Police National Computer Data Quality and Timeliness

Report by HM Inspectorate of Constabulary

Preface

The Police Service in England and Wales records and retains vast amounts of information concerning crimes and criminals, in recent years relying ever more on computers for this purpose. This information has the potential to enable forces to undertake rigorous, systematic and scientific analysis of crime and criminal behavior and could become an absolutely vital part of the police armoury in the fight against crime. The core of this data is stored on the Police National Computer (PNC) nominal database 'Phoenix'. Every police force in England & Wales relies on the information on PNC. Its full potential can only be realised, however, if the data on PNC is accurate, timely and complete.

The integrity of PNC information is important operationally but also to satisfy the legal obligations upon the Police Service under the Data Protection Act (i.e. only to hold data that is accurate and current). In addition, it is important to the other agencies that are increasingly making use of the PNC. The Criminal Records Bureau is due to commence operation in the Spring of 2002 and has been set up to help organisations make safer recruitment decisions, by providing wider access to criminal record information. Its whole operation, which is intended to protect the vulnerable in society against avoidable exploitation, is dependent upon the quality and availability of conviction data held on PNC.

In 1998, a Police Research Group report entitled "Phoenix Data Quality" identified worrying shortfalls in the quality and timeliness of data stored on PNC. By July 2000, when HMIC published the '*On the Record*' report, these shortfalls were still unresolved and HMIC made strong recommendations for improvements to strategy and business practices within police forces. Sadly, by early 2001, there were few signs that the Service as a whole had responded positively to either the PRG or HMIC reports and HMIC was asked to carry out a very focussed inspection of forces to help ACPO to achieve change.

The content, findings and recommendations within this report provide a much needed opportunity for all forces to improve their performance in achieving accurate and consistent high quality data. The operational benefits to all forces, and their partners, of accurate information on PNC are obvious. This report identifies many examples of good practice already being undertaken by forces, but also highlights important areas requiring urgent and sustained development. Armed with this information all forces are now expected to respond positively to maximise the crime reduction potential of their data recording systems by ensuring the integrity of the data held on PNC.

In the interests of effectiveness, legality and most of all professionalism, it is vital that every force gives this work a high priority status.

Sir David J O'Dowd CBE QPM
HM Chief Inspector of Constabulary
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Acknowledgements

Mr Peter Todd MSc, Assistant Inspector of Constabulary, led the Inspection on behalf of Sir David J O'Dowd CBE, QPM, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Constabulary. Both wish to place on record their thanks for the assistance rendered by the chief officers of all those forces that were the subject of detailed inspection, and all who acted in support of the inspection.

Particularly worthy of mention was the active involvement, on behalf of the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO), of Mr Ian Readhead LLB, Deputy Chief Constable of Hampshire Constabulary, who facilitated the inspection process within forces and sought to ensure that relevant information was brought to the personal attention of all Chief Constables.

Acknowledgement is also given for the invaluable advice and technical expertise provided by the staff of the Police Information Technology Organisation (PITO). Likewise to Mr David Gilbertson QPM BSc MBIM, who acted as a consultant.

Lastly, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector wishes to warmly acknowledge the hard work, support and commitment of the Inspection Team, led by Superintendent David Senior BA (Hons). The team was drawn from HMIC personnel and other staff kindly seconded from forces throughout England and Wales.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

1. Information on crimes and criminals is the life-blood of the Service when it comes to pursuing an intelligence-led approach to tackling crime and criminality. It is absolutely vital to have ready access to such information and computers are increasingly instrumental in providing this access. It is even more important, however, that the information once accessed is both accurate and completely up to date.

2. The Police National Computer (PNC) sits at the heart of the Police Service in England and Wales and represents the most comprehensive and thus most important database of information to support operational policing. Since the 'Phoenix' nominal database enhancement went live nationally in 1995, a number of key stakeholders have repeatedly expressed concerns over data accuracy and timeliness. Despite comprehensive and detailed reports on the subject during the intervening period, by early 2001, there were few signs of any significant improvements.

3. With the impending establishment of the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) and wider, persisting concerns, the Home Secretary directed HMIC to carry out a highly focussed inspection of timeliness and accuracy in respect of PNC. This report contains the results of that inspection.

The report structure

4. Section 1 of the report sets out the background to the inspection. It explains the succession of official reports published over a three-year period chronicling the particular concerns over timeliness and accuracy of PNC data. The Home Office Police Research Group paper in 1998 acted as a catalyst for the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) to produce a PNC Compliance Strategy which coincided with the results of the HMIC thematic report *''On the Record''*[1], published in July 2000. The latter reported that data quality and timeliness had not improved since 1998, and made eleven recommendations to address the range of problems identified.

5. The ACPO PNC Compliance Strategy sought to address the full range of areas identified but within the context of this inspection, particular attention was drawn to the two areas of performance that presented the greatest threat to the accuracy of data, and therefore formed the focus of the inspection team. These were the substantial delays experienced in:-

   (i)   the initial input of arrest/summons details , and
   (ii)   the final resulting of impending case results.

6. With the primary focus decided, Section 2 explains the scope of the inspection and scale of the problem in these areas at the start of the process. Seeking to meet a target of inputting 90% of all arrest/summons details within one day, the England & Wales average at the start of the inspection was 55 days. The situation in respect of impending case results was worse.

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[1] **A full version of the HMIC Report '*On the Record*' can be viewed at www.homeoffice.gov.uk/hmic/otr00.htm**

With a target to input results within 3 days of receipt from the courts, no force was near the standard (with some forces recording statistical averages of up to 599 days). In March 2001, there were 450,589 impending cases on PNC awaiting results with around 216,891 of these first recorded prior to July 2000.

7. In discussions between the Information Commissioner, Home Office, HMIC and the Police Information Technology Organisation (PITO), it was agreed that, if the data stored on PNC was to be considered fit for purpose, the Service would need to show significant improvements in data quality and timeliness. These improvements were required by the end of the main inspection period (by October), and must be sufficient to deduce that the position would be fully resolved by 1 April 2002.

8. The major focus for improvement of performance was to be the backlog of un-resulted cases. Targets were set for all forces, to achieve a reduction in their backlog equivalent to the resulting of all pre-July 2000 cases. Forces would have to be in a position to validate any pre-July 2000 case remaining in their backlog on 1 April 2002.

9. Section 3 of the report sets out the performance of forces during the inspection (see also paragraphs 17 to 22 below). Sections 4 & 5 identify the emerging issues in respect of process management within forces and the strategic and operational areas requiring resolution to achieve long-term, sustainable performance improvement.

10. In Section 6, consideration is given to the more immediate 'next steps' required to maintain and if possible accelerate the improvements to date, in order to meet the April 2002 targets. These measures include the provision of on-going 'consultancy' support to forces and the refining and consolidation of good practice and model templates into a 'Force Profile' approach.

11. Recommendations appear throughout the report and these are repeated and consolidated in Section 7.

Inspection methodology

12. The inspection team adopted a four track approach, which would:-
    * measure performance of every force over time and against improvement targets,
    * examine business processes in selected forces,
    * look at operational and policy implications, and
    * provide a conduit for dissemination of good practice.

13. PITO provided HMIC with data for all forces at fortnightly intervals plotting performance against the arrest/summons target and individual backlog reduction targets. Forces with poor performance against the latter measure were singled-out for full inspection by one of three teams, with a view to identifying the barriers to performance. Each force visited received a written report highlighting action required.

14. A fourth inspection team was added later to concentrate specifically on the process issues around arrest/summons input. Good practice advice was compiled from the work of this team and made available to all forces.

15. Two practitioner workshops were staged in May 2001 to ensure that every force had an opportunity at an early stage to understand what was required of them and to challenge the methodology or data provision within the inspection. Regular updates on progress and performance were then distributed personally to nominated Chief Officers and practitioners in every force at fortnightly intervals.

16. An Inspection Reference Group was maintained throughout the inspection process with representation from the key stakeholders (e.g. Association of Police Authorities, PITO and staff associations). This group also provided welcome advice to the inspection team throughout.

Forces' performance

Case Results

17. To clear the backlog of old cases and not allow new cases to increase, forces needed to achieve a reduction in impending case result backlogs, both cumulatively across England and Wales and individually, against their personal targets. Between 28th March and the 7th October 2001, the overall total of outstanding pre-July 2000 cases was reduced from 216,891 to 98,296 a reduction of 118,595 (55%). This is in line with the overall reduction required to meet the April 2002 target.

18. Individually, the performance of forces varied significantly. By the end of August, all but five forces had achieved a net reduction in their overall case result backlog. 12 forces achieved or exceeded their original targets and a further 31 achieved reductions, albeit below their targets. In the five forces with poorest performance, the main problem was identified as inadequate chief officer prioritisation and resultant under-resourcing. The inspection period was extended by a month whilst HMIC undertook an intensive exercise to address this blockage and by the end of September each of the five forces had engaged and their performance was improving.

19. Concentrating specifically on the pre-July 2000 cases, 12 forces still have significant work ahead to achieve the April 2002 timescale. Of these, seven have made significant efforts in the last few weeks and should now reach their earlier targets. Three have the ability to achieve the April 2002 deadline if they apply more consistent effort. The remaining two are very large metropolitan forces which account for a substantial proportion of the remaining national backlogs. They are attacking their backlog effectively but are likely to require additional resources to accelerate their respective July and August 2002 predicted completion dates.

Arrest/Summons

20. Improvements against performance in respect of the arrest/summons target were found to be more sporadic. The monitoring of arrest/summons performance was made difficult by the significant skewing of statistics caused by the mass input of 'old' case results leading to apparent inconsistencies in performance. Where input delays exist, they are invariably a result of poorly designed processes and a number of forces have tackled these head on and reduced average turn-around times from between 30 and 50 days to single figures.

21. There was significant unease as to whether forces without an IT solution could achieve the one-day target. The target was set in the expectation of the early implementation of a national IT solution, which has not yet materialised and is not imminent. Only four forces

consistently achieved one-day, but by the end of September 2001, 23 forces were inputting over 90% of all arrest/summons details within 10 days, which is a more realistic standard.

Other Issues

22. The work of the inspection teams has also highlighted wider areas of policy, infrastructure and support where there will need to be concerted efforts from forces and other organisations (e.g. PITO) if improvements in PNC data quality and timeliness are to be continued and then sustained.

