal justice processes and monitor performance. The force used its extensive community network to find 30 people from local faith and race groups, who were invited to join the group as lay members.

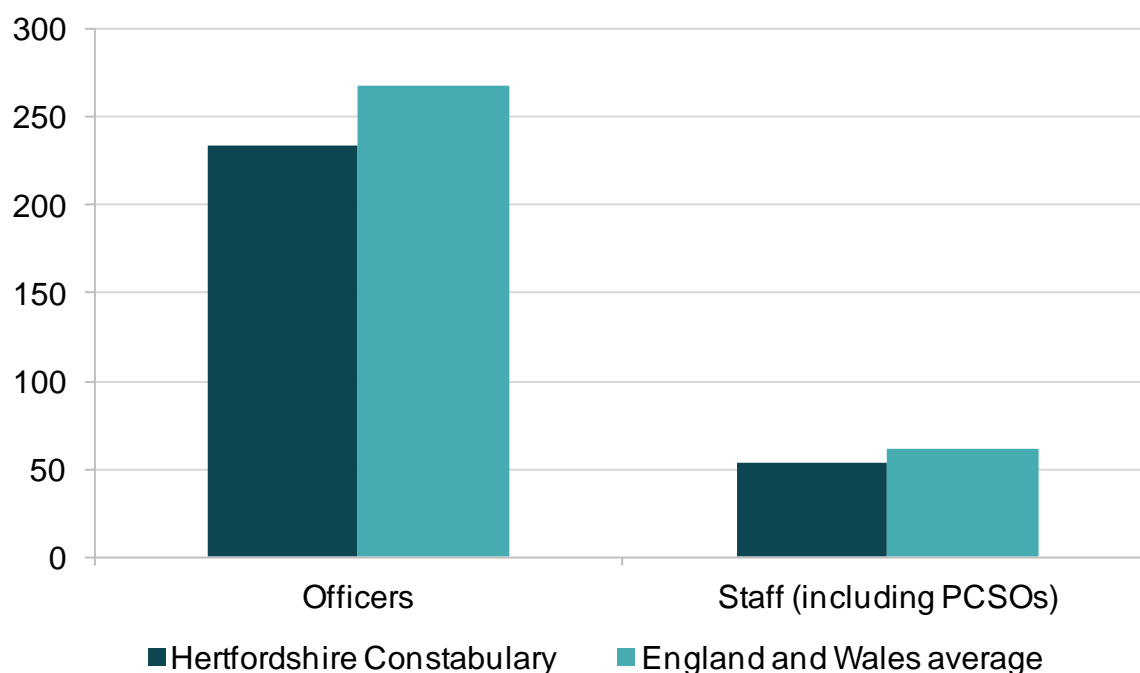
A Victims' Voice survey was conducted by the office of the police and crime commissioner (OPCC), seeking the opinions of victims about the response and support they received from the police and other services. Findings were shared with the force in autumn 2015. Of the 413 respondents, 314 commented on the police. These respondents were spread across age and ethnic groups in a way that was broadly in line with the local community. The survey captured the experience of victims of 17 crime types, including burglary, domestic abuse and assault. The respondents were broadly positive about police activity but also indicated the need for better, more frequent communication, and more sensitivity towards victims. In response, the force has increased resources allocated to the Victim Service, which is now co-located with Victim Support, operating together under the name 'Beacon'. The force team takes information directly from crime records and makes contact with victims, providing updates and identifying any vulnerability or wider support issues.

Identifying and understanding the issues

Hertfordshire Constabulary seeks information from the public in a number of ways. However, there should be more emphasis on analysing that information in order to identify areas for improvement.

Each force in England and Wales is required to record the nature of complaint cases and allegations and be able to produce complaints data annually. The numbers and types of complaints are valuable sources of information for forces and can be used to help them identify areas of dissatisfaction with their service provision, and take steps to improve how they treat the public.

Figure 1: Number of public complaint cases recorded against officers (per 1,000 officers) or staff(per 1,000 staff, including police community support officers) in Hertfordshire Constabulary compared with England and Wales, in the 12 months to 31 March 2016



Source: HMIC Legitimacy data collection

For further information about the data in figure 1 please see annex A

In the 12 months to 31 March 2016, Hertfordshire Constabulary recorded 234 public complaint cases per 1,000 officers, which was broadly in line with the England and Wales average of 268 cases per 1,000 officers. During this period, the force recorded 53 public complaint cases per 1,000 staff (including PCSOs), which was broadly in line with the England and Wales average of 61 cases per 1,000 staff (including PCSOs).

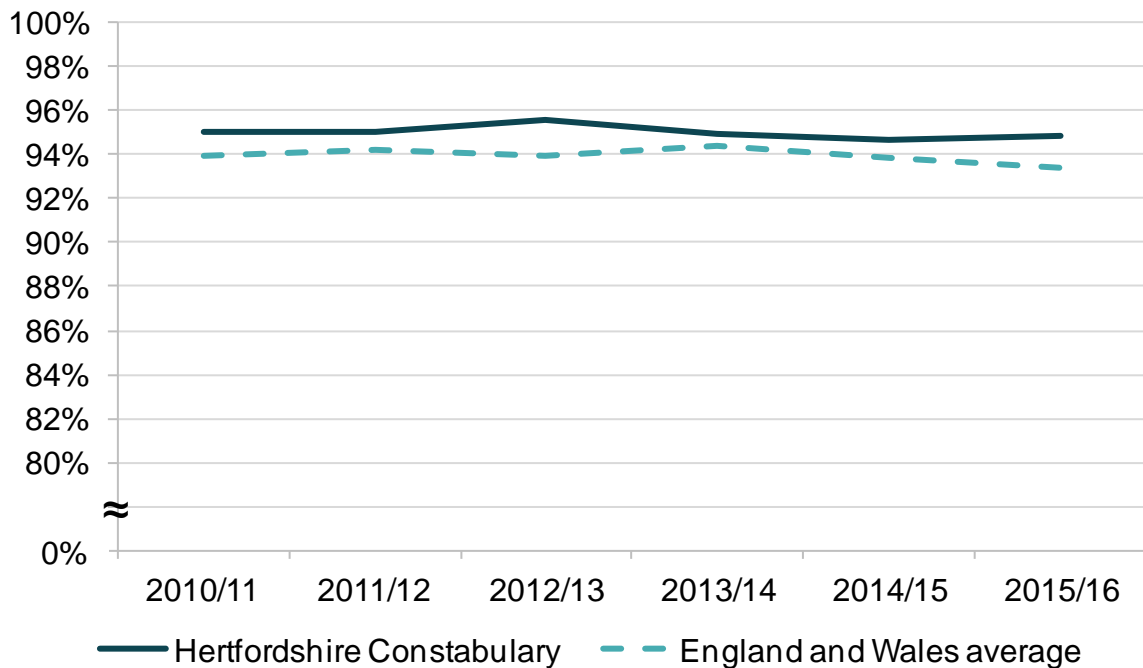
The most recent Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) data from forces show that, for April, May and June 2016, the type of complaint most frequently recorded by Hertfordshire Constabulary is ‘other neglect or failure in duty’.⁸ It is important to note, however, an issue identified during our 2014 inspection on police integrity and corruption;⁹ complaint allegation categories used by different forces may overlap with each other. For instance, similar allegations might be recorded by one force as ‘other neglect or failure in duty’, and by another force as ‘other irregularity in procedure’ or ‘lack of fairness and impartiality’. This means there is no definitive way of establishing accurately the number of public complaints about certain behaviours.

⁸ Independent Police Complaints Commission data are available at: www.ipcc.gov.uk/reports/statistics/police-complaints/police-performance-data

⁹ *Integrity matters*, HMIC, January 2015. Available from: www.justiceinspectors.gov.uk/hmic/publications/integrity-matters/

All forces are required to conduct victim satisfaction surveys with specified victims of crime groups and provide data on a quarterly basis. The surveys take account of victims' experiences of the service provided to them by the police, including examining how well victims feel they are treated, and inform forces' improvements to their service provision.

Figure 2: Percentage of victims satisfied with overall treatment by Hertfordshire Constabulary compared with England and Wales, from the 12 months to 31 March 2011 to the 12 months to 31 March 2016



Source: Home Office Annual Data Requirement
For further information about the data in figure 2 please see annex A

In the 12 months to 31 March 2016, 94.9 percent of all victims of crime (excluding hate crime) who responded to the victim satisfaction survey were satisfied with the overall treatment provided by Hertfordshire Constabulary, which was higher than the England and Wales average of 93.4 percent; and higher than the 94.7 percent who were satisfied with the overall treatment that the force provided in the 12 months to 31 March 2015, this is a not statistically significant difference.

