



Promoting improvements
in policing to make
everyone safer

PEEL: Police legitimacy 2016

An inspection of Sussex Police



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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 Sussex Police.

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

Force in numbers

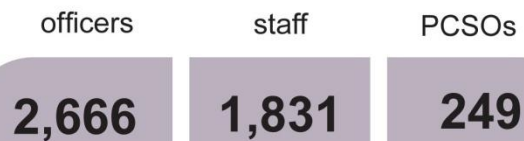


Workforce

Total workforce as of 31 March 2016

4,745

Total workforce breakdown as of 31 March 2016

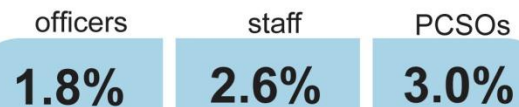


Ethnic diversity

Percentage of BAME in workforce 31 March 2016

overall workforce

2.2%



Percentage of BAME in local population, 2011 Census

6.3%



Gender diversity

Percentage of females in overall workforce 31 March 2016

Sussex Police
42%

England and Wales population, 2011 Census

51%

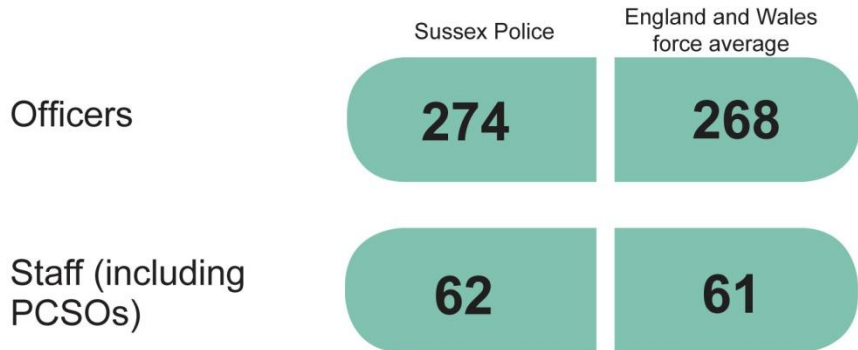
Percentage of females by role 31 March 2016





Public complaints

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



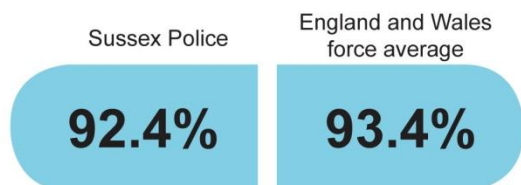
Grievances

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

Sussex Police 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. Effective scrutiny and governance arrangements manage risks to its integrity and ensure that its workforce behaves ethically and lawfully. The force supports the workforce's physical and emotional wellbeing by providing effective wellbeing services.

Overall summary

Sussex Police is good at treating the people it serves with fairness and respect. The force's vision emphasises the importance of fairness and respect, in line with the Code of Ethics,⁴ and its importance is understood across the workforce. The force seeks feedback from the public about the service it provides; for example, in community meetings, through its website and by undertaking surveys. It understands the importance of working with groups whose trust in the police is limited and works well with a range of external groups. The force responds to feedback by generating action plans, training and development, and ensures the workforce are made aware of any lessons to be learnt.

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

⁴ *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/

The force has a robust vetting process, which helps ensure that it recruits people with high standards of ethical behaviour. It gives clear guidance to the workforce on the standards of behaviour it expects, and reinforces this by publishing the outcomes of disciplinary procedures.

A control strategy and plan covers disclosure of information, computer misuse, associations with criminals and sexual misconduct. The force recognises abuse of authority for sexual gain (taking advantage of a position of power to exploit vulnerable victims of crime) as serious corruption. It ensures that all intelligence on risks to the integrity of the organisation is collated, evaluated and analysed. Details of any officers or staff who are dismissed from the force, or who resign while under investigation, are entered onto a national database through the College of Policing.

Sussex Police is good at treating its workforce with fairness and respect. It uses staff surveys to help identify and understand the areas that have the greatest impact on workforce perceptions of fair and respectful treatment.

The force understands the impact work may have on the health of its workforce. It has identified specific issues and instigated preventative work to protect and support its workforce. The force's wellbeing services are well understood by staff and held in very high regard.

The annual individual performance assessment process (known as the PDR) applies to both officers and staff. Although it is regarded as effective by the force, it is not obvious whether PDR appraisals are completed and valued at all levels of the organisation.

Recommendations

HMIC has not identified any causes of concern and has therefore made no specific recommendations.

Area for improvement

- The force should improve how it manages individual performance.

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 is seeking 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

Sussex Police has set a clear vision that emphasises the importance of fairness and respect in accordance with the Code of Ethics and seeks to build police legitimacy and public co-operation. Staff understand the importance of treating all the people they serve with fairness and respect. This is a clear part of the force vision and is evidenced by the guidance given by the police and crime commissioner (PCC) and chief officer team. It is promoted internally and externally through online blogs, briefings and the ‘Sussex Police in 2020’, ‘Transformation Quarterly’ and ‘Investing

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.*

for the Future' documents. Living and working by the Code of Ethics is one of the force's priorities and staff clearly identified it as such throughout our inspection. It is also central to the National Decision Model (NDM),⁷ this being a risk assessment framework, or decision-making process, that is used by police forces across the country.

The force has an NDM working group and recently ran an internal survey to test the degree to which the NDM and Code of Ethics were part of routine practice within the organisation. This showed that fewer than a quarter of staff appeared to lack appropriate awareness. Force champions were established and the force put in place a plan – with the help of its learning and development team – to act on these findings.

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.

Seeking feedback and challenge

Sussex Police has clear and established channels through which the public can question the legitimacy of police actions. The force's citizen focus and diversity team has significant expertise in analysing and keeping track of feedback and comments.

The force has a variety of methods by which it seeks people's views and perceptions of the fairness, respect and quality of the force's service provision. Examples include the force's online surveys on specific services to victims of crime and users of the new resolution centre, and its domestic violence exit survey. The force's Jewish equality champion spoke with the Jewish community to listen to their concerns, and explain the measures and activities the force had put in place to reassure the community and prevent offences against the community. The force has also conducted surveys at Gatwick Airport after it has used stop and search powers, and satisfaction surveys to evaluate users' experiences.

⁷ The National Decision Model is the police service's national decision-making model. For more information see the College of Policing's website: www.app.college.police.uk/app-content/national-decision-model/the-national-decision-model

The force also receives views and comments via its webpage, 'Your Voice Counts'. The public can submit an online feedback form, use Facebook or Twitter, or participate in a specific survey. Since May 2015, there has been a 250 percent increase in the public's use of Facebook for giving feedback. During the October 2015 national Hate Crime Awareness Week, the force received negative feedback from audiences it spoke with, who felt the police tended to exaggerate their receptiveness to hate crime. This enabled the force to learn lessons about how it communicates about hate crime, including its sensitivity to the needs of those affected by it.