Next Steps

23. The work of the inspection team between April and October only represents stage one of the improvements required by the Service to achieve the April 2002 targets. Equally, those targets can only be considered as an interim stage towards achieving consistent and sustainable timeliness performance and data integrity.

24. To achieve permanent improvements in performance, HMIC is developing a revised protocol for PNC inspections that will address both the throughput of cases and data integrity issues. In addition, good practice templates have been compiled during the inspection that will allow a model Force Profile to be introduced to establish the required time profile for case clearance and highlight deviations from acceptable performance.

25. Realistic targets for both arrest/summons and case clearance are achievable by all forces if appropriate effort is applied. The roles of Home Office, HMIC and PITO will all be important in the next stage but undoubtedly the key factor will be chief officer commitment, to ensure that PNC is a high priority, and therefore attracts the appropriate resources to enable the April 2002 deadline to be met.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1   This report sets out the findings of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) following a detailed inspection of the timeliness and manner in which police forces in England and Wales,[2] update the Police National Computer (PNC). The inspection was conducted in response to a direction from the Secretary of State under section 54(3) of the Police Act 1996, and has paid particular attention to data relating to the notification of arrest or summons and the case disposal of persons coming to the notice of police and other prosecuting authorities. It was conducted between April and October 2001, utilising personnel from HM Inspectorate, the Police Information Technology Organisation (PITO) and officers seconded from police forces in England and Wales.

1.2   Before describing what was found during the inspection however, it is important to have an understanding of the business processes employed by forces in their use of the PNC, and where the PNC stands in relation to the overall effectiveness and efficiency of the police service.

1.3   It is also important from the outset to understand two expressions that will be used throughout the report, namely "Arrest/Summons" and "Impending Prosecutions". When an offender is charged or reported an Arrest/Summons report must be created on the PNC. Its prime purpose is to alert any enquirer that a prosecution has commenced. This record will remain as an Impending Prosecution until it is either deleted or updated, usually with a court result.

(A) PNC data quality and timeliness

1.4   In England and Wales prior to 1995, records of persons arrested were forwarded by police forces to the National Identification Bureau and input onto PNC centrally. Information on convictions was stored on microfiche and copied to police forces by post when required. In urgent cases this was done by telephone. This was time-consuming and with the greater accessibility and use of PNC at force level, inefficient.

1.5   Since the completion of the 'Phoenix' project, in May 1995, the PNC nominal index has maintained a full record of all persons arrested, summonsed, cautioned or otherwise coming within the ambit of the criminal justice system for recordable offences,[3] together with full details of the subsequent case disposal. Individual police forces now have the responsibility for ensuring that the records are current and accurate.

1.6   In 1998, as a direct result of concerns that had been expressed by various stakeholders, PITO commissioned a report on PNC data quality and timeliness. The review, by the then Home Office Police Research Group (PRG), confirmed that there

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[2] **Includes all Police Act forces, Jersey, Guernsey, Isle of Man, British Transport and Ministry of Defence Police. A separate inspection has been carried out by HMIC (Scotland) the findings of which are not included in this report.**
[3] **All offences that carry the option of imprisonment and offences listed in the National Police Records (Recordable Offences) Regulations 2000.**

was indeed reason to be concerned. Record keeping was poor, there were major issues around the timely updating of individual records, and system lapses were disclosed that were in breach of data protection legislation.[4] This important report acted as a catalyst for subsequent action by the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) and HMIC.

1.7   In April 2000, Chief Constables Council agreed the ACPO PNC Compliance Strategy,[5] which set challenging performance standards for all forces in terms of Arrest/Summons reports and the subsequent updating of nominal index records with court results and disposals. The strategy was adopted as ACPO policy with adoption from the 1st April 2001.

1.8   In July 2000, HMIC published a report entitled *'On the Record'*, following a thematic inspection that had commenced in the previous January. This report was a detailed examination of police crime recording and the PNC and it concluded that PNC data quality had not improved since the publication of the PRG report. Indeed too many aspects of police performance were being undermined by "unprofessional standards and a lack of compliance". HM Inspector was extremely concerned by his findings and no fewer than eleven of the twenty recommendations in his report related to PNC and data issues (see Appendix One). At Recommendation Nine, he required forces to submit a position statement and action plan to HMIC by 1st February 2001 setting out how they proposed to implement the recommendations of the PRG report and the ACPO PNC Compliance Strategy.

> **Good Practice**
> In **Suffolk** the force uses its PNC Action Plan and Position Statement to drive activity. Both are a critical and open look at the current position of the force in relation to PNC. The Action Plan and the Position Statement are regularly updated on a weekly basis and not only identify actions, but also the owners of actions and milestone dates for completion.

(B) The ACPO PNC Compliance Strategy

1.9   ACPO Crime Committee had established a working group in early 1999 to examine how, and to what extent, forces in England and Wales had responded to the PRG report with specific reference to business processes and working practices relating to PNC. In October 1999 the working group produced the ACPO Compliance Strategy for PNC, which is an integral part of the overall National Police Information Management Strategy for the Police Service. ACPO Chief Constables Council adopted the Compliance Strategy in April 2000 (see paragraph 1.7 above).

1.10   On 17th January 2001 a meeting of ACPO Chief Constables Council was advised in a paper that the issue of PNC data quality was becoming critical and that the Information Commissioner might, in extremis, resort to a policy of enforcement

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[4] **Police Research Group paper 'Phoenix Data Quality' 1998.**
[5] **See Appendix Two.**

notices to require improvement. The paper was a detailed and precise exposition of the problem and was put forward as a measure of ACPO's commitment to solving it.

1.11   The ACPO PNC Compliance Strategy established performance indicators for Arrest/Summons and Court Case Results as set out below. These were recognised as having a direct impact upon the operational efficiency of forces and any external organisation accessing the data. They are therefore of critical importance and have been the main focus of this inspection. The indicators relating to Bail Conditions, Warning Signals and Descriptions, whilst also impacting the police service, have less immediate significance for other stakeholders.

Timeliness Performance Indicators (extract)

Arrest and Charge   [*N.B. referred to in this inspection as Arrest/Summons*]

1. Initial details satisfying operational need - 90% of inputs to PNC within 24 hours.
2. Full entry - 90% within 5 days.
3. Once compliance with 1 and 2 above is obtained, then a staged improvement to 90% within 24 hours for full entry.

Court Case Results - Police Entered

1. 100% entered within 72 hours of coming into police possession. This performance indicator standard will remain valid only whilst work is continuing on the computerised link between forces and magistrates courts.

1.12   In February 2001, a meeting took place at the Home Office with the Information Commissioner at which HMIC and ACPO were represented. The Commissioner emphasised the need for urgent action to be taken to remedy what she regarded as the unsatisfactory situation described by the PRG report and *'On the Record'*. The Commissioner was particularly concerned about the potential impact of inaccurate data on the CRB (see 1.13, below).

(C) Implications for the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB)

1.13   The Criminal Records Bureau (CRB), which is being established under Part V of the Police Act 1997 as an executive agency of the Home Office will 'go live' in the Spring of 2002[6]. Its role is to issue certificates to applicants, showing details of convictions recorded, or the absence thereof. It has been estimated that the annual throughput of the CRB will be around nine million certificates. Dependent upon the purpose for which the certificate is sought, there are three different categories of disclosure;

- **Basic -** relating to employment in non-contentious occupations where only current convictions will be supplied.[7]

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[6] **Based upon information available October 2001.**
[7] **The Basic level of disclosure will be available from Summer 2002.**

- **Standard** - where current and 'spent' convictions will be supplied.[8]

- **Enhanced** - required for employment in high-risk areas, such as unsupervised responsibility for children. All convictions and relevant intelligence held locally by police forces will be supplied. Research for the CRB has shown that there may well be 2.5 million cases in this latter category each year.

1.14   The extent to which CRB can discharge its core business is very much dependent upon PNC data quality, and in subsequent correspondence the Information Commissioner has made it clear that whether or not data, *" . . . is judged adequate for the CRB's purposes in order to coincide with its target date for commencement of operations . . .",* is a matter which will require further consideration by her office.

1.15   In early 2001 the Parliamentary Home Affairs Committee carried out a short enquiry into aspects of the CRB including PNC data quality. Their report stated;

> *"It would be unacceptable if errors on the PNC let even one undesirable person through the checking system. Equally, inaccurate data should not be allowed to traduce a blameless individual. The manifest levels of PNC error make us doubt whether it can support a system of criminal records certificates."; and, – "The Home Office must ensure that improvements are made to the quality of data stored on the PNC. . ."[9]*

1.16   Section 119 of the Police Act 1997 places an obligation upon the chief officers of all police forces who hold such information to disclose it for the purposes of Part V of the Act. Although such data may be held on local records, the vast majority is held on PNC in the nominal index

1.17   The PNC nominal index represents the core data set to be used by the CRB. Indeed without it the CRB could not operate. As the Bureau will have direct, on-line access to PNC and will issue certificates automatically based upon the information present at the time, in many cases there will be no direct contact with police forces to confirm its validity. The requirement for forces to maintain accurate and timely data is of critical importance.

1.18   At present the CRB cannot ascertain whether an Arrest/Summons report exists on a nominal record, only the police can access this information. As forces are only contacted in relation to 'Enhanced' applications there is a strong possibility that proceedings still shown as Arrest/Summons, but which should have been updated with a court result, will be missed with potentially serious implications for the validity of the process.

1.19   Of no less importance is the weeding of redundant records. Rules drawn up by ACPO to ensure consistent practice across forces have recently been subject to further review and it is hoped that this will be completed shortly. This aspect was not included in the terms of reference for this inspection.

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[8] **The term 'spent' is defined in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.**
[9] **Paragraphs 32 and 50 Home Affairs Committee Session 2000-01 Second Report - Criminal Records Bureau 28th March 2001.**

(D) Other Consequences

1.20 Largely prompted by the report of the Home Affairs Committee, there have been a number of Parliamentary Questions and some Press speculation linking concerns about PNC data quality and timeliness with the efficiency of the CRB.

1.21 With the broadening of access to the PNC for other users, (CRB, courts, prisons, etc), the need for absolute integrity in terms of data handling procedures (indeed all police interactions)[10] is paramount. There are also legal and moral imperatives to safeguard individual rights and freedom. Such data must be able to meet the challenge of detailed scrutiny and audit and it is the responsibility of police managers to ensure that this is the case.