The force has governance processes in place to monitor fair and respectful treatment, such as: an out-of-court disposal scrutiny panel, a stop search scrutiny panel comprised of independent and lay members, and an equalities engagement and inclusion board (EEIB). A newly formed coercive powers board, led by a chief officer, has oversight of how all such powers are applied, including how and when force is used. Independent advice and scrutiny comes from the Hertfordshire Equality Council, which has a member on the EEIB and has been commissioned to carry out regular reviews of stop search data.

The force also routinely collects and assesses information from: victim satisfaction and other telephone surveys; crime, incident and arrest data; complaints; and local news scanning. It was not clear how this is aggregated together by the force to assess its effect on the public's perceptions of fair and respectful treatment.

Body-worn video has been made available to all response officers, but footage is not at present subject to systematic review or review as part of the stop search scrutiny process. However, video footage is now being used to assess the response to domestic abuse incidents, when the victim declines to support prosecution, to establish whether sufficient alternative evidence is available to support a prosecution and also to make sure of the legitimacy of the police response.

An independent custody visitor (ICV) scheme is in operation in Hertfordshire, coordinated by the OPCC. Independent custody visitors conduct unannounced visits to custody suites. Information is shared between the ICV participants and the force at two meetings per year, and at the end of each visit feedback is provided to the custody staff. No further or more detailed information is sought by the force beyond this.

In August 2014, following HMIC's 2013 inspection on the effective and fair use of stop and search powers,¹⁰ the Home Office published guidance to police forces on how to implement the Best Use of Stop and Search scheme.¹¹ The scheme aims to increase transparency and community involvement, and to support a more intelligence-led use of the powers, leading to better outcomes. All police forces in England and Wales signed up to participate in the scheme. In 2015, HMIC's legitimacy inspection¹² considered the extent to which the force was complying with the scheme and found that it did not comply with all features of the scheme, in that it was not recording and publishing outcomes adequately. In autumn 2016, HMIC will re-assess the force's compliance with that feature of the scheme. We will publish our findings in early 2017.

¹⁰ *Stop and Search Powers – are the police using them effectively and fairly?* HMIC, July 2013. Available from: www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/publications/stop-and-search-powers-20130709/

¹¹ Best Use of Stop and Search Scheme, Home Office, August 2014. Available at: www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/346922/Best_Use_of_Stop_and_Search_Scheme_v3.0_v2.pdf

¹² *PEEL: Police legitimacy 2015 – A national overview*, HMIC, February 2016. Available at: www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/publications/police-legitimacy-2015/

How well does the force act on feedback and learning to improve the way it treats all the people it serves, and demonstrate that it is doing so?

It is important that, as well as actively seeking feedback from the public, the force also responds to that feedback. HMIC assessed the extent to which this response includes changes to the way the force operates to reduce the likelihood of similar incidents occurring in future, as well as resolving individual incidents or concerns, and how well the force communicates to the public the effectiveness of this action.

Making improvements

We found that Hertfordshire Constabulary was responsive and open to feedback, keen to make changes and able to share improvements across the workforce. We found that the majority of activity taken in response to feedback from the public occurs among neighbourhood teams and was generally about operational matters, such as setting local priorities. The force does not have a focal point for publicising changes it has made as a result of feedback from the public or organisational learning gained from inspections and independent reviews.

Remedial action has been taken in light of the HMIC findings about the Best Use of Stop and Search scheme, and the response to the Victims' Voice survey has improved the way in which victims are supported. Representatives from the ICV scheme have been invited to contribute to training events for custody staff, particularly new staff, to help illustrate the impact detention has on members of the community. The recent introduction of Yammer, an online communication platform for use within the force, is intended to promote the easier exchange of best practice and learning. Neighbourhood staff use the Safety-Net system, to which the other community safety partnership members also have access, to manage and resolve local issues such as anti-social behaviour. Staff described to us how success stories and new techniques were regularly shared on this system.

The force has reacted in a comprehensive manner to a recent series of nine unconnected misconduct cases involving sexual impropriety and/or abuse of authority by members of the workforce. This high-profile series of cases was designated a critical incident by the force and managed under the name Operation Downfield. The force set up arrangements to: identify and learn lessons; prevent further incidents; and reassure the public that it treats people with fairly and with respect. External scrutiny and analysis of how the cases were handled were used to provide assurance about the quality of the investigation and to identify ways in which perpetrators might be identified sooner in the future.

The force has worked well with the media to encourage accurate reporting of the cases when they went to criminal trial. Online video messages from chief officers about the cases, with content about how to recognise and react to similar behaviour,

have been viewed by all staff. The force has shared its experience with other police forces and has devoted a large section of the chief officer roadshow agenda to the effect the cases have had and the learning points drawn from them, to raise the awareness of the workforce.

Demonstrating effectiveness

The force seeks to learn from feedback, and makes changes in light of organisational learning, but it does not always share those with the community.

For example, the workforce survey at the end of 2015 was a clear example of evaluating effectiveness. It assessed how much a part of routine practice the Code of Ethics had become, with survey responses assessed by experts from the University of Hertfordshire to achieve clarity about the messages about organisational culture and to recommend areas for remedial activity. The learning points identified were each the subject of an action plan, covering specific communication to the workforce and revised training material using role-modelling and ethical dilemmas. The code has clearly become the basis for how the force expects staff to treat people. However, the information is aimed at the workforce, and the force could demonstrate more clearly to the public the scale and nature of activity carried out.

The activity undertaken in support of Operation Downfield demonstrates a timely and multi-faceted response. Immediate areas for improvement and learning were identified and responded to, accompanied by heavy publicity within and outside the force. The subject matter concerned is such that effectiveness of the force's response is best judged across a term longer than that covered by this report. The force reported to us no adverse effect upon public satisfaction rates in the immediate term; however, changes in misconduct and complaint investigations will be analysed for the emergence of any trends and any possible association with Operation Downfield. The force is alert to the fact that an increase in reports, ostensibly an indicator of declining professional standards, might occur as a result of increased public confidence in reporting cases and increased awareness among the workforce.

Summary of findings



Good

Officers and staff across Hertfordshire Constabulary understand the importance of treating people with fairness and respect. Ethical leadership has been provided by chief officers, who have set out the force's values in a code of practice, 'The Herts Way'. This has been effectively promoted and adopted across the workforce.

The force seeks feedback using a range of methods, including surveys and engagement activities. It has set up 'key information networks', and consults the Hertfordshire Equality Council on equality and diversity issues. Neighbourhood teams organise local 'street meets' and surgeries.

Hertfordshire Constabulary collects information from victim satisfaction and other surveys, complaints and local news monitoring, but it is not clear how this is acted upon.

Stops and searches are now recorded adequately, after HMIC found in 2015 that the force was not compliant with the Best Use of Stop and Search scheme. The information gathered in a Victims' Voice survey has changed the way in which victims are supported. The workforce survey at the end of 2015 led to positive changes in the way the force expects its staff to treat people.

How well does the force ensure that its workforce behaves ethically and lawfully?

In 2014, HMIC inspected the extent to which the police was acting with integrity and guarding against corruption.¹³ Given the continued importance of this topic, we are returning in this question to those national recommendations emerging from the 2014 inspection that our 2015 legitimacy inspection did not cover. Our inspection focus this year also reflects research showing that prevention is better than cure: the best way to ensure that police workforces behave ethically is for the forces to develop ethical cultures and to have systems in place to identify potential risks to the integrity of their organisations, so that forces can intervene early to reduce the likelihood of corruption.¹⁴

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

One of the first things forces can do to develop an ethical culture is to use effective vetting procedures to recruit applicants who are more likely to have a high standard of ethical behaviour and to reject those who may have demonstrated questionable standards of behaviour in the past, or whose identities cannot be confirmed.