The force understands the importance of trying to work with the community, especially where trust in the police may be limited. It gauges perceptions through independent advisory groups (IAGs), external reference groups (ERGs) covering race, disability, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) issues, and Gypsies and Travellers, and its own internal organisational reassurance board (ORB). ERGs provide their members with the opportunity to test, challenge and inform Sussex Police in relation to hate crime, which is on the agenda of all of them. The office of the police and crime commissioner (OPCC) has set up a Sussex Youth Commission (SYC) and a Sussex Elders' Commission.

The LGBT advisory group provided insight into tackling hate crime in licensed premises, advising on the reluctance of licensees to report hate crime because they feared a negative impact on future licensing hearings. This was responded to with a joint letter from the force and local authority suggesting that increased reporting would be seen as a positive step rather than not supporting any future licensing application.

The disability ERG raised an issue with the force concerning how well the force handled detainees or prisoners who were on the autism spectrum. As a result, Sussex Police worked with a specialist organisation (Autism Sussex) to provide knowledge and awareness training for all its custody officers to ensure that they treated such detainees with fairness and respect.

The Gypsy, Roma and Traveller ERG challenged Sussex Police with regard to the number of hate crime cases where a suspect was arrested. The force informed the ERG that of the eleven crimes recorded during the period under discussion, it had interviewed a suspect in nine of the cases.

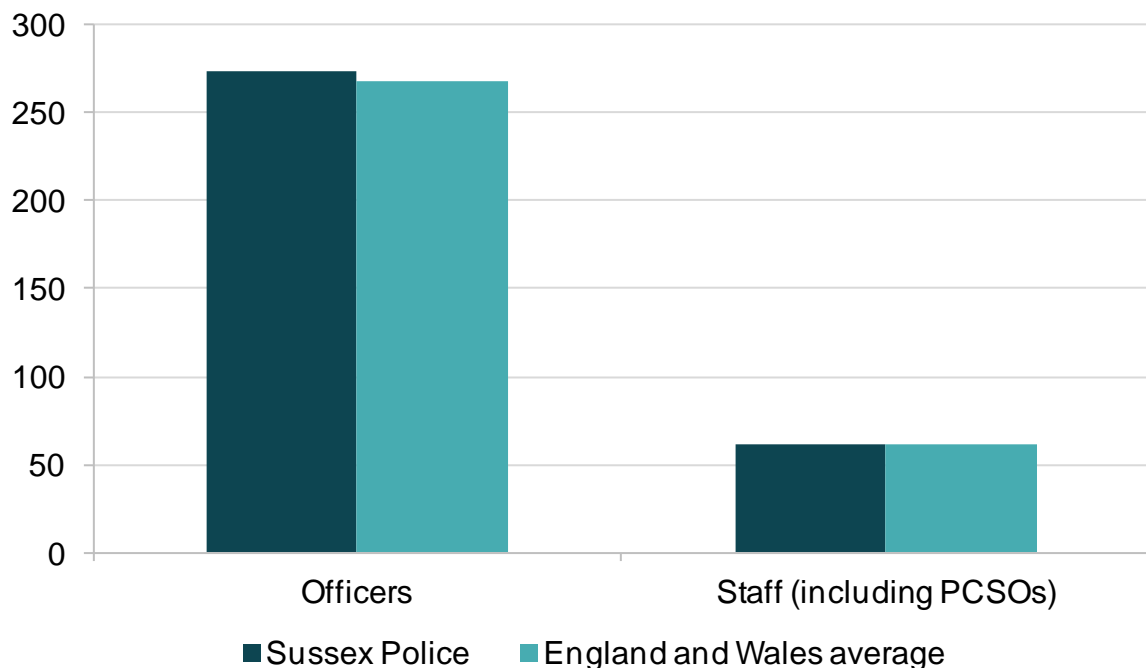
The independent custody visitor (ICV) scheme, managed by the OPCC, provides for unannounced visits to its custody suites. We found that this scheme is an effective system for the force to independently monitor its treatment of people it takes into custody.

The force has a high degree of engagement with people making complaints about their fair and ethical treatment. The force resolves almost three-quarters of complaints through local resolution.⁸ The force believes this to be because its supervisors make immediate contact with complainants, recognising that earlier intervention is more likely to lead to an increase in trust and confidence and resolution that is mutually beneficial.

Identifying and understanding the issues

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 Sussex Police 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

⁸ The force provided this figure to HMIC during our fieldwork and based it on a new process to increase the number of local resolutions developed with divisional chief inspectors to ensure compliance with regulations.

In the 12 months to 31 March 2016, Sussex Police recorded 274 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 62 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).

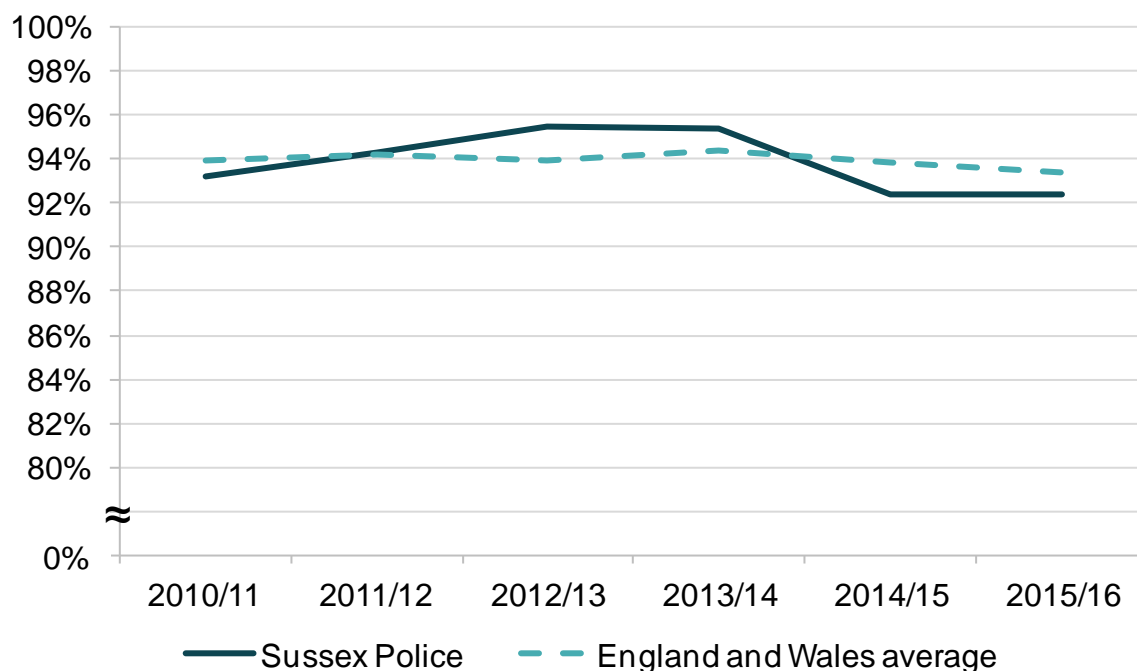
The most recent Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) data from forces show that, for April, May and June 2016, the types of complaint most frequently recorded by Sussex Police are 'other neglect or failure in duty' and 'incivility, impoliteness and intolerance'.⁹ It is important to note, however, an issue identified during our 2014 police integrity and corruption inspection;¹⁰ 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.

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' experience of the service provided to them by the police and inform forces' improvements to their service provision, including examining how well victims feel they are treated.