1.22 As noted in '*On the Record*' [11] the total annual cost to police forces for PNC services is £17.6 million. Stewardship of such a large sum of public money requires adherence to the highest standards.

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[10] **HMIC report - Police Integrity England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Securing and Maintaining Public Confidence. June 1999.**
[11] **'*On the Record*' pg. 78**

2. THE INSPECTION

2.1 This section outlines the scope and methodology of the HMIC inspection with particular reference to the position nationally at the commencement of the process in March 2001. It includes some limited analysis of the performance problems inherent at the time.

2.2 A number of decisions were taken from the outset which shaped the format of the inspection and highlighted the limited number of areas which it was agreed should be addressed. These decisions are included in the relevant parts of this section.

(A) The Criteria

2.3 Following the initial meeting with the Information Commissioner at the Home Office on 9th February, in early March 2001 a series of meetings took place involving most of the principal stakeholders. It was agreed that the police service needed to ensure that:

- current and future data on PNC should fully comply with the Data Protection Act 1998, particularly the 3rd, 4th and 5th Principles, and,

- issues of timeliness and accuracy should be addressed as a matter of urgency.

2.4 In April 2001 the then Home Secretary gave a formal direction under section 54(3) of the Police Act 1996, requiring Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Constabulary to conduct a review and inspection for the purpose of furthering police efficiency and effectiveness in relation to the inputting of data on the Phoenix database (nominal index) on the PNC, with the following terms of reference.

- The timely inputting of Arrest/Summons reports within 24 hours, in accordance with the target set out in the ACPO Compliance Strategy;

- The timely inputting of court results within 72 hours of receipt from the court, in accordance with the target set out in the ACPO Compliance Strategy;

- The reduction, at a significant and sustained rate, of the backlog of impending prosecution cases; and

- The dissemination of good practice, leading to improvements in relevant business processes.

(i) Arrest/Summons

2.5 The performance standard for Arrest/Summons reports is as set out in the ACPO compliance strategy. With effect from April 1st 2001, 90% of all records should be entered on PNC within 1 day. As of the 11th March the national average for achieving 90% of input was a totally unacceptable 55 days.

2.6   The creation of an Arrest/Summons record[12] will generate a reference number (usually referred to as the 'A/S' number) which is required for many operational purposes. The ACPO strategy allows forces the option of creating a basic record in the first instance comprising not less than twenty-eight fields of data. This is referred to as the 'Skeleton' record and if used, must be updated to a full record within five days. Some forces find this double access to the record counter-productive and enter the full record first time, albeit normally then outside of the 1-day target.

2.7   At the time of the creation of the ACPO strategy, and this performance indicator, the Service was anticipating the national implementation of a standard Custody & Case Preparation IT solution, with automatic linkages to PNC. This has not yet materialised and will not be available nationally in the near future. The absence of an IT solution is a barrier to achieving timely input of Arrest/Summons details.

2.8   In most cases, however, poor performance in this area was more likely to be the result of poor business processes and less to do with the absence of technology. Lengthy delays were seemingly built into the system by forces adopting practices that delayed initial inputting, such as circulating the Phoenix Source Document (PSD)[13] reports to other departments within the force before forwarding them for entry onto PNC.

(ii) Impending Prosecutions (Court Results)

2.9   The performance standard as set out in the ACPO Compliance Strategy is that court results and disposals should be entered as an update to the initial Arrest/Summons report within three days of the receipt by police of the result from the court. The courts are also required to deliver results to the police within three days of the court date[14]. The total time from case finalisation to input on PNC should therefore not exceed 6 days. On the basis of PITO data, in March 2001, no force was close to meeting this standard with, in the worst instance, forces appearing to take up to 599 days to complete a record relating to an impending prosecution.

2.10   In fact, it was apparent from the outset that this performance data was distorted by the mass input of cases from within force backlogs of old files, as older files drove up the average number of days. HMIC took the view that any meaningful analysis of performance must be based initially on 'cases' and not 'days'. The time-based standard would be reintroduced later in the inspection process. This approach was agreed with the Information Commissioner as a sensible first stage towards tackling the time-based indicator.

2.11   As at 11th March 2001, there were 450,589 impending cases entered on PNC awaiting results. Allowing for the normal passage of cases from initiation to finalisation, it was agreed that most cases should be finalised within 9-12 months. Of the outstanding total in March 2001, 233,698 had been recorded since the 1st July 2000 and could be regarded as likely to be legitimately outstanding. The vast majority of the residue was overdue for finalisation.

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[12] **Appendix Three details how and when this is done.**
[13] **The term 'PSD' is a record, usually paper, containing details for entry onto PNC. Forces use local expressions of which 'Source Input Document' (SID) is probably the most common.**
[14] **See Appendix Four**

2.12   There was an urgent need for the police service to demonstrate tangible improvement in performance by clearing this unjustified backlog. Following discussion it was agreed that;

- No force should have any 'Impending Prosecution' on PNC that is older than 12 months, that has not been the subject of investigation to confirm that the court result is still legitimately outstanding.

- The above performance standard should be effective from April 1st 2002 with forces moving towards that position from April 1st 2001 and maintaining it thereafter.

- ACPO Compliance Strategy timeliness performance standards needed to be part of the overall validation exercise.

2.13   Relying upon the above information ACPO, on behalf of the police service committed itself to clearing or validating, between 1st April 2001 and 1st April 2002, at least 216,891 impending cases that were recorded on PNC prior to 1st July 2000. Each one would have to be resulted, deleted from the database or validated as being correctly outstanding. Simultaneously forces would need to put systems in place to ensure that the throughput of new cases did not substantially increase the overall total of impending cases. These targets represented a huge commitment for some forces.

(B) Inspection Methodology

2.14   In planning the inspection and review methodology a 'four track approach' was adopted: -

- Measure performance over time and against improvement targets,
- Examine business processes in selected forces,
- Look at operational and policy implications, and
- Provide a conduit for dissemination of good practice.

2.15   The inspection did not seek to examine 'on site' the performance of every force. This would have been logistically and operationally impossible in the time available. Instead, it was decided that between April and October 2001, the individual and aggregate performance of forces would be monitored. All were measured against quantitative data from PITO, provided on a fortnightly basis.

2.16   This performance data was quality assured before being passed to HMIC. It was then passed electronically to the nominated 'accountable officer' of ACPO rank in each force and to the relevant force PNC bureaux. The data gave details of performance relating to the inputting of Arrest/Summons reports (in days), and to the reduction of Impending Prosecutions (in cases).

2.17   Until the backlogs were cleared, attempting to identify a method to measure actual performance against the 72-hour target would be fruitless, as the old cases would significantly distort results.

2.18   Impending case result improvement targets were set for each force based upon the number of cases recorded prior to 1st July 2000 that must be cleared by April 1st 2002. As the initial total was calculated from each force's backlog on March 11th 2001, the scale of the task differed from force to force.

2.19   The reduction targets per fortnightly period were 4% of the initial total (i.e. 25 fortnightly periods @ 4%). Forces also had to ensure that they had robust business processes in place to ensure that 'new' cases were being dealt with expeditiously so as not to create a further backlog.

2.20   Seventeen forces were selected for detailed inspection by seconded personnel (see Table 1 below).

Table 1 – Forces selected for visits - all aspects

Week	Date (week commencing)	Force
1	11-6-01	Kent *
		Devon and Cornwall *
		Metropolitan
2	18-6-01	Greater Manchester
		West Midlands
		Thames Valley
3	25-6-01	West Yorkshire
		North Wales
		Cheshire
4	2-7-01	Cumbria
		Surrey
		Sussex
5	9-7-01	Essex
		Nottinghamshire
		South Yorkshire
6	16-7-01	Northamptonshire
		Leicestershire

* Beacon Forces

2.21   Eleven forces were selected on the grounds that the PNC performance data indicated they were 'underachieving'. The Metropolitan Police Service, West Midlands Police, Greater Manchester Police and West Yorkshire Police were selected on the grounds that as some of the largest forces in the country with the greatest throughput of cases, they might have experience of value to colleagues. The remaining two forces were selected as 'Beacons' by performance data indicating that they were meeting or exceeding performance targets and might well have systems or business processes that would be worth disseminating further. Each force visited was given detailed feedback, at management and ACPO level, on what the inspection had disclosed.

2.22   It became apparent during the inspection that some forces were performing well in clearing Impending Prosecutions, but having difficulty achieving the Arrest/Summons target. From 11th June 2001 HM Inspectorate employed additional seconded personnel to offer assistance specifically in relation to this area of the

business. A total of seven forces received personal visits or contact for this element of the inspection (See Table 2, below).

Table 2 – Forces selected for visits - Arrest/Summons only

Date (week commencing)	Force
24-7-01	Lincolnshire
31-7-01	South Wales
7-8-01	Suffolk
14-8-01	Wiltshire
21-8-01	Cleveland
29-8-01	Gwent
4-9-01	Northumbria

2.23 The dissemination of 'good practice' was seen as a critically important aspect of this exercise. HM Inspectorate actively directed practitioners to those forces where processes, working arrangements or IT priorities were producing worthwhile results. In addition, PITO sponsored two one-day conferences where representatives from ACPO, HMIC, the Information Commissioners office and PITO addressed senior practitioners from forces on the wider implications of PNC data quality and demonstrated 'good practice' in workshops.

3. PERFORMANCE AGAINST THE TARGETS

3.1 This Section sets out the statistical results for the period of the inspection, March to October 2001. Appendix Five details the national trend. Appendix Six contains the performance data for each force in respect of both Impending Prosecutions (Case Results) and Arrest/Summons at the start of the process (11 March 2001), and Appendix Seven details performance at the end (7 October 2001).

3.2 The original scope of the inspection envisaged compiling results up to and including the end of August 2001. In view of the then-current volatility of results and to allow the report to reflect the most recent performance trends, this was extended to incorporate the statistics generated to the 7th October 2001.

(A) Arrest/Summons

3.3 Appendix Seven(A) represents the full statistics for the period ending on 7th October 2001. The national average fell from 55 to 37 days during the period of the inspection which, although it was a move in the right direction, was disappointing. This figure was definitely affected, however, by the mass clearance of backlog cases (as highlighted in paragraph 2.10). For example, the Isle of Man with a very small number of cases had an extensive clearance programme and contributed a performance of 387 days, thereby adversely affecting the national average. Removing this one figure reduced the national average to 29 days, which is clearly more positive but still requires further improvement.