Once the workforce is recruited, one of the best ways to prevent corruption from occurring among the workforce is by establishing an ethical working environment or culture. To achieve this, forces need to clarify and continue to reinforce and exemplify acceptable and unacceptable standards of behaviour, including the Code of Ethics.¹⁵ This year, HMIC focused on assessing progress in those areas

¹³ *Integrity Matters*, HMIC, January 2015. Available from:

www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/publications/integrity-matters/

¹⁴ *Promoting ethical behaviour and preventing wrongdoing in organisations*, College of Policing, 2015. Available at:

http://whatworks.college.police.uk/Research/Documents/150317_Integrity_REA_FINAL_REPORT.pdf

¹⁵ *Promoting ethical behaviour and preventing wrongdoing in organisations*, College of Policing, 2015. Available at:

http://whatworks.college.police.uk/Research/Documents/150317_Integrity_REA_FINAL_REPORT.pdf

and *The role of leadership in promoting ethical police behaviour*, College of Policing, 2015. Available at:

http://whatworks.college.police.uk/Research/Documents/150317_Ethical_leadership_FINAL_REPORT.pdf and

Literature review – Police Integrity and Corruption, HMIC, January 2015. Available at:

www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/publications/integrity-matters/

highlighted for improvement in our 2015 legitimacy inspection and our 2014 integrity and corruption inspection.

In HMIC's 2015 legitimacy inspection, we found Hertfordshire Constabulary was developing a good ethical culture and this continues to be the case. We found that the force promotes and supports its ethical culture in many ways, from the measures it takes before recruitment, to initial training programmes for all staff, to the dissemination of 'The Herts Way' throughout the workforce.

Initial vetting

The alliance has a fully collaborated vetting unit that provides all vetting services to the three forces within the alliance. The head of the alliance PSD has oversight of the process and the Cambridgeshire deputy chief constable is the senior responsible officer.

HMIC found that there are a number of areas for improvement in the way that the alliance's vetting unit undertakes vetting for the three alliance forces. The alliance's vetting policy and procedure are only partly based upon the national vetting policy. We were told that the alliance's approach to vetting the workforce, volunteers and contractors is based on common sense and risk management. The decision as to whom to vet and at what level is the responsibility of the alliance's vetting manager. This vetting manager also has the autonomy to prioritise vetting enquiries or extend clearance periods. All new joiners who have access to force buildings or computers are vetted. However, due to a lack of capacity within the alliance's vetting team, the alliance prioritises vetting and considers its approach is proportionate to the risks. For new recruits, the basic checks completed will include: local intelligence; police national computer; police national database (custody, crime records, child protection and domestic abuse); special branch checks; and, if the applicant has worked for a previous police force, checks with that force's PSD. In addition, checks on people who live at the same address and an open source search are conducted. The national guidance states that all forces' databases should be searched. The alliance's unit cannot complete the required database checks, because it lacks the capacity to do so. The guidance also states an applicant's family should be included for checking, but unless the applicant lives with the family, the unit does not do this either. The outcomes of the basic checks may lead to further checks being completed.

The alliance vetting unit has been reviewed to ensure that it has sufficient resources to address the current and future requirements of the alliance. A recent decision has been made to double the size of the vetting unit. While this is encouraging, the force needs to consider the short-term risks while the additional staff are recruited, trained and reach a level of operational competence. Early discussions are taking place for the vetting unit to work collaboratively with a further four forces. In the meantime, the

SRO recognises the risks and is seeking support from other force vetting units to reduce the vetting backlog and increase capacity to deal with the additional vetting requirements from the recruitment.

In HMICs Police Integrity and Corruption inspection 2014, we found that the vetting arrangements within Hertfordshire Constabulary were insufficient and recommended: “Within six months, ensure the force complies, as far as practicable, with the current national vetting policy and develops plans to fully comply with the new vetting code when it is published in 2015”. In this inspection we found that vetting arrangements remain inconsistent and not fully compliant with national guidance.

The College of Policing’s ‘disapproved register’ contains details of those officers who have been dismissed from the service or who either resigned or retired while subject to a gross misconduct investigation where it had been determined that there would have been a case to answer. The force complies with its obligations to provide the College of Policing with details of those officers and staff who have been dismissed from the service for inclusion on the current disapproved register.

Clarifying and reinforcing standards of behaviour

Hertfordshire Constabulary continues to reinforce standards of behaviour regularly, primarily using ‘The Herts Way’ as the point of reference. We spoke to staff across the force, in a wide variety of roles, who described a lot of information and guidance available via the intranet and also said that they felt comfortable seeking advice from the PSD. They described a continuous stream of information about standards supplied via ‘The Shield’ (a newsletter compiled and circulated by PSD), HertsBeat (the internal news and information circular), training events, team briefings, chief officer roadshows and force-wide messages from chief officers and on Yammer – an external social media site.

There has been training for the workforce, including events specifically for special constables, using ethical dilemmas likely to be faced both in the course of police activity and while away from the workplace. The force publishes information relating to chief officer gifts, hospitality, expenses and the declaration of business interests.

Governance with regard to ethical standards and behaviour is provided by the equality ethics and integrity board, chaired by the deputy chief constable. This board provides strategic vision and co-ordination for three themes: equality and inclusion, ethics and integrity, and corporate health and wellbeing. A Code of Ethics plan is in place, setting out how acceptable standards will be communicated and monitored, and how they will be developed based on feedback and best practice elsewhere.

HMIC’s 2014 Police Integrity and Corruption inspection report recommended that, within six months, the force should ensure that it has communicated to all its workforce the requirements to comply with policies relating to notifiable associations, secondary employment, business interests, gifts and hospitality. (A notifiable

association is an association with an individual who could pose a risk to the integrity of an individual member of the workforce or the force itself. Officers and staff are required to report such associations, which then allows for a full evaluation of the risk posed to both the individual and the force.) We found that the force could do more to clarify to all officers and staff what is acceptable in terms of receiving gifts and hospitality, declaring personal business interests and what 'notifiable associations' means, as awareness of the policies among the officers and staff we spoke to was variable.

The ACU and PSD are implementing a programme of improvement, having recognised that their capability and capacity are inadequate, and that this contributed to a serious case collapsing at court. Following a review of the ACU, the new head was charged with developing an action plan for implementation by June 2017. This includes the development of an improved communications strategy on anti-corruption and integrity.

How well does the force identify, understand and manage risks to the integrity of the organisation?

HMIC's 2014 police integrity and corruption inspection emphasised the need for forces to make arrangements for continuous monitoring of their ethical health, through active monitoring of force systems and processes to spot risks to their integrity, including – but not limited to – business interests, gifts and hospitality, and public complaints.¹⁶ These findings reflect the research commissioned by the College of Policing, which highlights the importance of taking a problem-solving approach to preventing wrongdoing, by scanning and analysing police data to identify particular officers or hotspots on which to target prevention activity.

This year HMIC was particularly interested in how well forces – from dedicated anti-corruption units to individual supervisors – are identifying and intervening early to reduce individual and organisational vulnerabilities (i.e. those individuals, groups or locations that may be susceptible to corruption). We also assessed how well forces are seeking and assessing intelligence on potential corruption, with a focus on those areas for improvement identified in our previous inspections.

Identifying and understanding risks to integrity

The equalities, ethics and integrity board, chaired by a chief officer, reviews information and data to understand how the force complies with its own values, which include the Code of Ethics. The PSD governance group continually monitors unacceptable behaviour identified from public complaints.

¹⁶ *Integrity matters*, HMIC, January 2015. Available from: www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/publications/integrity-matters/

The alliance's anti-corruption unit (ACU) is developing a new high-level plan to address HMIC's 2014 police integrity and corruption inspection recommendations, and a subsequent departmental peer review is taking place following the collapse of a court case.

The vetting unit does not comply with the national police vetting policy. It is awaiting new national guidance on the different levels of vetting and the aftercare periods. It is clear from the vetting unit performance reports that the unit does not have sufficient capacity and has a significant backlog of requested clearances. The unit's priority is to vet new recruits; it does not have the capacity to re-vet existing officers and staff, which is a risk that Hertfordshire and the other alliance forces recognise and plan to improve with support from another force.

The ACU undertakes priority vetting for staff in more sensitive posts such as counter-terrorism and the eastern region serious organised crime unit, as well as specialist vetting for officers and staff joining departments such as that investigating child abuse. However, not all officers and staff in sensitive roles are adequately vetted, and we found a lack of compliance with best practice on re-vetting, vetting aftercare, follow-up of business interest applications and identification of vulnerable staff. We spoke to members of the workforce who had gone many years without re-vetting; notably, in some cases they had moved to new posts that required a higher classification of security clearance.