⁹ Independent Police Complaints Commission data are available at:
www.ipcc.gov.uk/reports/statistics/police-complaints/police-performance-data

¹⁰ *Integrity matters*, HMIC, January 2015. Available from:
www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/publications/integrity-matters/

Figure 2: Percentage of victims satisfied with overall treatment by Sussex Police 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, 92.4 percent of all victims of crime (excluding hate crime) who responded to the victim satisfaction survey were satisfied with the overall treatment provided by Sussex Police, which was broadly in line with the England and Wales average of 93.4 percent; and in line with the 92.4 percent who were satisfied with the overall treatment that the force provided in the 12 months to 31 March 2015.

In order to maintain the principles and standards of professional behaviour for policing, the ORB seeks to identify those issues which are most significant through analysis and interpretation of feedback, both solicited and unsolicited, by the citizen focus and diversity team. The force intends that representatives from the OPCC and the force strategic IAG will be invited to attend the ORB as observers. In 2015/16, the force's 'Your Voice Counts' facility on its website provided over 500 unsolicited submissions covering a wide range of topics. Public reaction in the media to police activity is monitored and analysed by the force to evaluate the legitimacy of its actions.

Each district has a stop and search engagement plan which addresses in particular black, Asian and minority ethnic and youth work covering fairness and respect. The force has reviewed its stop and search processes to include 'ride along' schemes, public scrutiny meetings, and public scrutiny of body-worn video camera and stop and search records. Search receipts have been redesigned to request feedback

online through 'Your Voice Counts', and social media is being used to encourage discussions in an attempt to build trust through open, fair and transparent conversations.

The SYC encourages Sussex Police to adopt the 'Youth Pact', to guide police interactions with young people and help the police and young people promote mutual respect for each other. In addition, the SYC is working with Sussex Police to create an information card to help young people understand their rights and responsibilities. The SYC will use this to help provide peer education to inform young people of their rights, and how to handle interactions with the police.

The force has a diversity team and an equality champion framework, which involves senior officers and senior staff taking the lead to promote equality for each of the Equality Act protected characteristics. They locate external networks or groups which may advise, challenge and act as a 'critical friend' to the force. For example, people with autism have advised how people with this condition should be treated in custody. This has resulted in training for all custody staff and has helped in reducing potential friction.

The force has established several independent advisory groups (IAGs) with members from different communities who cover several areas such as race, LGBT, Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities, and disability. Issues of concern are addressed at local neighbourhood engagement panels and action groups. These issues then become local priorities and are published online.

In implementing and complying with the Best Use of Stop and Search scheme, the force has established district stop and search engagement plans with young people particularly in mind. There are 'ride along' schemes. The force also holds public scrutiny meetings. Stop and search receipts now request online reaction through 'Your Voice Counts' to build trust and confidence.

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

The force acts on feedback and learning by forming action plans and by providing training in appropriate areas. Change programmes are in being with appointed change champions who communicate relevant feedback to staff to promote openness and understanding. Reports about the status of HMIC and IPCC recommendations, areas for improvement and lessons learned are given appropriate scrutiny. The force gathers and analyses public feedback about how fairly and respectfully it has treated the public. This is communicated internally and externally. The force regularly provides feedback information from a variety of sources to its various project champions and single points of contact (SPOCs) in the force. Progress is reported to the relevant chief officer portfolio boards where actions are monitored and assurance received that actions have been completed. Confirmation of completion is notified to the ORB, other relevant groups and individual victims.

In October 2015, the police and crime commissioner launched a new app to help people record evidence of hate crimes as they happen. The app enables a smartphone to be used to secure legally sound evidence, to record a reliable statement and to file a crime report with the police. The app has also made it easier for repeat and vulnerable victims of hate crime to access support.

The force responds to feedback and may alter procedures or programmes accordingly. Conventional and social media are used to communicate with the public. Examples include the publishing of the outcomes of disciplinary proceedings, working with the local press over high-profile internal cases, addressing the under-reporting of hate crimes at licensed premises, reporting changes that were recently made to online crime reporting and closure of investigation letters.

Every quarter, 'Routine Orders' are used to publicise the outcome of misconduct hearings. The force intends to change the frequency of these orders to weekly, to improve understanding. The force publicises outcomes, but in a manner which shows consideration for the individual concerned. The main objective is learning for the workforce. The force's corporate communications team, research board and learning and development department monitor complaints and concerns about police conduct to identify training needs for the workforce.

Questions had been raised with the force as to whether officers were using spit hoods appropriately. The force identified a training need and very quickly produced and circulated a short instructional video (including online).

The force regularly provides information from a variety of sources using the 'Policing News' summary, a fortnightly bulletin that it disseminates internally through its SPOCs. However, the force does not test or review how extensively it circulates this information or how well it is understood by staff.

Demonstrating effectiveness

The force has participated in the national Stonewall Workplace Equality Index (WEI) programme for nearly a decade. The WEI is an evidence-based benchmarking tool used by employers to assess their achievements and progress with LGBT equality in the workplace. Sussex Police has regularly been placed in the top 100 UK employers and in 2016 achieved 22nd place out of more than 400. This independent assessment demonstrates the success of action to improve and has been widely publicised internally and within Sussex, as well as in the national press. The force has an effective formal meeting process, which enables custody procedures to be regularly reviewed with independent custody visitors (ICVs) to ensure continued best practice. The ICV service can act as a conduit between the force, former detainees and their families in enabling better understanding of procedures. ICVs recently advised better use of social media to help raise awareness of the existence of the ICV scheme, thereby providing public reassurance and aiding recruitment. The ICV scheme handbook is due to be refreshed in 2016 to further provide reassurance to members of the public. The service provides regular updates about its activities through the weekly PCC's letter.

The force's communications team is good at providing considered messages using a variety of media, including Facebook and Twitter. It obtains responses through a number of 24-hour channels of communication into the force.

Summary of findings



Good

Sussex Police understands the importance of treating all the people it serves with fairness and respect. This is a clear part of the force's vision. The PCC and chief officer team instruct the force to observe the Code of Ethics. Sussex Police has a variety of methods at an organisational and local level to seek feedback on people's views and perceptions of service provision and the quality of service they have received. The force has an understanding of the importance of trying to access groups whose trust in the police is limited, and uses a number of ways to gauge independent feedback.

The force acts on feedback and learning by forming action plans and by training and development in appropriate areas. The force communicates relevant feedback to staff and staff associations so that they can understand where any changes are required. This may be as a result of formal recommendations, the identification of areas for improvement and lessons learned. Its purpose is to promote learning on

how the public have been treated in terms of fairness and respect. However, although the force actively and regularly provides feedback information from a variety of sources, there is no test of how extensively this information is circulated or of how well it is understood by staff.

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

In 2014, HMIC inspected the extent to which the police were acting with integrity and guarding against corruption.¹¹ Given the continued importance of this topic, we are returning in this question to those national recommendations emerging from the 2014 report from that 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 an ethical culture and to have systems in place to identify potential risks to the integrity of the organisations, so that forces can intervene early to reduce the likelihood of corruption.¹²

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 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.¹³ This year, HMIC focused on assessing progress in those areas highlighted for improvement in our 2015 legitimacy inspection and our 2014 integrity and corruption inspection.