3.4 Accepting the anomalies, the results indicated that only four forces were meeting the ACPO performance standard. Amongst those forces that demonstrably improved were Avon and Somerset (reduced from 21days to 1 day), Lancashire (20-1), South Wales (78-2), Warwickshire (25-8) and West Yorkshire (27-3). See Table 3 for details of the best performing forces.

Table 3 – Best performing forces on Arrest/Summons

	Force	Days [15]
1	Avon and Somerset Constabulary	1
2	Kent	1
3	City of London Police	1
4	Lancashire Constabulary	1
5	Cambridgeshire Constabulary	2
6	Norfolk Constabulary	2
7	South Wales Police	2
8	West Yorkshire Police	3
9	Metropolitan Police	3
10	Hampshire Constabulary	7
11	Guernsey Police	7
12	Gloucestershire Constabulary	7
13	Warwickshire Constabulary	8
14	West Midlands Police	9
15	Durham Constabulary	9

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[15] **Days to enter first 90% of cases.**

3.5   It was found that the absence of common systems between, and sometimes within, forces could compound the problem of data quality and timeliness. For example, the inspection found that, in forces which permit arrest details to be updated on PNC by telephoning the input bureau, there are instances of officers registering arrest and charge/caution details on PNC without first establishing how the case was to be finally resolved. Custody officers, unaware of this, have then decided on an alternative outcome, including no further action, which has meant that the PNC data is incorrect from the outset.

3.6   Although the majority of forces showed some improvement in performance the response of the service to the requirement to improve working practices quickly was very poor. If forces are consistently to meet the ACPO Compliance Strategy target, there is a need to deliver substantial improvements to the processes involved. Undoubtedly to reach the one-day target consistently, consideration must also be given to an IT interface solution. Both issues are discussed later in this report.

(B) Impending Prosecutions (Court Results)

3.7   On 11th March 2001 there were 216,891 cases which had first been recorded prior to 1st July 2000 still awaiting a result. To clear this total prior to 1st April 2002 required a reduction of 8,676 cases per fortnight (see Appendix Five). By 7th October the total stood at 98,296, a reduction of 118,595, a continuation of this trend would clear all the pre-July 2000 cases by April 2002.

3.8   Experience gleaned from the best-performing forces suggested that it is reasonable to expect a 10% residue of cases that for various reasons remain legitimately pending, for example where complex proceedings are in train or the offender has absconded. Taking this into account, the findings at 3.7 suggest that the Service *should* be able to meet the April 2002 target.

3.9   Within the overall successful performance, however, there was a wide range of results achieved by individual forces. Appendix Eight sets out their performance in graphical format with a trend line indicating when pre-July 2000 cases will be cleared. Table 4 reproduces excerpts from the table of forces based on the projected date for clearance of 'old' case results. Whilst many forces have projected completion dates well within the target date, on pre-7 October 2001 data, several others are predicted to fail to do so.

Table 4 – Projected dates for clearance of pre-July 2000 cases (as at end of August 2001)

	Force	(1)[16]	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
1	South Wales	461	7479	7940	1778	August 2001
2	Avon & Somerset	639	5618	6257	1511	September 2001
3	City of London	221	745	966	541	
4	Guernsey	5	111	116	14	
5	Gwent	503	3691	4194	1600	
6	Lincolnshire	142	2409	2551	203	
7	Norfolk	145	2760	2905	889	
8	North Yorkshire	156	2155	2311	213	
9	Bedfordshire	459	1898	2357	1045	October 2001
10	Cleveland	758	3850	4608	3307	
39	Gr. Manchester	8052	17319	25371	3593	July 2002
40	Nottinghamshire	1759	5534	7293	572	
41	Metropolitan	40356	40537	80893	18380	August 2002
42	Ministry of Defence	45	274	319	-58	September 2002
43	Thames Valley	1489	7069	8558	741	October 2002
44	Isle of Man	69	230	299	-31	December 2002
45	Jersey	91	272	363	331	January 2003
46	North Wales	2913	2911	5824	1862	March 2003
47	Northamptonshire	2680	3749	6429	2834	
48	British Transport Police	4081	4088	8169	2048	July 2004

3.10 The inspection team spent a significant amount of time, in the last month of the inspection period, in discussion with forces experiencing increases in their backlogs or where 'old' case targets were unlikely to be met. By early August it became clear that some chief officers had simply not considered the issue to be a sufficiently high priority to warrant the effort required. This had adversely affected the resources allocated to the problem.

3.11 Table Five sets out in greater detail the actions taken by the 10 forces in the bottom section of Table 4, around and beyond 7 October.

Table 5 – Forces' Action to Reduce Pre-July 2000 Clearance Rate

Force	**Developments**
Greater Manchester (July 2002) **Metropolitan** (August 2002)	Together the forces have a significant proportion of the national total of outstanding pre-July 2000 cases. The Metropolitan Police has the largest backlog with over 40% of the national total. The forces will require targeted support to clear these cases by the 1st April. It is unlikely that they can accelerate progress to achieve compliance using their current resources.
British Transport (July 2004)	The effort put in by these forces has been inadequate or inconsistent. A concentrated effort is required to reduce the number of outstanding cases

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[16] **Key: (1) Number recorded prior to 1-7-00; (2) Number recorded after 1-7-00; (3) Total (1) and (2); (4) Total number of impending prosecutions cleared, a negative value indicates an increase in the overall total; (5) Indicates a date, based upon current performance, when all records created before 1st July 2000, that can be finalised, will be cleared.**

Nottinghamshire (July 2002) **Thames Valley** (October 2002)	prior to April 2002. This target is achievable by the forces if they apply consistent effort and resources.
Ministry of Defence (September 2002) **Isle of Man** (December 2002) **Jersey** (January 2003)	The number of outstanding pre-July 2000 cases for these forces is small, often in single figures. This distorts the projections that are valid for larger forces. The most recent figures for the Isle of Man (which are post projection) show the force has made a considerable effort to clear cases. Jersey Police have notified HMIC that they have cleared their old cases. The Ministry of Defence have been advised that their cases should be cleared promptly.
North Wales (March 2003)	The force has re-calculated and increased the bi-weekly target and is now on course to achieve compliance by April 2002.
Northamptonshire (March 2003)	The force has cleared 4,500 cases in six weeks and is now on course to clear the cases prior to April 2002.

3.12   These late efforts, if sustained, would leave doubts over just five forces: GMP and the Metropolitan Police, as large forces that will need significant resources to accelerate performance; and Nottinghamshire, Thames Valley and British Transport Police (BTP), who have applied either insufficient or inconsistent effort but should be able to meet the target date. Significant effort was expended by HMIC in the latter stages and, as of 7th October 2001, the inspection team was confident that the Chief Constable in each of the forces where problems had been experienced was personally seized of the issue and overseeing the progress in reducing backlogs

3.13   A trend was noted after the end of August when performance in four of the larger forces appeared to plateau. As these forces are responsible for in excess of half of the national total of outstanding Impending Prosecutions, any continuation or worsening of this trend would be a cause for serious concern.

(C) Conclusions

3.14   Although each force examined by the inspection team proved to be a different combination of issues, the main generic areas which had frustrated progress towards achieving force targets were: -

- Lengthy periods of 'denial' of the validity of PITO statistics
- Misunderstanding at practitioner level of the importance of achieving milestone reductions consistently throughout the whole April 2001 to April 2002 period
- Large increases in early input of Arrest/Summons data created a 'blip' in total backlog figures.
- Very late recognition at chief officer level of the urgency of the situation.

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3.15   Overall the performance of the Service by the end of the formal inspection period can be characterised as having just about met the interim targets for Impending Prosecutions but fell somewhat short of achieving the Arrest/Summons standard.

3.16   On the positive side, whether from the outset or as late conversions to the cause, every force has demonstrated an ability to achieve their case resulting targets, providing sustained and sufficient effort is applied. Against this, there remain doubts

over the ability of some large forces to clear large backlogs and some others to sustain consistent commitment.

3.17 Sections 4 and 5 explain in detail the structural and strategic requirements to achieve sustainable improvements in the long term. Section 6 highlights the immediate 'Next Steps' required to address the achievement of the April 2002 performance targets.

4. MANAGEMENT OF THE PNC FUNCTION WITHIN FORCES

4.1 This section details the important and fundamental business process and functional management issues which were highlighted in the inspection and require to be addressed to achieve long-term sustainable performance.

(A) Arrest/Summons Recording - Source Document Submission

4.2 The inspection found a widespread lack of understanding by forces of the business processes supporting Phoenix Source Document (PSD) submission. A number of examples were found of completed PSD's unnecessarily passing from department to department before being forwarded to the PNC bureau. Many forces were unable to explain poor performance in this area and appeared to have difficulty mapping existing working practices.

4.3 Although factors affecting PSD quality and timeliness have been detailed in research elsewhere,[17] the inspection found that many of the issues exposed have yet to be addressed by some forces. In particular, the method of data collection and transmission to the point of input, which was found to have a significant impact upon performance.

> **Good Practice**
> In **Cumbria** the incorporating of PSD creation in the duties of civilian custody staff has seen significant improvement in both timeliness and quality.

4.4 Any failure properly to record an Arrest/Summons report expeditiously has serious consequences for the efficiency of the police business. For example, if a DNA sample is taken, a failure to create an Arrest/Summons report means that no unique identifying number relating to the offender can be generated. This in turn means that there will be a delay in submission of the sample and subsequent delay in identification. In circumstances where DNA evidence may be crucial in the investigation of serious crime, any such delay brought about by inefficient business processes is unpardonable.

> **Good Practice**
> **Greater Manchester Police** has developed a PC-based Phoenix Source Document (PSD) tracking application which monitors submission rates and produces management information reports. **Staffordshire Police** has developed a similar networked solution.

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[17] **'*On the Record*' para 8.3 *et seq***

(i) 'Manual' systems

4.5   Many forces continue to use paper forms to collect the information required for the PSD, and the transmission of the paper record to the point of PNC input is by internal mail. Allowing for finalisation of the report, checking, possible rejection and transportation, there is little prospect of achieving the 24-hour compliance target by this method.

4.6   Facsimile-based systems required re-keying of data by the PNC inputters, but this method accelerated the transmission process and, by the integrated design of essential documents, had the potential to reduce duplication. However, poor-quality copies and the need for PNC input staff to challenge inconsistencies with the originator often undermined these gains. Additionally, for internal reasons, some input documents extend to eight or more pages which will not fit into a facsimile machine. In one large force it was found that there was only one unsupervised receiving machine in place. When this machine ran out of paper, facsimile transmission ceased for two days.