The policing integrity and corruption inspection 2014 recommended that, within six months, the force should develop the capability to respond actively to information that identifies patterns of unprofessional behaviour and corruption. We found that Hertfordshire – and the alliance more widely – do not yet have this capability; the force and alliance do little to seek out risks to integrity across their area. The alliance needs to develop the monitoring of management information and force systems to identify risks, and this is a priority in its new action plan.

Intervening early to manage risks to integrity

Hertfordshire Constabulary and the alliance have limited capability to take early action to manage risks to integrity. The force, in conjunction with its alliance partners, is developing its capability to identify staff or groups vulnerable to corruption, for example, by profiling officers and staff who may face debt problems. This is now being addressed as part of the new PSD and ACU action plan.

Looking for, reporting and assessing intelligence on potential corruption

Hertfordshire Constabulary and the alliance are developing the way they look for, report and assess intelligence on potential corruption. We found that officers and staff were aware of the anonymous route to report wrongdoing. We spoke to several members of the workforce who had firsthand experience of using the system and others who had reported concerns to a line manager.

The ACU has introduced a new daily management process, which, while it is predominantly reactive, will review the intelligence the ACU receives. The ACU will also review all public complaints against a sexual predatory behaviour matrix, following best practice from Kent Police.

The force and alliance need to improve how well they assess all sources of intelligence on potential corruption. HMIC's 2014 police integrity and corruption inspection recommended that the force and alliance should develop within six months a process that considers, prioritises and records corruption-related intelligence. The PSD has only recently introduced a tactical tasking and co-ordination group process to undertake this. The bi-weekly PSD and ACU meeting ensures all activity is recorded and arranges appropriate oversight. The meeting gives priority to developing intelligence according to the seriousness of the allegations, although there is no formal assessment of risk. This work is being developed along with plans to introduce the 'management of risk in law enforcement'¹⁷ (MORiLE) risk assessment, which will be used to assess and prioritise intelligence using a MORiLE threat score.

How well is the force tackling the problem of officers and staff abusing their authority for sexual gain?

In 2012, the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) published *The abuse of police powers to perpetrate sexual violence*.¹⁸ This report states that “the abuse of police powers for purposes of sexual exploitation, or even violence, is something that fundamentally betrays the trust that communities and individuals place in the police. It therefore has a serious impact on the public’s confidence in individual officers and the service in general.” The report identified this behaviour as a form of serious corruption that forces should refer to the IPCC for its consideration of how it should be investigated.

The Code of Ethics¹⁹ – which sets out the standards of professional behaviour expected of all policing professionals – explicitly states that they must “not establish or pursue an improper sexual or emotional relationship with a person with whom

¹⁷ MORiLE develops a range of methods to assist decision makers in identifying and prioritising threat, risk and harm, and links this to an organisational capacity and capability to respond.

¹⁸ *The abuse of police powers to perpetrate sexual violence*, jointly published by IPCC and ACPO (now the National Police Chiefs' Council), September 2012. Available at: www.ipcc.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Documents/research_stats/abuse_of_police_powers_to_perpetrate_sexual_violence.PDF

¹⁹ 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 at: www.college.police.uk/What-we-do/Ethics/Documents/Code_of_Ethics.pdf

[they] come into contact in the course of [their] work who may be vulnerable to an abuse of trust or power”.

The most recent national counter corruption assessment, in 2013, highlighted corruption for the purposes of sexual gratification as a major threat to law enforcement.²⁰ HMIC’s 2015 report *Integrity Matters*²¹ identified police sexual misconduct as an area of great concern to the public. We share the public’s disquiet and so we looked at this issue specifically as part of our 2016 inspection. Our work was given additional emphasis in May 2016 by a request from the Home Secretary that we inspect forces’ responses to the issue of officers and staff developing inappropriate relationships with victims of domestic abuse and abusing their position of power to exploit victims.

Recognising abuse of authority for sexual gain as serious corruption

Hertfordshire Constabulary recognises abuse of authority for sexual gain as serious corruption, and has made considerable efforts to explain the necessity for professional boundaries. The force’s activity is coordinated under Operation Downfield, which is its overarching response to a series of misconduct incidents in some way linked to abuse of authority or inappropriate sexual activity during 2015. The force learned important lessons from the conviction of one of its officers in December 2015 for offences of misconduct in public office, after he had multiple sexual relationships with vulnerable domestic abuse victims.

The head of the ACU provided an awareness briefing on the anti-corruption plan to senior leaders from all alliance forces in June 2016. The briefing gave an overview of the main elements and signs of corrupt practice. It set out the current concerns about sexual and predatory behaviour towards vulnerable people, especially victims of domestic abuse. It covered how such incidents should be reported and measures the force can take when the suitability of a person to continue in their role is called into question, for cases where misconduct cannot be proven. The presentation was supported by academic research about police officer and staff responses to a range of ethical dilemmas.

²⁰ Every three years, the national counter corruption advisory group commissions a strategic assessment of the threat to law enforcement from corruption. The most recent assessment was completed in June 2013 by the Serious Organised Crime Agency. The assessment was based upon three years of intelligence reports on possible corruption gathered by forces in England and Wales, supplemented by information from other forces and national agencies.

²¹ *Integrity matters*, HMIC, January 2015. Available from:
www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/publications/integrity-matters/

Looking for and receiving intelligence on potential abuse of authority for sexual gain

The new head of the ACU recognised that the existing joint PSD approach to seeking intelligence did not include a prevention plan. The alliance intends to recruit an officer to lead and implement a prevention plan, which will include the ACU taking responsibility for prevention work. A number of prevention activities are taking place across the alliance, including a chief officer-led group that reviews cases of officers abusing their position for sexual gain. The ACU will share the learning across the alliance.

Taking action to prevent abuse of authority for sexual gain

We found a high degree of clarity among the workforce about the seriousness of incidents related to abuse of authority for sexual gain. This was communicated through briefings and corporate presentations by senior officers, online videos from the deputy chief constable which were viewed by all staff, the chief officer roadshows, all-staff messages from chief officers and content added to the force intranet site.

Both PSD and ACU give information to new recruits and recently promoted officers about the abuse of authority for sexual gain. The PSD's quarterly 'The Shield' publication also contains information on this issue and is available on the force intranet.

The force's efforts under Operation Downfield have been comprehensive and, we found, successful in increasing awareness among the members of the workforce with whom we came into contact. Along with presentations and briefings relating specifically to this issue, a statement entitled 'Maintaining Professional Boundaries and Standards of Behaviour' was circulated to all staff, giving absolute clarity about expectations and what to do if boundaries are breached.

Building public trust

The force is working to a comprehensive plan for continued communication with the workforce, other police and partner organisations and the public. There are various confidence-building activities planned for 2016, including the production of a joint message and video by the deputy chief constable in each of the alliance forces for internal broadcast and regular updates and bulletins in 'The Shield' and other force circulars. There will also be more information on Yammer, the intranet and the force website regarding confidential reporting methods, regular meetings with staff representative associations, full reporting of misconduct and criminal trial outcomes and briefings to the OPCC.

The force's principal partners and stakeholders, including the media, have received briefings to explain the nature of the Operation Downfield cases, share information about what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable behaviour by the police workforce, and how to report concerns.

How well does the force engage with the public and its workforce about the outcomes of misconduct and corruption cases?

HMIC's 2014 literature review on police integrity and corruption emphasised the importance of collection and dissemination of information about misconduct to the public, on the basis that it shows police forces are taking the problem seriously, and detecting and punishing wrongdoing.²² This information also forms the basis for deterring misconduct and enhancing integrity within police forces themselves. This year, HMIC examined how well forces engage with the public online and through holding police officer misconduct hearings in public, and also more widely following high profile incidents with the potential to undermine public perceptions of police integrity. We also looked at how aware the workforce is of these outcomes.

Working with the public

Hertfordshire Constabulary engages with the public well about misconduct and corruption cases. Misconduct hearings are publicised on its website and information about attending open hearings is easily accessible there too. The force adopts a transparent and inclusive approach to the media with regard to corruption cases. In defining a detailed communication strategy for Operation Downfield, the force prioritised maintaining the public's trust and confidence, and sought to reassure the public that the actions of the individuals were being dealt with.