¹¹ *Integrity matters*, HMIC, January 2015. Available from: www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/publications/integrity-matters/

¹² *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

¹³ *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/

Initial vetting

Sussex Police has a policy which provides a clear approach to vetting and compliance with the national police vetting policy.¹⁴ This policy applies to all police officers and staff working within or joining Sussex Police, staff seeking to join certain high-risk or 'designated' posts within the force and non-police personnel (for example, contractors, volunteers, independent advisory group (IAG) members or PCC advisers). The force has a robust vetting process that reinforces standards of behaviour. The professional standards department (PSD) is active in briefing divisional management teams on current issues and informing the workforce through general orders and the 'Patrol' bulletins. The force conducts vetting health checks for those who change roles to determine if they are suitable, for example on promotion or new postings.

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 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

Sussex Police adopts a number of ways to reinforce acceptable standards of behaviour and to discourage what is unacceptable. In its training courses the force emphasises the principles of the Code of Ethics, which forms the basis of the day-to-day work of the workforce. There are messages from the chief constable about the Code of Ethics and the importance of the principles that underpin it and it is often mentioned in the chief constable's regular blog. The professional standards department (PSD) gives a presentation to new regular officers about standards of professional behaviour, and challenging and reporting improper conduct. It uses up-to-date examples of cases it has dealt with, including examples of corruption. Other staff, including special constables are given a one-day induction course based on the Code of Ethics and the standards of professional behaviour.

There is substantial guidance, accessed from the front page of the force intranet under the heading 'Integrity Guidance', which corrals information on subjects such as the Code of Ethics, business interests and secondary jobs, social media policy and disclosure of information. The guidance also refers to 'Break the Silence', which offers all police officers and staff the opportunity to report securely any concern in the strictest of confidence. The PSD anti-corruption unit (ACU) has a control

¹⁴ ACPO / ACPOS National Vetting Policy for the Police Community, Association of Chief Police Officers, 2012. Available from: [www.northants.police.uk/files/documents/Freedom Of Information/ac^ACPO National Vetting Policy.pdf](http://www.northants.police.uk/files/documents/Freedom%20Of%20Information/ac^ACPO%20National%20Vetting%20Policy.pdf)

ACPO is now the National Police Chiefs' Council.

strategy, which covers disclosure of information, computer misuse, associations with criminals and sexual misconduct. The National Decision Model is cited in a wide range of training courses and its use is encouraged by everyone in the force so that common terminology is adopted, along with values and actions which promote the making of sound decisions based on threat and risk.

Following a recommendation made as a result of our 2014 police integrity and corruption inspection, the force has taken steps to develop and maintain an ethical culture, and to identify and manage risks to the integrity of the organisation. It seeks to have the ability to effectively gather, respond and act on information which identifies patterns of unprofessional behaviour and corruption. The ACU has developed a 'potentially vulnerable person system', which collects information and intelligence from a number of sources to identify those who may be vulnerable or who present a risk to the force.

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.¹⁵ 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 for targeting 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 force has an anti-fraud and corruption policy. This is currently being updated to become a joint policy with Surrey Police. A joint strategic threat assessment has just been completed and a control strategy and action plan is being prepared to respond to the identified threats. Sussex Police's ACU follows a control strategy incorporating four risks to the force:

¹⁵ *Integrity matters*, HMIC, January 2015. Available from: www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/publications/integrity-matters/

- misuse of data systems;
- disclosure of confidential data;
- notifiable associations; and
- sexually predatory officers.

In line with this control strategy, the ACU works closely with the vetting unit to ensure that reported notifications of concern are subject to enhanced data access checks.

The force has a comparatively small ACU, with knowledgeable, experienced staff who have been in post for a substantial period. This has allowed the unit to build contacts across the force and maintain a high level of expertise. The force has an effective anonymous reporting system, which is well known and receives reports on a wide range of issues from staff. The unit is adequately resourced to process intelligence such as notifications of criminal associations in a timely manner. This is supported by a tasking process to direct any investigation appropriately. The force can show a recent example where very limited information on potential staff misconduct subsequently led to a full investigation and the dismissal of staff members. This example concerned staff abusing their position for sexual gain.

Active monitoring is carried out by the force. In early 2016, approval was given for 300 random drugs and alcohol tests to be administered to Sussex Police staff during the year. At the time of our inspection, 80 had been conducted. Potentially vulnerable staff are flagged up, monitored and regularly discussed in PSD and its ACU by reference to factors including attendance at work, performance and financial conduct. Force credit cards are scanned and audited to compare with finance department records and receipts, resulting in the 'top ten spenders' each month being reviewed. All gifts and hospitality data are published quarterly, including accepted and declined offers.

Through web monitoring software, Sussex Police has recently started to audit and monitor internet usage that is accessed via the force network. Looking at prohibited websites is permitted for justifiable reasons, with the prearranged agreement of the ACU. The workforce can view Facebook and other social media sites. Divisional commanders consider disciplinary or other management action against anyone caught misusing the force internet.

The force ensures that all intelligence received through the 'Break the Silence' scheme (BTS), or from confidential reporting, members of the public, other forces and agencies is collated, evaluated and analysed. The ACU is adequately resourced to process intelligence in a timely manner and this is supported by a tasking process to direct any investigations appropriately. Disclosure of information is considered to be a significant corruption risk and is made a priority in the control strategy, along with computer misuse, association with criminals and abuse of authority for sexual

gain. Approved and rejected business interests are not systematically monitored by the vetting unit but, if a concern is raised, targeted monitoring is conducted. The ACU examines social media sites in the light of intelligence obtained and assessed risk.

A notifiable association policy is designed to identify those individuals who could pose a risk to the integrity of an individual employee or the force itself. It requires the officer or staff member to report such associations which then allows a full evaluation of the risk posed to both the individual and the force to be undertaken. The force's ACU has provided good evidence to show that as a result of the previous HMIC recommendation, the force ensures that it regularly monitors notifiable associations.

Intervening early to manage risks to integrity

The ACU's control strategy and plan covers disclosure of information, computer misuse, associations with criminals and sexual misconduct. They use intelligence, enforcement and prevention measures to address these risks.

The force published the outcomes from misconduct investigations to its staff to help raise awareness and prevent unacceptable behaviour. The human resources team is responsible for updating information on the outcomes of misconduct and corruption, with support from the corporate communications team. A range of internal channels are used to involve the workforce including 'Routine Orders', 'Priority News', 'Lessons Learned' bulletins and force-wide emails for high-risk incidents, or where it is deemed appropriate.

The force introduced drugs and alcohol misuse testing, consisting of 300 random tests conducted over a 12-month period. Following its implementation, the force's policy was updated and the scheme was well publicised with the aim of promoting prevention.

BTS referrals are passed to divisions and departments as appropriate for local management action and early intervention by supervisors.

Twenty-eight police personnel were dismissed or resigned in 2015 while under investigation, following intervention by the PSD. The ACU detective sergeant, in conjunction with the force vetting manager and supported by local supervisors, identifies high-risk employees and instigates prompt vetting or re-vetting appraisals to mitigate or remove any risks.