(ii) E-mail

4.7   The use of an electronic PSD transmitted through the internal network was used by a small number of forces. Although in most cases the data has to be re-keyed into PNC, this is a cheap option where no interface is available. Advantages are instant transmission, some validation of data at the point of input, and clarity.

(iii) Computerised interface with local systems

4.8   In the few forces with computerised application interfaces, the information captured on local computerised custody, case preparation or crime systems could be transferred automatically. The use of a computerised interface addressed concerns regarding duplication of effort and transmission but raised issues already identified by HM Inspectorate.[18] Whilst addressing shortfalls in performance, one force discovered the interface was failing to transmit information to PNC when changes had been made to the local record. Another discovered a large quantity of 'lost' records. For a computer interface to succeed the force has to ensure system integrity.

4.9   In one force the custody system generated a report in the PNC bureau when a custody record met a specified criteria. Although re-keying is required, this semi-automated process ensures the generation of a PNC record without an additional burden being placed upon operational officers.

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[18] *On the Record* **8.4.2** *et seq*

(iv) Telephone reporting

4.10   A small number of forces collected the information through the officer telephoning the input bureau directly. Subject to the satisfactory resolution of security considerations,[19] this has the advantage of the inputter being able to query information with its originator in real time. For such a system to succeed, however, staffing in the bureau has to be sufficient to support an adequate real-time response including 24-hour availability. An operational officer claimed that, on one occasion, it had taken repeated attempts over two days for the PNC bureau staff to answer the telephone.

> **Good Practice**
> In the **Metropolitan Police o**fficers telephone Arrest/Summons reports to the PNC Input Bureau (SO3), where a skeleton record is created. The paper record is then marked with the letter of the shift that has entered the record and is placed in that shift's tray. This shift then assumes responsibility for the full record and ensures continuity.

4.11   In many cases PNC bureau staffing levels did not reflect the workload created by court resulting. Even without the current initiative to clear backlogs, many bureaux were overwhelmed with work, resulting in an alarming increase in 'old' cases. A simple evaluation of demand linked to average case inputting times would have exposed the shortfall. A lack of concern bordering on apathy appeared to prevail in a number of forces in the post-court finalisation process. Indeed during a focus-group interview a clerk stated that, because management (incorrectly) regarded post-court finalisation as not time critical, it was common for even the low levels of existing personnel to be removed at little or no notice from post-court functions to fill in for shortfalls elsewhere.

> **Good Practice**
> **Hampshire** undertook a time and motion study of PNC inputting, allocated a suitable budget and recruited temporary staff to clear the backlog.

(B) Court Results - the Inputting Process

4.12   Failure to record court convictions expeditiously will result in conviction records being incomplete, a matter of profound significance for the public. A detective in one force expressed frustration that he was not in a position to present a complete conviction history at a remand hearing because there was insufficient time to establish the results of a number of Impending Prosecutions. During another inspection interview a pre-court clerk detailed how she had spent days 'chasing up' conviction records, some a number of years old, in order to establish results before a

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[19] ***On the Record*** **8.4.5**

case file could be submitted. These cases show that poor record keeping on PNC is adversely affecting operational efficiency and creating hidden costs elsewhere.

4.13 The location of court result inputters varies widely. A number of forces make use of a centralised bureau whereas others input from territorially based 'Administration of Justice Units'. There was no evidence to suggest that the location of the inputting process has an appreciable bearing upon performance. However, inputting close to the data source is perceived as being the most effective working practice.

4.14 The staffing of PNC bureaux was found to be the most significant contributory factor in the failure to achieve compliance. Bureaux managers point to overwhelming workloads and understaffing as reasons for poor performance. The inspection found a number of forces with store cupboards full of court results waiting to be input. In one force hundreds of case results had been recorded on paper (i.e. the often-difficult research phase had been completed), but before the results could be entered onto PNC the staff had been diverted elsewhere. This resulted in finalised cases being stored in the bureau for many months.

4.15 The inspection found considerable evidence of staff having been temporarily diverted from other duties within recent weeks to assist the inputting process. Indeed the comment *'..I'm only robbing Peter to pay Paul'* by a senior officer to the inspection team gave an insight into the officer's belief that the current work was a short term 'fix.' Whilst short-term gains will undoubtedly be achieved, this will not sustain performance over the long term without investment in appropriate staffing levels. A data-inputter can be trained to be technically competent within a week. However, the expertise required to finalise court results has to be developed over a longer period of time. Resulted court files, particularly those from the higher courts, are not always presented in a logical order and the inputter may have to 'interpret' court results before they can be accurately entered.

4.16 Additionally, due to amendments to charges made during the legal process, the results may bear no relationship to the charges originally recorded which, in complex cases, could have been some years earlier. It is not uncommon for the inputter to refer an inconsistent result back to the originating court for clarification or correction. Far from being low-skilled data entry clerks, inputters rightly see themselves as a key part of the data quality validation process.

4.17 It is for the reasons set out above that staff should not be diverted to and from PNC duties. A number of forces have found during the course of this inspection that, when pressed for rapid performance improvements, staff with the requisite skills were either not available, had been transferred to equally pressing duties, or could not be recruited at short notice. Clearly, investment in staff recruitment must be seen in the context of any broader human resources strategy, but in this, as in so many other areas of quality service delivery, the 'people' aspect is a critical success factor.

5. STRATEGIC AND OPERATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 In addition to the process issues in section 4, the inspection highlighted barriers at strategic and operational level that must be addressed in the long-term interest of all concerned.

(A) Strategic Implications

5.2 At the national (ACPO) level it is not clear where responsibility for the championing and maintenance of the PNC business process lies (see Appendix Nine). PNC currently falls under the Information Management Business Head of ACPO's "Support" side and is focussed on technology, data protection and security. This remit does not address the main business areas of PNC that support operational policing.

> **Recommendation One**
> **Her Majesty's Chief Inspector recommends that ACPO nationally review the position and priority of PNC within the structure of portfolio holders to reflect both the technical and operational importance of PNC.**

5.3 The inspection has confirmed, yet again, the importance of leadership in the delivery of a quality service. Where chief officers displayed visible, assertive and focused leadership in relation to this matter, there was immediate, sometimes dramatic, improvement in performance. Where this was absent, performance often faltered. Where PNC Bureaux staff felt that they were valued and that their work was seen as an important part of the drive against crime, standards rose. Where this was not the case, there was evidence of low morale and staffing difficulties. Nowhere was this put more succinctly than by the head of the PNC Bureaux of a medium-sized force who claimed that he had been told by his chief officer, after being refused additional resources, *". . What are you complaining about; it's only a bit of typing . ."*

> **Good Practice**
> In **Cheshire** the ACPO PNC Compliance Strategy performance indicators are now embedded in the ACC (Crime) portfolio, the force Crime Strategy and their internal performance review structure. The ACC (Crime) and the ACC (Operations) both include PNC performance in terms of PSD submission rejections, in monthly meetings with Divisional Commanders, holding them to account both in terms of numbers and names of officers.

5.4 All forces have implemented the recommendation[20] that each should have a PNC Steering Group with specific responsibility for PNC issues and such groups now exist. The inspection has found, however, that the quality and effectiveness of such groups is extremely variable. Good examples were found of groups, chaired by a

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[20] '*On the Record*' Recommendation 12

chief officer[21] with professionally managed minuted meetings. However, in some forces the group met infrequently and appeared to have minimal impact.

5.5   The inspection has found that, in a number of forces, because PNC serves a variety of functional 'silos' and differing needs, each department used it but no single department had responsibility for its efficient use. In some forces the responsibility for performance was vested in the Head of Crime's portfolio, in others it sat within the I.T. Department. In yet more it fell within the Administration of Justice Department.

5.6   The strategic ownership was often confused and even when an 'owner' had been nominated, PNC tended to sit very low in their list of priorities, being viewed largely as an administrative burden rather than an important operational tool. In view of this and the emergence of additional national systems in the future, the situation should be addressed by ACPO as a matter of urgency.

5.7   The inspection found a breakdown of understanding and strategic vision between the user community and PITO. Although regional and national user groups meet frequently, there is evidence to suggest that the status of attendees within the user force is not appropriate for the purpose. The user groups are now virtually practitioner forums. Whilst accepting there is a place for both, well-intentioned and competent practitioners may not be sighted on the strategic vision of their force or national developments. Evidence suggests that the rank/grade of attendees has reduced over the past ten years, a clear illustration of the lessening importance attached to PNC by the user community.

5.8   PITO has finite resources and the current backlog of requests for upgrades and changes are evidence of how the user community is disconnected from the reality of what can be achieved. Overriding demands such as the requirement to change the system to address changes in legislation, thereby extending the timescales for less urgent work, frustrates user expectation and drives them to develop local solutions. The need for a root and branch appraisal of the purpose and expectations of PNC has never been more urgently required.

5.9   Issues should be raised, considered and validated at force PNC Steering Group level, under the supervision of a chief officer, before being considered elsewhere. Proficiently run force PNC Steering Groups are well positioned to provide a current perspective on PNC usage that is close to operational requirements. PITO should explore the best means of harnessing this potential.

5.10 The inspection found that, in recent times, this issue has been recognised by PITO Board with the formation of the PNC Management Sub-Committee. The committee has representation from, amongst others, the Association of Police Authorities (APA), the Association of Chief Police Officers in Scotland (ACPOS), the Home Office Criminal Justice Integration Unit (CJIU) (formerly IBIS, the criminal justice partners) and a representative of the ACPO PNC Police User Group (not to be confused with the practitioner forums mentioned above). Although currently only in

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[21] **An officer of Assistant Chief Constable rank or above.**

its formative stages, this committee is well placed to champion a programme of reform within the PNC community which is long overdue.

5.11   Within the ACPO Compliance Strategy there are a few significant questions, raised by forces during the inspection, which need addressing (e.g. the validity of the 24 hour Arrest/Summons target see 6.4 below) but overall the strategy should be reinforced, as should the need to abide by the earlier recommendations from *'On the Record'*.