Working with the workforce

We found that the workforce was made aware of misconduct and corruption outcomes quickly after the conclusion of each case, as a matter of routine. The force uses a variety of means, including intranet messages, inclusion in weekly force orders – the formal process by which information is distributed across the whole workforce – and in 'The Shield', the PSD-compiled circular. We were told that sufficient information is included in the summary of each case for staff to understand the nature of the conduct that led to the hearing, or criminal trial, how that constituted a breach of acceptable standards and the consequences of each breach.

²² *Literature Review – Police Integrity and Corruption*, HMIC, January 2015. Available at: www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/publications/integrity-matters/

Summary of findings



Requires improvement

We found that Hertfordshire Constabulary and the alliance are doing some positive work on identifying and enforcing standards of behaviour through the PSD publications, leadership briefings, training for new recruits and specialist training on areas such as autism. However, HMIC has serious concerns that the force and its alliance partners are not yet in a position to ensure that the workforce behaves ethically and fairly.

We found too few of the recommendations we made in our police integrity and corruption inspection in 2014 had been implemented. For example, the force still does not have the capacity to vet the workforce adequately, and not all officers and staff we spoke to understood why they needed to declare business interests. We found that those recommendations that had been completed had only been completed recently and under the new leadership.

The alliance PSD, which includes the ACU and vetting unit, is currently the subject of an improvement plan, resulting from the collapse of a serious gross misconduct court case due to concerns about the quality of the investigation. The alliance response includes new heads of both the PSD and the ACU, who have brought with them experience, capability and the commitment to bring about improvements quickly. To implement improvements effectively, the force and alliance must ensure that these units have sufficient capacity, capability and support.

Cause of concern

The risks that HMIC identified in 2014 and the lack of progress of the recommendations, until recently following the collapse of a court case, is of serious concern.

Recommendations

Hertfordshire Constabulary, together with the other forces in the alliance, namely Bedfordshire Police and Cambridgeshire Constabulary, should:

- review the capacity and capability of its professional standards department and anti-corruption unit to ensure they can manage their work effectively;
- establish and operate effective processes for identifying and managing individuals at risk of corruption;
- ensure it complies with all aspects of the current national guidelines for vetting; and
- improve its workforce's understanding of all corruption prevention policies.

Areas for improvement

- Annually, the force should produce a local counter-corruption strategic assessment and control strategy, to identify risks to the force's integrity.

To what extent does the force treat its workforce with fairness and respect?

A workforce that feels it is treated fairly and with respect by its employers is more likely to identify with the organisation, and treat the public in a similarly fair and respectful way. Conversely, perceived unfairness within police organisations can have a detrimental effect on officer and staff attitudes and behaviours.²³ As such, this concept of ‘organisational justice’ and its potential impact on ‘procedural justice’ form an important part of HMIC’s assessment of police legitimacy. As there is no comparative data on how fairly officers and staff perceive forces to have treated them, we focused our assessment on how well forces identify these perceptions within their workforces and act on these findings. In particular, we looked at the extent to which organisational ‘fairness’ is reflected through the way individual performance is managed, and how ‘organisational respect’ is reflected through how forces provide for the wellbeing of their workforces, particularly through preventative and early action.

How well does the force identify and act to improve the workforce’s perceptions of fair and respectful treatment?

Research suggests that forces that involve officers and staff in decision-making processes, listen to their concerns, act on them and are open about how and why decisions were reached may improve workforce perceptions of fair and respectful treatment.²⁴ On this basis, HMIC assessed how well the force engages with its staff to identify and understand the issues that affect them, and how well it acts on these issues and demonstrates it has done so.

Identifying and understanding the issues

Hertfordshire Constabulary employs a wide range of methods to identify and understand the issues that affect the workforce, including surveys, regular engagement with staff representative groups and online messaging such as ‘Ask the Exec’ and, more recently, Yammer.

²³ *Fair cop 2: Organisational justice, behaviour and ethical policing*, College of Policing, 2015.

Available at:

http://whatworks.college.police.uk/Research/Documents/150317_Fair_cop%202_FINAL_REPORT.pdf
f Organisational justice: Implications for police and emergency service leadership, Herrington C and Roberts K, AIPM Research Focus, Issue 2, 2013. Available at: www.aipm.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/Org-Justice-Final.pdf

²⁴ *Fair cop 2: Organisational justice, behaviour and ethical policing*, College of Policing, 2015, page 11. Available at:

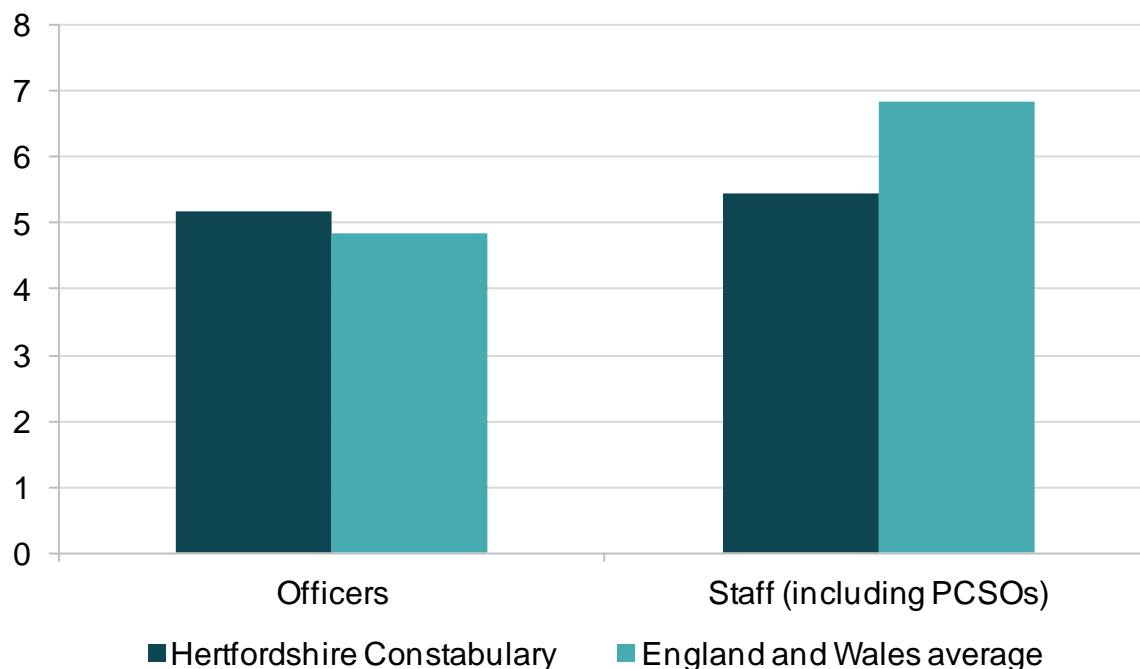
http://whatworks.college.police.uk/Research/Documents/150317_Fair_cop%202_FINAL_REPORT.pdf
f

A tri-force all-staff survey “Your Voice Matters” began in June 2016, including Cambridgeshire, Bedfordshire and staff within collaborated units, developed in conjunction with Durham University. The force has carried out a total of 38 “SNAP” surveys – short online and subject-specific surveys – during 2015 and early 2016 on subjects such as workforce experiences of using KINs and leadership issues confronted by first-line supervisors (sergeant and staff equivalent), and ‘temperature checks’ for senior leaders, gathering views about working conditions. Cultural surveys have been, and continue to be, used at team and department level. This online and anonymous process, confined to people actually working in a team or location, seeks views on cultural indicators such as stories, expectations, working practices, how the team or location actually works, style of supervision, perceived current culture and preferred culture. The survey also seeks practical recommendations and suggestions for improvement. Once analysis of the replies has been carried out, results are shared with the participants along with a series of responses or actions taken by the senior leader responsible for the team or location.

Engagement with representative groups is continuous and we heard positive feedback about the inclusive relationship between such groups and the force leadership. The range of groups is comprehensive, extending across all protected characteristics, many faith groups, staff associations and unions.

Grievances are concerns, problems or complaints raised formally to employers by officers or staff. Data on numbers and types of grievances provide forces with a useful source of information about the sorts of issues that staff and officers are concerned about.