Looking for, reporting and assessing intelligence on potential corruption

Sussex Police employs a confidential reporting system referred to as Break the Silence (BTS). This has been established for over eight years and is held in high regard by forces throughout the south-east region. BTS has attracted a significant number of first contacts (164 in 2015). All intelligence received through BTS, confidential reporting, members of the public and other forces and agencies is

collated, evaluated and analysed. All allegations of corruption are recorded and allocated for investigation. Close liaison with regional units allows examination of alleged corruption to determine if there are any threats posed to ongoing organised crime group investigations.

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) and the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) published *The abuse of police powers to perpetrate sexual violence*.¹⁶ 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 Ethics*¹⁷ – 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 [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. HMIC’s 2015 report, *Integrity matters*,¹⁸ 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’ response to the issue of officers and staff developing inappropriate relationships with victims of domestic abuse and abusing their position of power to exploit victims.

¹⁶ *The abuse of police powers to perpetrate sexual violence*, jointly published by the 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

¹⁷ 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

¹⁸ *Integrity matters*, HMIC, January 2015. Available from: www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/publications/integrity-matters/

Recognising abuse of authority for sexual gain as serious corruption.

Sussex Police recognises abuse of authority for sexual gain as serious corruption and has a comprehensive anti-corruption policy covering standards of ethical behaviour. The force strategy relating to the targeting of vulnerable persons by members of the workforce was first introduced in February 2012. It was later recognised as an important risk for the force and given priority in the force's control strategy issued in June 2014 which it shares jointly with Surrey Police. This has continued as a priority. Sussex Police has listed the identification and management of sexually predatory officers in the context of risk assessment in their joint force control strategy. In the last two months, the professional standards department (PSD) has successfully administered two high-profile cases, both of which resulted in dismissal.

Investigations into sexual misconduct are prioritised by the PSD in accordance with intelligence received, public complaints or when identified within an already instigated misconduct investigation.

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

Sussex Police ensures that all intelligence-gathering opportunities are explored. Its ACU proactively conducts live-time intelligence reviews of overt misconduct or complaint cases of a sexual nature. It considers particular case chronologies to identify any significant events or evidence which may point to the identification of a specific officer, and it uses lawful business monitoring and surveillance and investigative opportunities to monitor electronic communications (e.g. telephone calls, fax transmissions, emails and internet access) transmitted on their systems.

The ACU has conducted research to increase its ability to identify potential predatory officers at an earlier stage. It considered adopting a set of matrices that had been used by other forces whereby information from within the organisation was collated and reviewed covering a number of different policing areas, including multiple complaints and conduct matters that would be scored using the matrix to give a risk rating.

At the time the ACU ran its caseload through the matrices held and found that a number of cases did not score highly. These included one which led to a dismissal and another which led to a criminal conviction. The low score was due to the two subjects being unknown to the PSD prior to receipt of the initial allegation.

As a result of review, the ACU decided not to use a prescriptive matrix and instead prioritises and investigates fully all allegations of sexual misconduct and targeting vulnerable persons for sexual gain.

The force actively monitors social media channels to assess whether staff are targeting vulnerable people for sexual gain. The PSD uses its systems to test out any suspicions that identified officers and staff are abusing their authority to meet people, including vulnerable people, to form a sexual relationship with them. A recent case of an officer approaching prostitutes relied on a passing comment from a prostitute who said that one of her clients was an officer. This intelligence led the PSD to build trust with the individual and obtain considerable evidence to take the officer to court. The officer was convicted of two counts of misconduct in public office and received a 15-month sentence.

Sussex Police has recently introduced a remote monitoring software programme, which enables monitoring of computer activity. Its use is based on risk, proportionality, necessity and justification, as opposed to random checking. If the PSD has even minimal information or a suggestion that it has good reason to examine use of IT, then it will do this. However, it gives careful consideration within policy and acts on information to ensure that auditing does not infringe staff's view of the PSD.

The head of PSD and ACU reviews intelligence during a weekly meeting that identifies top three priorities and assigns work to officers and staff. Additionally, a series of meetings, which are underpinned by a clear and strong governance framework, aim to review and assign work. There is currently a two-day turnaround of all initial intelligence with 100 percent completion rate within that timescale. The force can demonstrate a robust approach to dealing with any emerging issues of potential corruption.

Taking action to prevent abuse of authority for sexual gain

HMIC found that Sussex Police has provided clear guidance to its workforce about reporting gratuities, business interests and notifiable associations, and this guidance is well understood by the workforce. However, the force needs to do more to highlight the risks and expectations around abuse of authority for sexual gain and how to report it.

Supervisors have a good knowledge of procedures to follow when reporting business interests, notifiable associations and gratuities. These are clearly signposted on the force intranet. However, there is no training or way of alerting managers to issues relating to inappropriate behaviour, with specific reference to the abuse of authority for sexual gain as a high-risk area. HMIC was informed that the PSD plans to provide such awareness training to alert managers to issues relating to inappropriate behaviour with specific reference to the abuse of authority for sexual gain as a high-risk area. This work has followed the public dismissal of a serving officer. This high-profile case has led to the force making sure that staff have greater awareness and understanding of such abuse of authority.

HMIC was told by senior managers during the inspection that the force publicised significant cases, covering abuse of authority, so staff and officers understood the significance and impact of such behaviour. In addition, the force deals with corruption reactively, subsequently publicising the shortcoming or misconduct. The force does not run specific campaigns setting out the consequences if staff are drawn into corrupt activity. This approach runs the risk that not all staff understand the significance of the issues.

Building public trust

Sussex Police has a communications plan which sets out its principal communications activity to make sure that there is a consistent approach in relation to officers and staff who face internal misconduct and gross misconduct disciplinary action, or who are arrested on suspicion of or charged with criminal offences.

Sussex Police actively publicises the results of internal disciplinary hearings through media releases, coverage on the force's public news pages and via social media.

The force lets the public know about the results of disciplinary hearings. For example, at a divisional level, it discusses these findings with the independent advisory groups (IAGs) and also reviews the findings at strategic level with the force-wide Sussex independent advisory group (SIAG), which has a number of members from divisional IAGs.

The force lists the outcomes and any dates of future misconduct hearings on its website. The public can apply to attend a hearing using an online form on its website. The force publishes the outcomes of any hearings on the website.

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.¹⁹ This information also forms the basis for deterring misconduct and enhancing integrity within police forces themselves. This year, HMIC looked at how well forces engage with the public online and through 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.

¹⁹ *Literature review – Police integrity and corruption*, HMIC, January 2015. Available at: www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/publications/integrity-matters/

Working with the public

The force actively publicises the results of public gross misconduct hearings through media releases, coverage on the force's public news pages, via social media and the force's intranet. The force has demonstrated its robust way of dealing with poor conduct in recent high-profile cases – for example, a case that arose from the Shoreham air crash operation where two police constables were dismissed. It is starting to publish misconduct outcomes every week and this will include police staff misconduct. All officers and staff who are dismissed from the force, or who resign while under investigation, are now entered onto a national database through the College of Policing to provide greater transparency to the outcomes of police misconduct cases.