> **Recommendation Two**
> **Her Majesty's Chief Inspector draws renewed attention to Recommendations 11 to 20 of *'On the Record' (2000)*, and recommends that all forces develop appropriate systems, overseen at a senior level, to ensure that they are implemented.**

5.12   PITO is delivering a National Strategy for Police Information Systems (NSPIS) that will integrate computerised business areas including PNC. The NSPIS programme is developing case preparation and custody applications with delivery scheduled for December 2001 and the end of April 2002 respectively. The development of a crime recording system has been suspended pending review. Both the case preparation and custody applications will have a direct interface; data entered on either system will automatically update PNC. This will ensure that data collected locally is transferred to PNC as part of an automated process.

5.13   At present, in most forces, data is entered into PNC by the use of directly connected terminals, a local force interface (known as a STIF interface), or by interface with a related computer system. Only by the use of a system interface can wasteful and time-consuming re-keying of data be avoided. In the areas of case preparation, custody and crime, forces already use computerised systems, but only twelve forces have applications interfaced directly to PNC.

5.14   In part this is due to the unfulfilled expectations raised by NSPIS. Delivery of the systems is currently four years behind schedule and, due to the size of the task and the resources available, the last force is not expected to receive the applications until the first quarter of 2005. Recognising the business benefits in nationally developed systems, many forces deferred local procurement and based their force IT strategy upon the national initiative. Non- delivery has resulted in forces belatedly struggling to develop local solutions. This is an additional incentive for forces to turn their back on PNC and invest in local systems as discussed elsewhere.[22]

5.15   One force with a large number of impending cases on PNC was found to have court results on a local system, which had not been re-keyed into PNC. In the absence of a national solution being available in the short term, a large metropolitan force is developing an interface with its own criminal justice system. The extensive slippage in the delivery of a national solution has caused a number of forces to re-evaluate available options. The bespoke procurement of a system interface between local

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[22] **See 5.17**

systems and PNC is, in some cases, now considered to be the only viable option. Effectively, a number of forces are moving away from the PITO-led technology solution, which is inexorably leading to the progressive undermining of NSPIS.

Good Practice

An initiative by the Performance Review Department of the **Metropolitan Police** has resulted in the development of an Access 2000-based database for the matching of Impending Prosecutions with 'resulted' cases. After loading data extracts showing Impending Prosecutions from PNC and court results from the court proceedings database maintained by the Home Office Research, Development and Statistics Department (RDS), the system uses filtering and algorithms to identify records relating to an individual. This semi-automates record finalisation and is speeding procedures on a number of Borough Operational Command Units. The development has been brought to the attention of PITO for professional evaluation. If it is technically robust it could deliver significant benefits to other forces.

5.16 Running parallel is computerisation elsewhere in the criminal justice system. LIBRA is a single service-based agreement to provide IT services for magistrates' courts, won by ICL in September 1999. It is likely to operate for 12 years from the start of the rollout programme. The project is intended to replace three ageing systems with a single national IT service capable of being linked with all of the other main agencies. It consists of a mandatory set of core services covering case preparation, hearings, results, finance and enforcement. The service also includes, as options, office automation products and resource management systems operating on a common infrastructure. The project, which was scheduled for delivery in mid 2001 is delayed indefinitely. It is difficult for forces to plan for procurement of vital IT applications without some degree of confidence that national systems will be 'rolled-out' on time.

(A) Operational Implications

5.17 An issue that arose in every force visited was the level of commitment that operational officers showed to local computerised systems at the expense of PNC. Either because they did not fully understand its functionality, or because they had little experience of seeing beneficial results, many front-line officers had 'given up' on PNC. Local systems using modern software were seen as more relevant to their needs. This has a direct effect on the business processes employed in forces because Arrest/Summons data, and to a lesser extent court result data, tends to be entered on local systems before it is entered on PNC. It would seem that this is an example of 'the customers' voting with their feet and renewed attention should be paid to the marketing of PNC and its applications. PITO personnel evidence the level of user awareness by citing requests for enhancements to PNC being made when the functionality is already available on the system. Training issues are discussed in detail at section 5(C) below.

5.18 It was found in many forces that the resourcing of PNC inputting was solely based upon local considerations. Forces did not consider their responsibilities to the data

protection legislation or other forces and, now, non-police organisations. The detrimental effects of this are mitigated locally by a dependence upon local systems. Whilst efficient internal resource management is quite correctly a local matter, external responsibility for quality and timeliness is not optional and can only be fulfilled by strict adherence to nationally agreed standards.

5.19   The user, in real time, can access much of the management information available from PNC. For the more sophisticated enquiry PITO must supply the information. Until recent times this was done in printed form. Traditionally, enormous printouts have been produced and sent to forces only to be ignored because to 'plough through' them was not cost-effective. One of the consequences of this for PNC is that they are inundated with ad-hoc requests for information which, unless managed effectively, divert staff from other, more important duties. The requirements for information that cannot be accessed directly by the user should be reviewed and focussed upon current requirements. Wherever possible management information should be supplied in an electronic format.

> **Recommendation Three**
> **Her Majesty's Chief Inspector recommends that PITO review, as a matter of urgency, the supplier/customer relationship between PNC and forces, particularly in relation to the marketing of PNC functionality, and the type, frequency and validity of management information reports produced.**

(B) Other Prosecuting Agencies

5.20   Police are responsible for entering onto PNC Arrest/Summons information relating to external agency[23] prosecutions for recordable offences. Forces claim, with some validity, that the fact that these bodies do not notify them at the commencement of proceedings is often the reason for failing to achieve the required performance. If a record is created when the court result is received, the offence date may be many months earlier. The subsequent delay will suggest that the force is failing to achieve compliance.

5.21   At least one force has written to non-police agencies and advised them in detail of their responsibilities, and indeed a number of such agencies were not aware that the prosecution should be reported to the police. Whilst research conducted elsewhere suggests that these cases represent a small percentage of the total, forces need to manage their relationship with external prosecuting agencies to ensure that they meet their obligations.

(C) Training

5.22   As stated by HM Inspectorate, '. . . *The provision of high quality training is a key ingredient in ensuring all staff are equipped to obtain the maximum crime reduction benefits from PNC applications . . . . the systems are only as good as the information they contain.*'[24] To address these issues forces must provide operational

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23 For example RSPCA, DSS, Customs.
24 *On the Record* 7.5 et seq

(i) Operational personnel

5.23 In particular the training of operational personnel was found to be inadequate in a number of forces. In one force an example was given of an operational problem that could have been quickly resolved by the use of a Vehicle On-line Descriptive Search (VODS). Only one officer in a group of six was aware of the facility, the others had relied upon their control room to deal with the matter. If officers do not understand the potential of the system the appropriate action will not be initiated. During inspection focus groups, many front line uniform officers indicated they would welcome a PNC input on their periodic training days.

5.24 It is partly because the full functionality of PNC is not widely appreciated that the quality and timeliness of PSD submission is poor. Officers need to know why they have to be timely and accurate by understanding the benefits that are available to them.[25] A number of forces have devised PNC tracking and performance monitoring systems to highlight repetitive PSD completion errors. This is fed into corrective training. Whilst this initiative is to be commended, it should be used to complement and not replace adequate training at the outset.

5.25 Where PSD quality tracking is not in place, forces may wish to consider introducing appropriate measures to highlight all error sources and types to identify emerging trends and the evaluation of training provision, using existing software packages developed by other forces for this purpose. The training and awareness of operational personnel must be managed as part of an overall PNC strategy and not left to word of mouth or local 'experts'.

(ii) Data entry personnel

5.26 The second important strand is the training of data inputters. With a few notable exceptions, most forces regarded the PNC function as having low status and this had a direct impact on staffing levels and morale. The majority of personnel are civilian support staff, usually at the 1-2 grade, the lowest point on their salary spine. Although the work is specialised and often complex, few had received detailed, job-specific training. Some police officers were employed in PNC bureaux and their expertise was greatly valued, but this is clearly an unsatisfactory situation. Trained police officers should not be employed in jobs that can and should be managed by civilian support staff.

5.27 The following extracts from force inspections describe a situation that is typical of many forces;

> *'...The (PNC) Bureau has faced many challenges this summer with staff turnover, training/recruitment, secondments and other absences (including the*

personnel with adequate and relevant training, and inputters with sufficient resources and specialist training to meet operational demand. Whilst detailed examination of training was outside the terms of reference of this inspection, it has nonetheless found significant weaknesses in this vital area.

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[25] **'On the Record' Chapter 6 et seq**

Bureau Manager's own sick leave). In common with all forces, they have been asked to address not only the areas detailed above, but also the DNA project. I was advised that the latter has been completed....'

'...(it) would take some months to take effect because of recruitment, selection, training and gaining the necessary experience....'

5.28   The inspection teams were repeatedly told that backlogs had occurred because suitably qualified inputting staff could not be found. This clearly puts a premium on the retention of trained personnel and the management of specialist training.

5.29   Inadequate training has been raised as a matter of concern in each of the key reports on this subject since 1998, and was discussed at length in *'On the Record'*[26]. A key reason for the difficulties that many forces now face is the fact that not only have they allowed the quality of training and re-training to decline, but they have also ignored the need to have an adequate number of PNC accredited trainers. A significant number of forces have insufficient trainers to meet their needs and this has a direct impact on the ability of the force to resource adequately the PNC function. This will hopefully be addressed as they develop systems to implement Recommendation 13 of *'On the Record'*. There would be value, however, in independent confirmation of progress.

> **Recommendation Four**
> **Her Majesty's Chief Inspector recommends that Her Majesty's Inspector (Training), in consultation with PITO and National Police Training, conducts a review of the quality and availability of accreditation training for PNC trainers and the extent to which they are subsequently employed in forces.**

(D) The Courts

5.30   The ACPO PNC Compliance Strategy requires forces to enter the court result on PNC within 3 days of receipt from the court. Home Office Circular 24/1991 (Appendix Four) requires that magistrates' courts should supply the police with the result within 3 days, i.e. the court result should be on PNC no later than six days after the result is known. As local procedures differ and are often dependent upon manual processes the court to police time cannot be monitored centrally. However, although the inspection found no evidence of extensive delay in transferring information from courts to the police, there was evidence that the three-day target was not being met. Police forces have been encouraged to negotiate locally with courts to minimise delay and report any difficulties so that they can be resolved at a national level. Only one force, Northumbria, has requested such intervention, and the situation was satisfactorily resolved.

5.31   Whilst fully computerised links exist in only a few places, a significant number of courts allow the police to directly access their computer system to obtain results.