Figure 3: Number of grievances raised by officers (per 1,000 officers) or staff including PCSOs (per 1,000 staff) that Hertfordshire Constabulary finalised compared with England and Wales, in the 12 months to 31 March 2016



Source: HMIC Legitimacy data collection

For further information about the data in Figure 3, please see annex A

In the 12 months to 31 March 2016, Hertfordshire Constabulary finalised 5.2 formal grievances raised by officers per 1,000 officers, which was broadly in line with the England and Wales average of 4.8 per 1,000 officers. During this period, the force finalised 5.5 formal grievances raised by staff per 1,000 staff (including PCSOs), which was broadly in line with the England and Wales average of 6.8 per 1,000 staff (including PCSOs).

The staff suggestion scheme ‘Herts and Minds’ remains in operation, although usage is declining, which is the case with ‘Ask the Exec’ as well. Workforce members told us that they remained aware of both, and gave examples of change and rewards under ‘Herts and Minds’, but that responses to questions submitted via ‘Ask the Exec’ took a long time. Yammer is becoming established as the main forum for idea and information exchange. It is informal, but not anonymous, so users find it easy to use but would be reluctant to add any contentious or challenging comment in this open forum.

The force carries out exit interviews, including for volunteers, and commissioned Hertfordshire Equality Council to identify whether there had been any evidence of disproportionality in terms of the characteristics of those leaving the organisation. The outcome of this work was that there was no disproportionality.

Making improvements and demonstrating effectiveness

The force reacts to information supplied from the workforce through surveys and other feedback channels. The supervisor development events 'Valuing Our Leaders' were structured to reflect the issues identified as most important in the SNAP survey of sergeants and staff equivalents in late 2015. They included information about how to best manage the performance, health and wellbeing of staff. Similarly the force-wide survey in late 2015 to gauge how well the Code of Ethics was embedded was pivotal to focusing follow-up training and communication on the issues of greatest need. These surveys, along with the cultural surveys, show how the force detects and responds to the feelings of the workforce.

The force is open and communicative about improvement activity, with representative groups telling us that they felt informed and engaged. The agenda for the current round of chief officer roadshows will give updates on priority issues, including Operation Downfield, the impact on the workforce of increased collaboration, the roll-out of Athena²⁵ and the financial position. Each roadshow uses MeetingSphere software, so attendees can pitch questions and submit comments during the event. The system also collates contributions, and once the current round of roadshows ends that material will be analysed to draw out the themes for chief officer communications, training and organisational development.

How well does the force support the wellbeing of its workforce?

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 being more invested in what they do. Last year our inspection was concerned with what efforts forces were making to consider, and provide for, the wellbeing needs of their workforces. This year we examined the progress the force had made since the last inspection, with a particular focus on preventative activity.

Understanding and valuing the benefits

Hertfordshire Constabulary understands and values workforce wellbeing, providing more and better wellbeing services for staff. In HMIC's legitimacy inspection 2015, we found the wellbeing of staff was clearly a priority. This was reflected in a wellbeing plan, which was overseen by the equality, ethics and integrity board. More recently the tri-force wellbeing board, led by a Hertfordshire chief officer, has

²⁵ Athena is a new IT system to manage crime records, case preparation, investigations, intelligence and detainee handling planned for late 2016.

coordinated activity and staff engagement related to health and wellbeing issues, including mental wellbeing, across the three forces. The board has started work on their assessment against the Wellbeing Charter.

We also found in the 2015 legitimacy inspection that the force had identified how supervisors were less confident at managing home-related psychological matters, and had put extra support in place for managers. This stemmed from analysis by the force of the nature, scale and type of effect of psychological illness that had led to absence from work. Actions have continued through 2015/16 in light of the findings, and the subject remains on the agenda of the chief officer board. Activity includes: extra wellbeing provision to prevent or reduce psychological harm for those associated with instances of misconduct, whether as victims, witnesses, 'whistle-blowers' or otherwise; a staff survey planned for 2016, aimed at understanding the impact on the workforce of changes in wellbeing provision; and plans to carry out 'mental health first aid' training across all three forces.

To increase supervisors' confidence in dealing with health and wellbeing issues, a series of attendance management sessions took place in the local policing command locations in the autumn of 2015. A survey was to be sent to attendees afterwards to judge the sessions' relevance and effectiveness. However, the same subject area has been included in the 'Valuing Our Leaders' events in summer 2016, and both sets of training will be assessed together.

Identifying and understanding the workforce's wellbeing needs

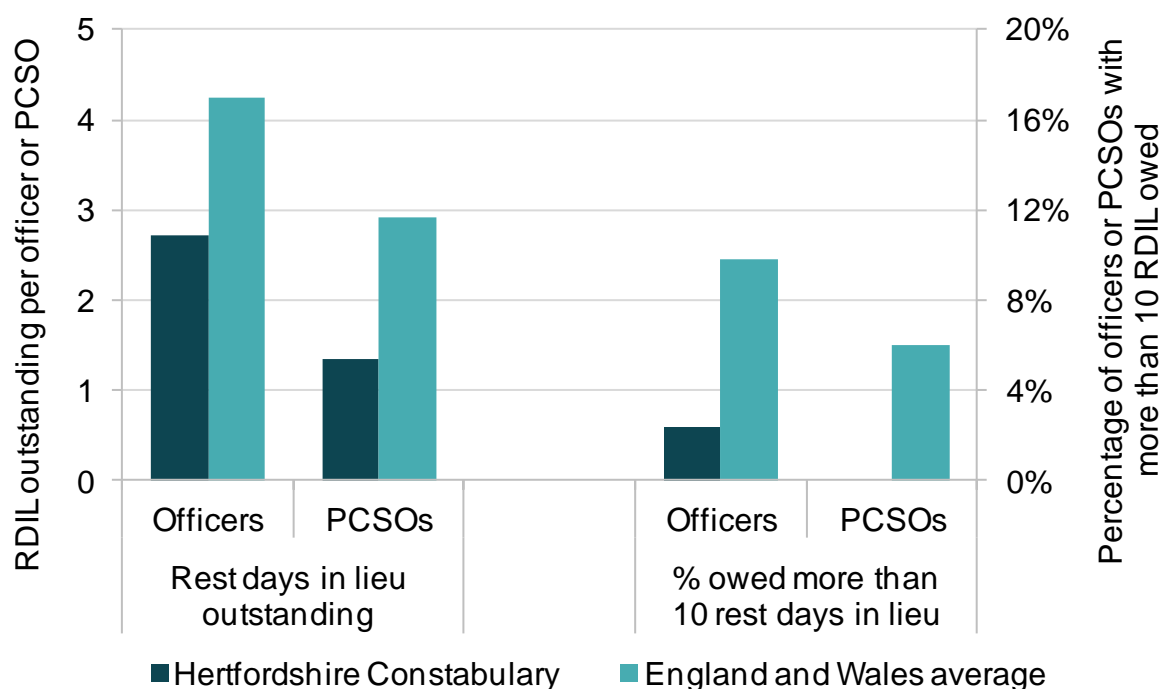
The way the force understands workforce wellbeing is improving. This has been achieved through increased governance of progress on the actions in the well-workforce plan, targeted used of surveys – in addition to the tri-force Your Voice survey – that will encompass wellbeing issues, and supervisor development events.

All wellbeing services are open to volunteers, and there has been recent action to align Special constables more closely with regular frontline staff, remove differences in equipment provision to promote the sense of inclusion and improve access to support from supervisors.

The members of the workforce that we spoke to uniformly felt that the provision of wellbeing services was adequate and that their needs had been met once they had accessed those services. However, their prevailing concerns were about stress related to workload combined with a lack of opportunity to take leave, both of which they felt were linked to workforce reductions. The force's policy allows for officers to carry over a maximum of five days, or the equivalent amount of hours, in annual leave to the next year. In 2015/16, 1,323 of the force's 1,929 officers exceeded that limit, indicating that – irrespective of cause – there is widespread underuse of annual leave. The force should carry out an analysis to understand the scale, causes and effect of the high number of officers carrying forward annual leave.

Rest days in lieu (RDIL) are leave days owed to officers or PCSOs when they have been required to work on their scheduled rest day for operational reasons. Long working hours can have a detrimental impact on the health and wellbeing of the workforce, so it serves as a useful point of comparison for assessing the extent to which the force is managing the wellbeing of its workforce. Analysis of the numbers of RDIL accrued but not yet taken can be a useful tool for forces to identify and understand potential wellbeing concerns for individuals and teams.