The force lists the outcomes and any dates of future misconduct hearings on their website. The website allows the public to attend a hearing by applying online.

Working with the workforce

The force publicises to its workforce the outcomes of its misconduct investigations to help raise awareness and prevent unacceptable behaviour. The HR department is responsible for updating information on the outcomes of misconduct and corruption, with support from the corporate communications team. A range of internal channels are used to involve the workforce including through publications called 'Routine Orders', 'Priority News', 'Lessons Learned' bulletins and force-wide emails for high-risk incidents.

The force publicises gross misconduct disciplinary hearings so that the workforce are aware of the behaviour that resulted in the sanction being taken. Senior staff taking part in force roadshows and managers in team meetings also highlight acceptable behaviour. The chief constable is effective at highlighting what is acceptable or unacceptable behaviour using his Twitter social media account.

The force has been very open with the public about the unacceptable behaviour of two officers following the Shoreham air disaster where the force began a misconduct investigation relating to the behaviour of two constables which resulted in their dismissal. The constables took part in extremely inappropriate and insensitive behaviour on social media and their comments were widely reported on social media and in the local and national press. The deputy chief constable took the lead by swiftly responding externally. The force also sent very clear messages to the workforce both during the investigation and at the conclusion of the misconduct case. Public statements also made clear reference that their behaviour fell far short of the standards required by the force and the Code of Ethics.

Summary of findings



Good

The force is good at ensuring that its workforce behaves ethically and lawfully. The force reinforces standards of behaviour by publishing outcomes of disciplinary cases and giving clear guidance to staff on expected behaviours about working in Sussex Police. There are checks and balances in place for the force to manage vetting of the workforce. The force can identify, understand and manage risk by ensuring that all intelligence received by the workforce, members of the public and other forces and agencies is collated, evaluated and analysed. The force has identified through its strategic risk assessment those principal corruption risks and prioritised them in its control strategy.

The force informs the public about the outcomes of misconduct and corruption cases via the media, social media and the force website. All officers and staff who are dismissed from the force, or who resign while under investigation, are now entered onto a national database through the College of Policing to provide greater transparency to the outcomes of police misconduct cases.

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.²⁰ As such, this concept of ‘organisational justice’, and its potential impact on ‘procedural justice’ forms 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.²¹ 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

The force effectively identifies and understands the areas that have the greatest impact on workforce perceptions of fair and respectful treatment. It uses exit interviews, detailed staff opinion and engagement surveys and, more recently, a survey using the national workforce and engagement survey for policing (which also

²⁰ *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
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

²¹ *Fair cop 2: Organisational justice, behaviour and ethical policing*, College of Policing, 2015, page 11. Available at:

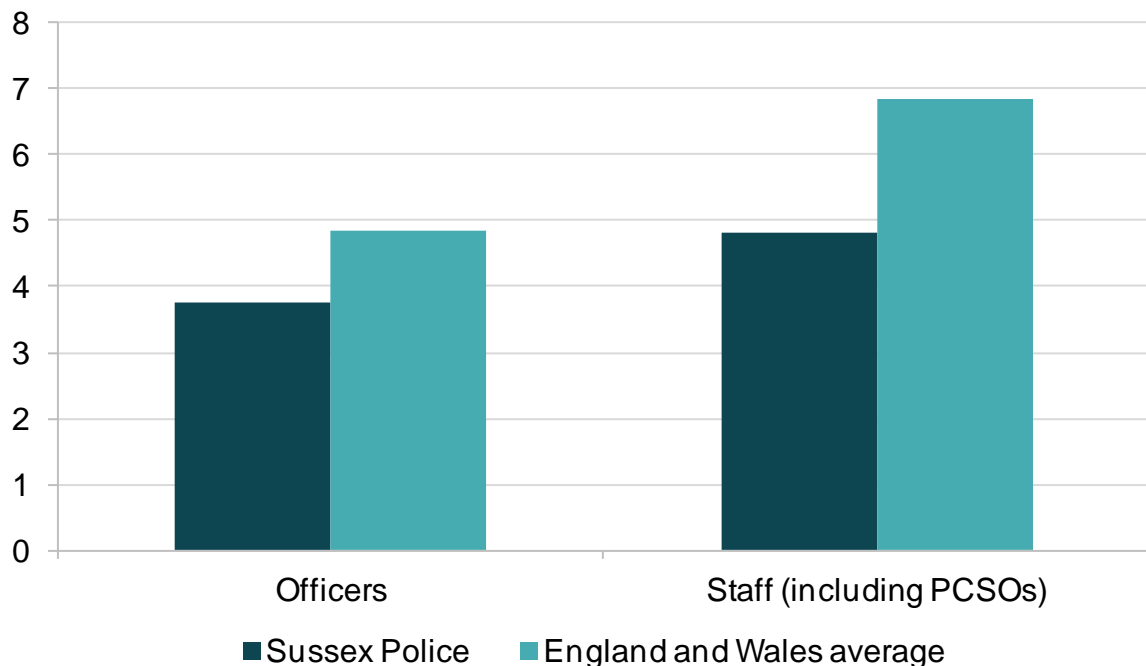
http://whatworks.college.police.uk/Research/Documents/150317_Fair_cop%202_FINAL_REPORT.pdf

covered Surrey Police and was run by Durham University), which closed on 14 March 2016. The outcomes of the survey will enable the force to understand and act on areas where people feel they are being unfairly treated. While these results are yet to be formally published, early indications are positive in relation to alignment with the Code of Ethics, leadership and a high level of confidence in being able to raise issues and to challenge without fear of recrimination.

However, there are some negative indicators around procedural fairness and procedural justice with job satisfaction coming through as quite low. It is not clear if this is a reflection of the change the force is currently experiencing but the structure of the local policing plan is unclear to some frontline officers who, while understanding that the way they deal with policing problems is changing, are unsure about the structure and their role in it.

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 (per 1,000 staff, including police community support officers) that Sussex Police 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, Sussex Police finalised 3.8 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 4.8 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).

Making improvements and demonstrating effectiveness

The force is going through a major change programme to redesign local policing and make savings, and part of this involves the restructuring and reorganisation of staff and officers. The force has identified that this is a difficult and unsettling process for staff and has been open about the changes ahead. Regular updates are posted about the programme on dedicated intranet pages and through 'Routine Orders' and chief officers' blogs. Where possible, alternative proposals submitted by staff have been incorporated into the new models – for instance, in redesigning the PCSO role where the opinions of PCSOs and their managers were gathered regarding new powers, and PCSOs were able to vote on the shift pattern options available for the new role.

Following a review of internal communications, a new internal communications strategy was launched in January 2016, setting out how the corporate communications team will make improvements to help ensure that staff and officers are aware of the force's priorities (including the Code of Ethics). These include ways to engage and inspire staff and officers, encourage leaders to be visible and give the workforce more of a voice. The review identified that the force could do more to encourage more open conversations about fairness and respectful treatment. The 'chief officer blog' was launched, which allows all of the workforce to comment directly and publicly to chief officers. The force also arranged for chief officers to visit staff at ten locations to increase senior leader visibility and to update colleagues on the force's current priorities in a consistent manner.