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[26] *'On the Record'* **7.5 et seq**

Alternatively transmission of a copy, usually a computer printout, of the court register is supplied.

> **Recommendation Five**
> **Her Majesty's Chief Inspector recommends that discussions take place between ACPO, PITO and other relevant stakeholders to examine what opportunities exist for a short term 'technology solution' for the inputting of court results, either involving NSPIS applications currently in development, or an interim solution.**

5.32   The inspection found that the relationship between police and the courts was generally good. There were however many examples of courts failing to respond to requests for information. In one case brought to the attention of HM Chief Inspector a court sought to charge police a fee for providing a court result.[27] In another, court staff refused to pass case result details over the telephone and the subsequent facsimile request received no reply. Chief officers have been compelled as a last resort to use police officers to search court archives, an expensive inappropriate option.

5.33   Delays are often exacerbated when the court initiates proceedings, as would be the case in the enforcement of a court order. It is often the case that the first intimation of the proceedings is when the court results are received, which badly affects 'Arrest/Summons' statistics for some forces.

5.34   This is not a problem that can be solved by the police service alone, it requires action at a number of points in the criminal justice system and close collaboration between stakeholder departments, including the Lord Chancellor's Department. In 1995 the Masefield Scrutiny into the Criminal Justice System recommended that courts should input data directly onto the PNC. There are undoubtedly improvements that can be made in the short term by forces to ensure that the process is speeded up. However, forces involved in the inspection unanimously made the point to HM Inspectorate that, whilst the capture of case results may have had some relevance when police officers were present in court for security and administration purposes, today police officers are seldom present at the conclusion of a case. The role of police is to prepare cases and act as witnesses. Responsibility for inputting court results onto PNC should rest firmly with the courts.

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[27] This is contrary to HO Circular 24/1991 (Appendix Four).

Recommendation Six

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector recommends that renewed and re-invigorated discussions should take place between relevant stakeholders to, (a) Ensure that local systems are in place to maximise co-operation with the courts to achieve their respective 72 hours targets and, (b) Work towards Magistrates' Courts and Crown Courts assuming full responsibility for inputting all case results directly onto PNC.

6. THE NEXT STEPS

6.1   The measures advocated in sections 4 and 5 are important to the long-term sustainability of performance but the key focus for the immediate future must be to build upon the progress to date and achieve the April 2002 performance targets.

6.2   The experience gained during the inspection has permitted the HMIC team to identify and develop a more realistic and sustainable performance framework (as set out in more detail in 6.6 – 6.10). However, it has also led HMIC to challenge the validity of the targets adopted for the first stage of the process and to propose alternatives.

(A) Arrest/Summons

6.3   Adherence to a national standard of one day for Arrest/Summons reports is not achievable by the service in the short to medium term. Whilst the desirability of all forces adhering to this standard is clear, the costs and logistical implications at this time are considerable. A typical example was a medium sized force that diligently attempted to implement new manual processes and achieved 80% of input within the 1-day target. To achieve the remaining 10% proved to be too resource intensive without an IT solution.

6.4   Any attempt at enforcement of the unachievable will fail. Equally damaging is the assumption by organisations outside the police service with direct access to PNC that the one-day benchmark is being achieved. HM Chief Inspector suggests that, now that the backlog of cases is clearing, consideration be given by ACPO to the use of an interim performance target leading to one day compliance, running parallel to the take up by the service of the NSPIS products. As, at the end of September 2001, half of the forces were inputting 90% of all Arrest/Summons records within 10 days this may be a suitable starting point. Any subsequent interim targets should be agreed by all organisations with an interest in the data and rigorously enforced.

(B) Impending Prosecutions

6.5   The performance target of clearing 4% of pre-July 2000 cases per two-week period was a 'blunt' and necessarily simplistic instrument to achieve a clearance of the massive backlog of old cases. For some forces this measure must be retained until they have cleared or validated their remaining backlogs. For the majority of forces, however, this measure has now fulfilled its purpose and is to be replaced by the 'Force Profile' system to be used permanently to monitor all forces' performance.

(C) Force Profile

6.6   The analysis of the best performing forces revealed that, where case results are being cleared promptly, at least 75.4% of the total workload should be less than 12 months old (i.e. in the current rolling 12 month period, shown as "Current Year" in Table 6). The remaining impending cases should all have been validated and the proportions in each 12-month period should not exceed the percentages shown in Table 6.

Table 6 – Force Profile
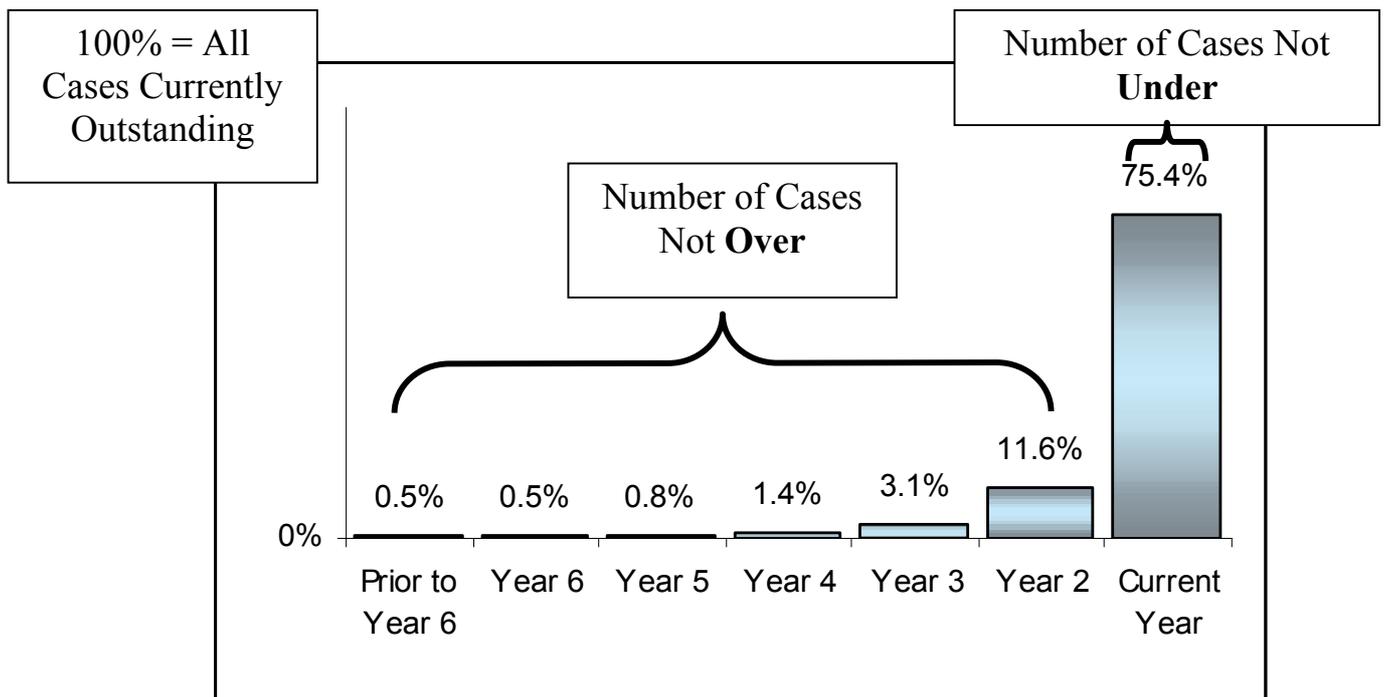
Year	6+	6	5	4	3	2	1[28]
Percentage of Total	0.5	0.5	0.8	1.4	3.1	11.6	75.4

6.7   The profile will 'roll on' every six months. The impending case element of the profile has the advantage of not calculating performance from a fixed date but considering all cases currently outstanding including those still 'in action'. The standard profile can be applied generically to all forces but is flexible enough to allow tailoring to individual circumstances, e.g. where local caseloads cause a legitimate variation from the standard percentages

6.8   A copy of the report as at 7th October is attached (Appendix Ten) which shows the larger forces carrying a significant number of old unresulted cases. This national template will be used until a local profile for each force can be created when that force has examined all old cases and validated them as legitimately outstanding.

6.9   The full Force Profile can also be extended to incorporate the Arrest/Summons performance and re-introduce the statistic showing the number of days from court result to entry onto PNC that was previously identified as misleading due to the backlog of cases at the outset. Without the confusion caused by the old cases, forces should be expected to have systems in place with courts locally to ensure timescales for input are achieved.

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[28] **Year 1 is the current year.**

> **Good Practice**
> In the **Metropolitan Police** area, a Criminal Justice Unit (Result Section) has been using, since January 2000, a diary system. All new cases are entered into a diary by their first court date. Daily court result sheets are compared to the diary listing and any adjournment date is then immediately entered into the diary and subsequently checked. This ensures that cases are not 'lost'.
>
> To control the number of Impending Prosecutions outstanding in response to warrants, Southwark Warrant Office has developed a system of warrant weeding in consultation with the CPS.

6.10   The main advantage of the proposed Force Profile approach is that it will allow performance to be monitored locally, in-force, as well as remotely, via statistics produced automatically by PITO. This could form part of HMIC's monitoring of forces and in any case should help to ensure that the current problems are not repeated.

> **Recommendation Seven**
> **Her Majesty's Chief Inspector recommends that following appropriate consultation with relevant stakeholders, a national inspection protocol[29] for PNC data quality and timeliness be introduced.**

(D) Achieving Best Value

6.11   Many of the problems underlying the poor PNC performance related to processes. Inefficiency in processes has rendered them ineffective, which raises a question as to whether they could possibly represent Best Value. Best Value is a particular responsibility of Police Authorities. The inspection disclosed that, in a minority of forces, the police authority had not received a formal briefing on this subject, nor had they been given the opportunity to discuss the matter with the chief officer. In relation to a subject that goes to the heart of effectiveness and efficiency, the involvement of the police authority is considered to be crucial. Given their responsibility for efficiency and effectiveness, the authorities must ensure that each force is maximising the potential of existing technology before investing in often-costly local solutions.

6.12   The inspection found no evidence of any intention, in any force, to expose PNC usage and working practices, as a discrete area, to the discipline of Best Value. The national protocol and Force Profile (Recommendation 7) will, if adopted, provide an ideal basis for a standardised approach to the issue and could inform individual Best Value Reviews (BVR). In view of the costs involved and national nature of the service provided by PNC, there would be advantage in a co-ordinated approach to

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[29] **When HMIC carry out inspections of forces and functions, they are carried out against written protocols, which set out the main areas to be examined and any standards expected.**

the management of Best Value Reviews. There are precedents for co-ordinating functional BVRs, the most obvious being Police Training.