Figure 4: Number of RDIL (rest days in lieu) outstanding per officer or PCSO and the percentage of officers or PCSOs with more than ten RDIL owed to them in Hertfordshire Constabulary compared with England and Wales, as at 31 March 2016



Source: HMIC Legitimacy data collection

Note: For some police forces, data about the number of RDIL outstanding are estimated from data on hours owed. For further information about the data in Figure 4, please see annex A

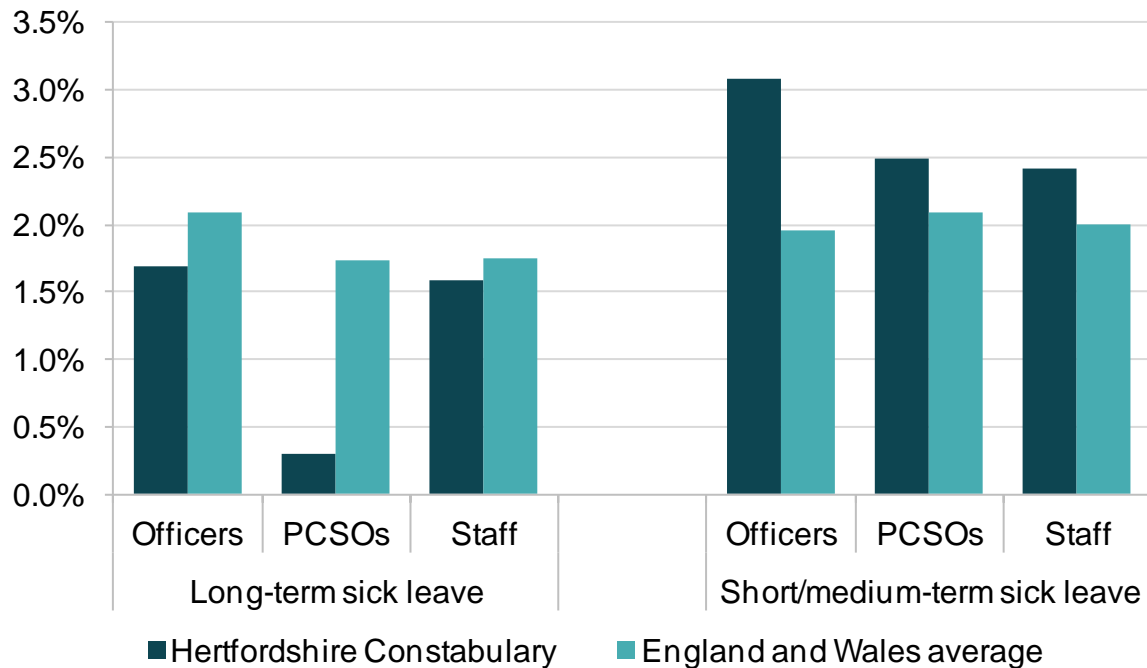
As at 31 March 2016, there were 2.7 RDIL outstanding per officer in Hertfordshire Constabulary, which was broadly in line with the England and Wales average of 4.2 days per officer. On the same date, there were 1.4 RDIL outstanding per PCSO in the force, which was broadly in line with the England and Wales average of 2.9 days per PCSO. As at 31 March 2016, 2.4 percent of officers in Hertfordshire Constabulary had more than ten RDIL owed to them, which was lower than the England and Wales average of 9.8 percent. As at 31 March 2016, no PCSOs in Hertfordshire Constabulary had more than ten RDIL owed to them. The England and Wales average was 6.0 percent of PCSOs. The data on PCSOs did not allow a comparison with the average.

The way management information about the workforce is used and analysed, in general, is not clear. At the time of our inspection, the transition to a tri-force Human Resources department had started but was not fully established, and collation of all

relevant databases into a single employee resource planning system was only partially complete.

Sickness data can provide a useful point of comparison for assessing the wellbeing of police workforces. Analysis of this data can also help forces to identify and understand the nature and causes of sickness at individual and organisational levels, and inform the targeting of activity to prevent and manage sickness.

Figure 5: Percentage of officers, PCSOs and staff on long-term and short/medium-term sick leave in Hertfordshire Constabulary compared with England and Wales, as at 31 March 2016



Source: Home Office Annual Data Requirement

Note: Long-term sickness absence is defined as an absence due to sickness that has lasted for more than 28 days as at 31 March 2016. For further information about the data in Figure 5, please see annex A

Figure 5 provides data on the proportion of officers, PCSOs and staff who were absent due to sickness on 31 March 2016.

- 1.7 percent of officers were on long-term sick leave, which is broadly in line with the England and Wales average of 2.1 percent.
- 3.1 percent of officers were on short or medium-term sick leave, which is higher than the England and Wales average of 2.0 percent.
- 0.3 percent of PCSOs were on long-term sick leave, which is lower than the England and Wales average of 1.7 percent.
- 2.5 percent of PCSOs were on short or medium-term sick leave, which is broadly in line with the England and Wales average of 2.1 percent.

- 1.6 percent of staff were on long-term sick leave, which is broadly in line with the England and Wales average of 1.7 percent.
- 2.4 percent of staff were on short or medium-term sick leave, which is broadly in line with the England and Wales average of 2.0 percent.

Increased and improved management information relating to wellbeing will be provided through the newly launched employee assistance programme (EAP) from the external provider Help EAP. Access to the new EAP is web based and accepts self-referral. There is provision for a wide range of issues, equally balanced between physical and emotional wellbeing. The confidential, independent nature of the service is made obvious to users, and assistance is on offer for 24 hours every day of the year. Access to an independent service while away from work is an important feature in encouraging the workforce to address issues that people would not want to disclose in the workplace.

Taking preventative and early action to improve workforce wellbeing

The alliance is about to open a new wellbeing suite in Sandy to improve service access for Bedfordshire Police, Cambridgeshire Constabulary and Hertfordshire Constabulary.

The force has taken some steps to raise the awareness of its workforce of the greatest threats to workforce wellbeing, and has improved the way early action can be taken.

We heard from members of the workforce that wellbeing is not routinely part of the individual performance assessment (referred to as PDR) discussions with supervisors and that generally indicators in behaviour related to stress are not picked up as early as they should be. However, the 'Valuing our Leaders' training is aimed at equipping supervisors to make early interventions and promotes the services available from the EAP, which are specifically intended to encourage early access to services by the whole workforce.

The force has been alert to the risk to wellbeing associated with misconduct cases, specifically learning from Operation Downfield, and its improved provision of wellbeing services to those close to the cases shows a progressive approach to harm prevention. There has also been promotional activity mirroring national wellbeing-themed weeks, such as on recognising signs of mental ill-health, menopause awareness and stopping smoking.

All of these developments are timely and demonstrate that the force is increasing its capacity and capability in relation to preventative measures.

How fairly and effectively does the force manage the individual performance of its officers and staff?

College of Policing research on organisational justice suggests that lack of promotion opportunities and not dealing with poor performance may adversely affect workforce perceptions of fairness, which in turn may lead to negative attitudes and behaviours in the workplace.²⁶ HMIC assessed how fairly and effectively the force manages the individual performance of its officers and staff, including the extent to which the process aligns with guidance produced by the College of Policing.²⁷

The performance assessment process

Hertfordshire Constabulary has comprehensive arrangements in place for performance assessments (PDRs) to take place. The PDR process is compulsory for all except volunteers, with supervisors expected to hold at least two professional discussions per year with their members of the workforce to inform the overall annual assessment. All PDRs are carried out in April, and the force checks that they are done on time. PDRs must be reviewed and commented upon by both the workforce member and the second line manager before they can be considered complete. If disagreements about the content cannot be resolved, the Fairness at Work process is used. This is an online resource which outlines ways to resolve disputes and manage grievances.

We found that the process is complied with, but members of the workforce indicated that conversations about performance are irregular and mid-term reviews are not always carried out. While the structures around PDRs are clear, we found widespread disenchantment with a process that is not seen as inspiring, engaging, rewarding or dynamic.

There is no systematic scrutiny of all performance assessments or progress against objectives within PDR's, denying the force an opportunity for the consistency and fairness of content, as well as any wider organisational trends, to be monitored.

²⁶ *Fair Cop 2: Organisational justice, behaviour and ethical policing*, College of Policing, 2015.