The previous survey, conducted in 2014, focused on people's roles, wellbeing, vision and leadership. A force-wide action plan was developed, as well as local action plans. These action plans were published and updated throughout 2014 and 2015. They were closed with a video from the force's chief officers as well as updates from divisional and departmental leads explaining the actions in response to the results.

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 workforce. This year we looked at the progress the force had made since the last inspection, with a particular focus on preventative activity to encourage wellbeing.

Understanding and valuing the benefits

Sussex Police understands wellbeing issues and has innovative initiatives in this area. The force has developed 'A Time to Think' session for staff to consider the impact of work on their health, and has included recent issues of clinical depression. The force has signed up to the mental health charity MIND blue-light programme and 'Time to change' action plan with commitment from chief officer teams working with police, fire and rescue, search and rescue and ambulance trusts in their capacity as employers to tackle mental health stigma in their workplace.

HMIC visited a 'Time to Think' session, which discussed mental health and was well received. The force has invested in a new wellbeing strategy, which has support from the chief constable and seeks to bring 'in house' provision to provide a more effective service that responds to workforce needs via the a 'wellbeing hub'. Wellbeing services are well understood by staff and held in very high regard. One of the areas for improvement set out in HMIC's 2015 legitimacy report was: "The force should ensure that officers or staff who have experienced traumatic cases or incidents have access to support."²²

At the time of HMIC's 2015 legitimacy inspection, the force was already in the process of redesigning and increasing its 'DEFUSE' process. This is a system which the force has adopted in order to respond to the welfare needs of its officers and staff who have been involved in traumatic incidents. Since the 2015 HMIC inspection, the force has trained over 60 new 'defusers' and has introduced the role of DEFUSE co-ordinator for each of their territorial divisions and police headquarters. In addition, it has developed closer links with Surrey Police through the two forces' programme of collaboration. As a result, the two forces can draw on each other's resources when faced with large-scale incidents. The new process was tested in August 2015 following Operation Bowdell – the operational name of the response to the Shoreham air crash.

Identifying and understanding the workforce's wellbeing needs

The force is good at identifying the wellbeing of its workforce. The force uses several ways to work closely with the workforce to understand its concerns, including return-to-work interviews, sickness data (including trigger points, reasons and levels of sickness absence) and launching a mental health advocate scheme. This scheme aims to address the fear, ignorance and stigma surrounding mental health by giving an opportunity for anyone experiencing mental health problems to communicate openly and with trust in a confidential environment. The force has also used its 'Time to Think' sessions to raise its workforce's awareness of a variety of issues, including wellbeing issues.

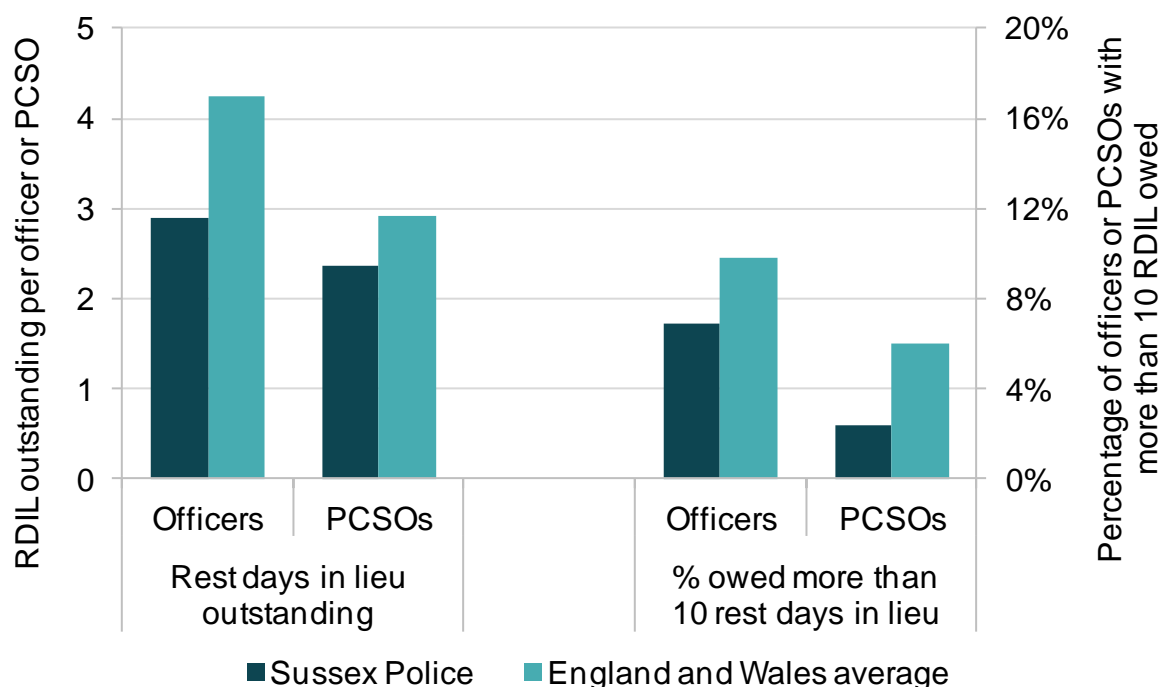
²² PEEL: Police legitimacy 2015 – An inspection of Sussex Police, HMIC, 2016. Available from: www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/publications/police-legitimacy-2015-sussex/

One of the areas identified for improvement contained within the 2015 legitimacy report was: “The force should ensure that its advice and guidance to officers and staff better assists them when supporting those on restricted duties in returning to full operational roles.”

The force has introduced a process for managers who are managing recuperative duties and this is set out on the HR area of the force intranet to give managers the guidance they require. In addition, local HR business partners have made themselves available to provide additional advice and guidance to managers who are managing recuperative duties.

Rest days in lieu (RDIL) 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. 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 useful tools for forces to identify and understand potential wellbeing concerns for individuals and teams.

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 in Sussex Police compared with England and Wales, as at 31 March 2016



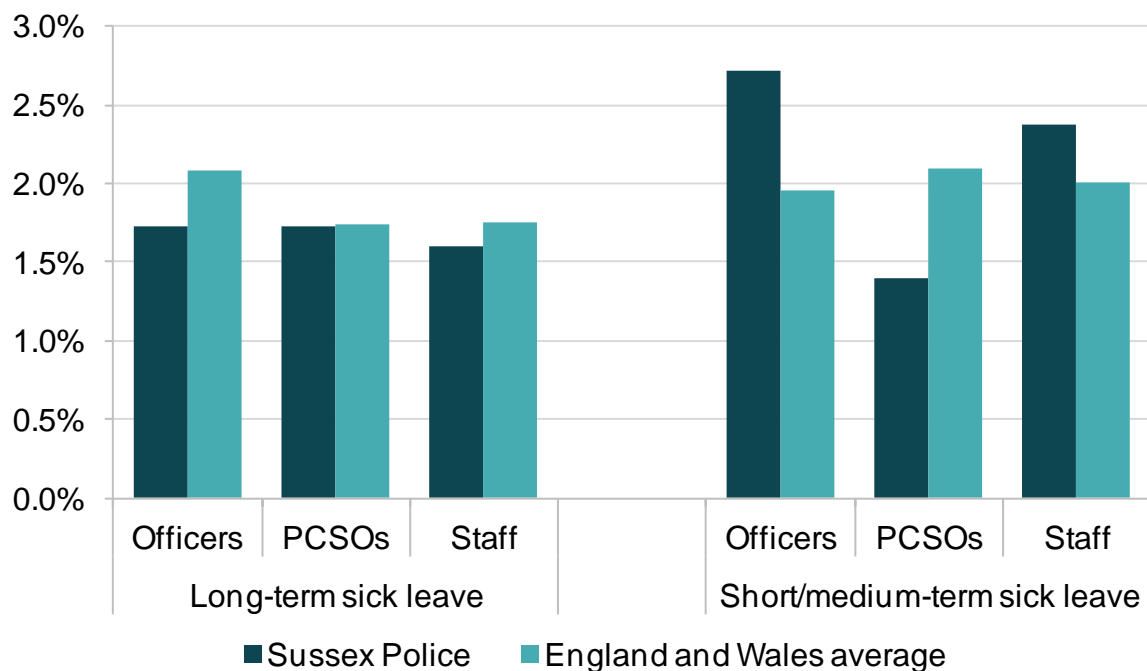
Source: HMIC Legitimacy data collection

Note: For some police forces data about the number of rest days in lieu 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 2.9 rest days in lieu outstanding per officer in Sussex Police, which was broadly in line with the England and Wales average of 4.2 days per officer. On the same date, there were 2.4 rest days in lieu 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, 6.9 percent of officers in Sussex Police had more than 10 rest days in lieu owed to them, which was broadly in line with the England and Wales average of 9.8 percent. As at 31 March 2016, 2.4 percent of PCSOs in the force had more than 10 rest days in lieu 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.

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 targeted activity to prevent and manage sickness.

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



Source: Home Office Annual Data Requirement

Note: Long-term sickness 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.
- 2.7 percent of officers were on short or medium-term sick leave, which is higher than the England and Wales average of 2.0 percent.
- 1.7 percent of PCSOs were on long-term sick leave, which is in line with the England and Wales average of 1.7 percent.
- 1.4 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.

Taking preventative and early action to improve workforce wellbeing

The force has introduced its 'joint people plan' with Surrey Police and this highlights that health and wellbeing are firm commitments for both forces. In the 2015 HMIC inspection, the force was good at providing for the welfare of its workforce. This year much has been done to prevent the onset of welfare issues with earlier and better support either following traumatic incidents or through other wellbeing issues identified by the staff or their supervisors. The force runs the wellbeing hub, an area of extensive information on the force intranet for all staff and officers. This includes areas of information such as mental health and wellbeing support, fitness, occupational health services or general health and safety support.

Sussex Police has also provided leaflets as part of its post-incident support programme to help partners, family members or friends to understand what they can do to help recovery. The force has made a big commitment to raise the profile of mental health issues and to create a culture where people with mental health issues can be open about their problems and seek help. To this end, the force has launched a mental health advocate scheme, which has been very positively received with over 100 employees training to become mental health advocates. The force actively manages those who are sick or on restricted or recuperative duties through regular sickness management meetings with occupational health and people services. The force aims to ensure that staff are appropriately employed according to their needs and the needs of the force, and that this level is effectively managed.

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.²³ 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.²⁴

The performance assessment process

The force has an annual staff appraisal process, called professional development review (PDR), which applies to officers and staff. In particular, it supports the promotion process. It relies on a moderation process to ensure consistency and fairness across portfolios in the assessment of staff. Sussex Police has arrangements to monitor fairness of PDR appraisals. The moderation process across the force is overseen by HR business partners and while they do not attend all panels, they advise managers on issues such as ensuring fair treatment of officers and staff. The force reviews the overall findings from the moderation process at a force executive board meeting. A diversity impact assessment of the moderation results has been commissioned by the force's positive action working group and this is a specific element of the positive action strategy.

However, HMIC found that the force has a mixed picture of whether PDR appraisals are completed and valued at all levels of the organisation. It is unclear whether there is any quality assurance of the moderation across departments and divisions to ensure consistency across the force. All staff that we spoke with had had a PDR appraisal. However, the quality of these annual appraisals was mixed: some staff have limited or general objectives and some felt that the system of grading is not effective, which leads to some frustration and demotivation.

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

²⁴ 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 records and reports the outcomes of the performance assessment process against information on the demographics that it holds on its workforce. The performance assessment outcomes feed the requirement for development opportunities for each individual. However, there is a perception that the force makes limited use of PDR appraisals, which are only be seen by the individual, their line manager and the second line manager.

The force has a talent management strategy in place to identify colleagues with potential and support their development. The force has a pool of talented individuals who are selected not only as good performers as identified through their PDR appraisals but also who have potential for either lateral moves or promotion. However, we found that the talent pools are patchy across the force and that there is no force-wide criteria to evaluate the officers and staff who are in these pools.

Moderation ratings that take place at the end of each performance year are reviewed by the force to assess whether there appears to be any disproportionality in the ratings. It carries out annual diversity analysis and the force's positive action strategy is developed using this analysis. It is exploring and implementing ways to support the progression and specialisation of colleagues from under-represented groups. The force is using its established relationships with diversity support groups during promotion processes to make sure that colleagues are aware of the support that is available.

While the moderation panels are useful to ensure consistency across departments, HMIC met staff who lacked confidence in the system due to a subjective assessment of their work rather than an evidenced-based judgment against staff performance. In addition, there is a lack of transparency around how the moderation process works across the force. The force should consider explaining further to officers and staff exactly how moderation should be achieved fairly and equitably across the force, and setting out why the PDR process is important and relates to staff and their job. While there are regular continuing discussions with supervisors, these are not always formalised or recorded. As a result, the end-of-year reporting is often rushed in the last few weeks without time to assist managers in how best to present the evidence.

The force also seeks to provide development opportunities for the members of the workforce who are at the bottom of the PDR gradings. Learning and development staff have carried out workshops on 'preparing for promotion' in advance of forthcoming sergeant and inspector selection boards. The workshops have been promoted through the force and specifically via the force's diversity groups.

Summary of findings



Good

The force is good at treating its workforce with fairness and respect. The force effectively identifies and understands the areas that have the greatest impact on workforce perceptions of fair and respectful treatment. It uses exit interviews and information based on detailed opinions of staff and engagement surveys to further develop this understanding. Sussex Police understands wellbeing issues and has taken a range of innovative action in this area.

The force understands the impact of the work on the health of its workforce. It has identified specific issues and instigated preventative work to protect and support its workforce. The force has invested in a new wellbeing strategy which responds to workforce needs via the 'wellbeing hub' and this comprehensive information means that it is well understood by staff and held in very high regard.

The force has an annual staff appraisal process (PDR), which applies to officers and staff. However, we found that PDR appraisals are completed and valued inconsistently at all levels of the organisation. All staff with whom HMIC spoke had had a PDR appraisal. However, the quality of these was mixed with some staff having limited or general objectives. Officers and staff perceive the graded system as not effective, leading to some frustration and demotivation.

Area for improvement

- The force should improve how it manages individual performance.

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.²⁵

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

²⁵ *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