Available at:

http://whatworks.college.police.uk/Research/Documents/150317_Fair_cop%202_FINAL_REPORT.pdf

²⁷ College of Policing guidance on the police performance development review process is available at: www.college.police.uk/What-we-do/Support/Reviewing-performance/Pages/PDR.aspx

The results of performance assessment

The force does not systematically assess the contents of all PDRs for effectiveness and fairness. A process is in place for moderation in a small minority of cases, when performance and achievement is such that a bonus or extra pay increment should be paid. Research and analysis of PDR content is possible and does happen to meet specific business needs, for example to support a recent review of the nature of the performance objectives being applied. The force has categorically moved away from unsophisticated statistical performance targets for its workforce, and the review found that only a small minority – less than 3 percent – of PDRs had any reference to numerical targets.

Members of the workforce to whom we spoke perceived the current system as a frustration and a necessity rather than as a route to professional development. It is the policy that applicants for promotion across the workforce should have an up-to-date PDR, although it is not clear what role the content plays in any assessment process. The force has adequate arrangements for dealing with unsatisfactory performance, and grievances are monitored by the equality and inclusion board, which is chaired by a chief officer. Rewards and recognition of good work occur at local and force level – “Starfish” awards are made to staff whose actions draw unsolicited praise from the public. These awards are well respected and valued across the workforce.

Summary of findings



Good

Hertfordshire Constabulary employs a wide range of methods to identify and understand the issues that affect its workforce, including surveys, regular engagement with representative groups and online messaging. Representative groups told us that they felt informed and engaged. The force has also shown that it reacts to information supplied through surveys and other channels. For example, recent training sessions were structured around the results of a staff survey.

Hertfordshire Constabulary understands and values workforce wellbeing. It is providing improved wellbeing services for its workforce. However, some of those to whom we spoke expressed concerns that their workloads, combined with a lack of opportunity to take leave, were leading to stress-related conditions. Figures indicate that a large amount of annual leave is being carried forward each year.

The force has comprehensive arrangements in place to manage individual performance through performance development reviews (PDRs). The workforce largely complies with the process, but we found widespread disenchantment with a system that is not seen as inspiring, engaging, rewarding or dynamic. PDRs are not systematically assessed for effectiveness and fairness, and those to whom we spoke perceived the current system as a frustration and a necessity rather than as a route to professional development.

Areas for improvement

- The force should review the arrangements that allow staff and officers to take annual leave, to minimise excessive carry-over of leave.

Next steps

HMIC assesses progress on causes of concern and areas for improvement identified within its reports in a number of ways. We receive updates through our regular conversations with forces, re-assess as part of our annual PEEL programme, and, in the most serious cases, revisit forces.

HMIC highlights recurring themes emerging from our PEEL inspections of police forces within our national reports on police effectiveness, efficiency, legitimacy and also leadership. These reports identify those issues that are reflected across England and Wales and may contain additional recommendations directed at national policing organisations, including the Home Office, where we believe improvements can be made at a national level.

Findings and judgments from this year's PEEL legitimacy inspection will be used to direct the design of the next cycle of PEEL legitimacy assessments. The specific areas for assessment are yet to be confirmed, based on further consultation, but we will continue to assess procedural and organisational justice aspects of police legitimacy to ensure our findings are comparable year on year.

Annex A – About the data

Please note the following for the data presented throughout the report.

The source of the data is presented with each figure in the report, and is listed in more detail in this annex. For the source of force in numbers data, please see the relevant section below.

Methodology

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

Comparisons with England and Wales average figures

For some data sets, the report states whether the force's value is 'lower', 'higher' or 'broadly in line with' the England and Wales 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 0.675 standard deviations 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 approximately a quarter of forces are lower, a quarter are higher, and the remaining half are in line with the England and Wales 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, a significance level of 5 percent is used.

For some forces, numbers described in the text may be identical to the England and Wales average due to decimal place rounding, but the bars in the chart will appear different as they use the full unrounded value.

Where we have referred to the England and Wales average, this is the rate or proportion calculated from the England and Wales totals.

Population

For all uses of population as a denominator, unless otherwise noted, we use the ONS mid-2015 population estimates.

Force in numbers

Workforce figures (based on full-time equivalents) for 31 March 2016

These data are obtained from the Home Office annual data return 502. The data are available from the Home Office's published Police workforce England and Wales statistics, www.gov.uk/government/collections/police-workforce-england-and-wales, or the Home Office police workforce open data tables, www.gov.uk/government/statistics/police-workforce-open-data-tables. Figures may have been updated since the publication.

Projections for March 2020 are budget-based projections and therefore are likely to take into account a vacancy rate depending on a force's planning strategy. In some instances an increase in budgeted posts may not actually indicate the force is planning to increase its workforce. In other cases, forces may be planning to reduce their workforce but have a current high vacancy rate which masks this change.

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 black, Asian and minority ethnic people within each force area. While the numbers may have since changed, more recent figures are based only on estimates from surveys or projections.

Figures throughout the report

Figure 1: Number of public complaint cases recorded against officers (per 1,000 officers) or staff (per 1,000 staff, including police community support officers) compared with England and Wales, in the 12 months to 31 March 2016

The Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) defines a complaint for the purposes of recording as "an expression of dissatisfaction by a member of the public with the service they have received from a police force. It may be about the conduct of one or more persons serving with the police and/or about the direction and control of a police force". A police complaint can be about more than one officer or member of staff and can refer to one or more allegations.²⁸

Data used in figure 1 are data extracted from the Centurion case recording and management system for Police Professional Standards data. We were able to collect the majority of this data through an automated database query, written for us by the creators of the software, Centurion (FIS Ltd). Forces ran this query on their systems

²⁸ *Guidance on the recording of complaints under the Police Reform Act 2002*, Independent Police Complaints Commission. Available at: www.ipcc.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Documents/statutoryguidance/guidance_on_recording_of_complaints_under_PRA_2002.pdf

and returned the outputs to us. This system is used in 41 of the 43 forces inspected. In order to collect the appropriate data from the two forces not using Centurion (Greater Manchester Police and Lancashire Constabulary), they were provided with a bespoke data collection template designed to correspond to information extracted from the Centurion database.

Although the IPCC categories used to record the type of public complaint and the accompanying guidance are the same in all police forces, differences in the way they are used still may occur. For example, one force may classify a case in one category while another force would classify the same case in a different category. This means that data on the types of public complaint should be treated with caution.

Figure 2: Percentage of victims satisfied with overall treatment compared with England and Wales, from the 12 months to 31 March 2011 to the 12 months to 31 March 2016

Forces are required by the Home Office to conduct satisfaction surveys with specific victim groups. Victim satisfaction surveys are structured around core questions exploring satisfaction with police responses across four stages of interactions: initial contact, actions, follow up, treatment plus the whole experience. The data in figure 2 use the results to the question on treatment, which specifically asks "Are you satisfied, dissatisfied or neither, with the way you were treated by the police officer and staff who dealt with you?"

When comparing with the England and Wales average, the standard methodology described above has been used. When testing whether the change in percentage of respondents who were satisfied between the 12 months to 31 March 2015 and the 12 months to 31 March 2016 is statistically significant, a chi square hypothesis test for independence has been applied.

Figure 3: Number of grievances raised by officers (per 1,000 officers) or staff (per 1,000 staff, including police community support officers) finalised compared with England and Wales, in the 12 months to 31 March 2016

The data refer to those grievances that were subject to a formal process (not including issues informally resolved with a line manager). Some of the grievances finalised in this period may have been raised in a previous year. Finalised refers to grievances where a resolution has been reached, after any appeals have been completed. Differences between forces in the number of finalised grievances may be due to different handling and recording policies. Data used in figure 3 were provided to HMIC by individual forces via a bespoke data collection in April 2016 prior to inspection.

Figure 4: Number of rest days in lieu outstanding per officer or police community support officer (PCSO) and the percentage of officers or PCSOs with more than 10 rest days in lieu owed to them compared with England and Wales, as at 31 March 2016

Rest days in lieu are leave days owed to officers or police community support officers when they have been required to work on their scheduled rest day due to operational reasons. Data used in figure 4 were provided to HMIC by individual forces via a bespoke data collection in April 2016 prior to inspection.

Figure 5: Percentage of officers, police community support officers and staff on long-term and short/medium-term sick leave compared with England and Wales, as at 31 March 2016

Long-term sickness is defined as an absence due to sickness that has lasted for more than 28 days as at 31 March 2016. Data used in figure 5 were obtained from Home Office annual data returns 501 and 551. Data on long-term absences can be found in the Home Office police workforce open data tables:

www.gov.uk/government/statistics/police-workforce-open-data-tables