> **Recommendation Eight**
> **Her Majesty's Chief Inspector recommends that following appropriate consultation with relevant stakeholders, The Secretary of State should consider using his powers under section 5 of the Local Government Act 1999, to require all police authorities to institute a Best Value Review of processes to ensure PNC data quality and timeliness. Such review should be conducted against a common template and terms of reference.**

(E) On-going audit and inspection

6.13   HMIC currently has a responsibility for the auditing of PNC. The audit is to ensure compliance with the PNC Audit Manual and the emphasis is very much on security and ensuring the presence of efficient business practices. Working within such a specific remit, the audit team are not addressing the issues relating to data quality and timeliness that have led to this report.

6.14   The continued involvement of HM Inspectorate needs to be considered. In effect, the inspection is merely part of a more extensive programme of work, leading to the delivery of significant improvement by April 2002. Much still needs to be done to ensure that reduction targets are met and performance in terms of timeliness and quality is maintained. The inspection has demonstrated the need for HM Inspectorate to examine the way it discharges its PNC audit responsibilities, both in relation to the deployment of existing specialist staff and the extent to which resources should be re-deployed.

> **Recommendation Nine**
> **Her Majesty's Chief Inspector recommends, that in consultation with the Standards Unit and other stakeholders, HM Inspectorate should urgently review their current PNC audit responsibilities in the light of the findings of this report, with a view to adopting a more proactive stance in relation to force performance, data quality and timeliness.**

(F) Mutual Support

6.15   Notwithstanding the national nature of PNC, the inspection found that working practices differed from force to force. Whilst the larger metropolitan forces can justify a 24 hour 7 days a week input bureau, the smaller forces find they have insufficient traffic to support this. Levels of investment, organisational arrangements, and business processes followed no national or even regional pattern. Local IT systems were seldom compatible between forces.

6.16   If all forces moved towards the national standard, there would be scope for forces to provide mutual out of hours support. Particularly in relation to Arrest/Summons record creation, and supported by service level agreements, the larger forces could support smaller neighbours or a regional solution could be found. For this to succeed, in addition to security considerations, some form of electronic transfer of information would be required be that telephone, e-mail or facsimile.

Recommendation Ten
Her Majesty's Chief Inspector recommends, that in consultation with other stakeholders, ACPO IM Committee initiate research with a view to encouraging mutual support between forces for out of hours PNC data entry purposes.

6.17   The support given to forces by HMIC-led teams within the period of this inspection has been crucial to the improvements made in many forces. The continued progress of improvements and the dissemination and rigorous adoption of good practice and model templates will require significant dedicated effort.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 This section sets out all of the recommendations found in the main body of the report.

Recommendation One (Paragraph 5.2)
Her Majesty's Chief Inspector recommends that ACPO nationally review the position and priority of PNC within the structure of portfolio holders to reflect both the technical and operational importance of PNC.

Recommendation Two (Paragraph 5.11)
Her Majesty's Chief Inspector draws renewed attention to Recommendations 11 to 20 of *'On the Record' (2000)*, and recommends that all forces develop appropriate systems, overseen at a senior level, to ensure that they are implemented.

Recommendation Three (Paragraph 5.19)
Her Majesty's Chief Inspector recommends that PITO review, as a matter of urgency, the supplier/customer relationship between PNC and forces, particularly in relation to the marketing of PNC functionality, and the type, frequency and validity of management information reports produced.

Recommendation Four (Paragraph 5.29)
Her Majesty's Chief Inspector recommends that Her Majesty's Inspector (Training), in consultation with PITO and National Police Training, conducts a review of the quality and availability of accreditation training for PNC trainers and the extent to which they are subsequently employed in forces.

Recommendation Five (Paragraph 5.31)
Her Majesty's Chief Inspector recommends that discussions take place between ACPO, PITO and other relevant stakeholders to examine what opportunities exist for a short term 'technology solution' for the inputting of court results, either involving NSPIS applications currently in development, or an interim solution.

Recommendation Six (Paragraph 5.34)
Her Majesty's Chief Inspector recommends that renewed and re-invigorated discussions should take place between relevant stakeholders to, (a) Ensure that local systems are in place to maximise co-operation with the courts to achieve their respective 72 hours targets and, (b) Work towards Magistrates' Courts and Crown Courts assuming full responsibility for inputting all case results directly onto PNC.

Recommendation Seven (Paragraph 6.10)
Her Majesty's Chief Inspector recommends that following appropriate consultation with relevant stakeholders, a national inspection protocol for PNC data quality and timeliness be introduced.

Recommendation Eight (Paragraph 6.12)
Her Majesty's Chief Inspector recommends, that following appropriate consultation with relevant stakeholders, the Secretary of State should consider using his powers under Section 5 of the Local Government Act 1999, to require all police authorities to institute a Best Value

Review of processes to ensure PNC data quality and timeliness. Such review should be conducted against a common template and terms of reference.

Recommendation Nine (Paragraph 6.14)

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector recommends, that in consultation with the Standards Unit and other stakeholders, HM Inspectorate should urgently review their current PNC audit responsibilities in the light of the findings of this report, with a view to adopting a more proactive stance in relation to force performance, data quality and timeliness.

Recommendation Ten (Paragraph 6.16)

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector recommends, that in consultation with other stakeholders, ACPO IM Committee initiate research with a view to encouraging mutual support between forces for out of hours PNC data entry purposes.

8. **SCHEDULE OF APPENDICES**

Appendix	Document	Reference in Text
One	*'On the Record'* Recommendations	1.8
Two	ACPO PNC Compliance Strategy	1.7
Three	Critical Time for Calculation of Performance	2.6
Four	Instructions to Courts re Timely Delivery of Results	2.9
Five (A)	Arrest/Summons - National Performance	
Five (B)	Impending Prosecutions - National Performance	
Six (A)	Arrest/Summons - Force Performance 11th March 2001.	3.1
Six (B)	Impending Prosecutions Force Performance 11th March 2001.	
Seven (A)	Arrest/Summons - Force Performance 7th October 2001	
Seven (B)	Impending Prosecutions - Force Performance 7th October 2001	
Eight	Explanation of Graphical Representations	3.9
Nine	ACPO Structure	5.2
Ten	Force Profiles	6.8

Appendix One

'On The Record' Recommendations Relating To PNC

Recommendation 9 (Chapter 5 page 86)
Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that all forces produce position statements in relation to the 1998 PRG report recommendations on Phoenix Data Quality and the ACPO Compliance Strategy for the Police National Computer. He further recommends that forces produce a detailed action plan, with timescales, to implement their recommendations. The position statements and action plans together with progress updates should be available for audit and inspection during future HMIC PNC Compliance Audits and inspection of forces. Forces should send copies of action plans to HMIC's PNC Compliance Audit Section by 1 February 2001.

Recommendation 11 (Chapter 7 page 111)
Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that the marketing, use and development of national police information systems is integrated into appropriate force, local and departmental, strategic planning documents.

Recommendation 12 (Chapter 7 page 112)
Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that where not already in place, forces should establish a strategic PNC Steering Group. This group should develop and be responsible for a strategic plan covering the development, use and marketing of PNC and Phoenix.

Recommendation 13 (Chapter 7 page 118)
Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that all forces conduct an audit of their present in-force PNC trainers to ensure they have received nationally accredited training. Any individuals who have not been accredited as PNC trainers by National Police Training should not conduct in-force PNC training.

Recommendation 14 (Chapter 8 page 145)
Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that forces ensure that each Phoenix inputting department develops an audit trail to register the return of substandard PSDs, via line supervisors, to originating officers. The system developed should include a mechanism to ensure the prompt return of PSDs. Forces should also incorporate locally based audit trails, monitoring the passage of returned PSDs between line supervisors and originating officers.

Recommendation 15 (Chapter 8 page 146)
Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that forces develop clear guidelines to cover their expectations of officers on the return of incomplete or substandard PSDs. This guidance should be communicated to all staff and regular checks conducted to ensure compliance.

Recommendation 16 (Chapter 8 page 148)
Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that forces should develop a system to ensure that all ad-hoc descriptive and intelligence updates registered on local force systems are automatically entered onto the Phoenix system. The policy should clearly outline whose responsibility it is to notify Phoenix inputters of any descriptive changes. Forces should also ensure that the policy is marketed to staff and that regular checks are conducted to ensure compliance.

Recommendation 17 (Chapter 8 page 150)

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that forces develop a formal system to ensure that a proportion of each member of Phoenix inputting staff's work is regularly checked for accuracy. Forces should also consider the benefits of measuring other aspects of their work including speed of entry and compliance with policies. Performance outcomes should be evidenced in staff PDRs.

Recommendation 18 (Chapter 9 page 164)

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends, where not already present, that forces develop risk assessed Force Data Protection Officer audit programmes.

Recommendation 19 (Chapter 9 page 164)

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that forces integrate PNC and Phoenix data quality compliance into their performance review and inspectorate programmes for BCUs and specialist departments.

Recommendation 20 (Chapter 9 page 165)

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that PSD performance statistics should be incorporated in routine force performance information. The statistics should identify omissions and errors in individual fields, in particular, descriptive information. Appropriate accountability measures should be established to ensure that any performance shortfalls identified are addressed.

Appendix Two

ACPO Compliance Strategy on PNC

Security Classification:		UNCLASSIFIED		
Accessible on the ACPO Intranet by:		All		
Contents may be seen by:		General Public		
Author:	**Richard Earland**	Force/Organisation:		**Kent Constabulary**
Date: Created:	**16 February 2000**	Telephone:	**01622 652603**	
Date: Revised:		Reference:		

STATUS: At its meeting on 27 April 2000 Chief Constables' Council agreed to accept this strategy and to recommend to Chief Constables that they adopt it for implementation as appropriate in their forces. It was further agreed that the target date for implementation should be the end of the financial year 2000/2001.

Compliance Strategy
For the
Police National Computer

CONTENTS

1.   FOREWORD

2.   MANAGING INFORMATION STRATEGICALLY

3.   KEY ACTION AREAS

          Resources
          Leadership
          Organisational Positioning
          Training
          Internal Scrutiny
          Performance Indicators
          Accountability
          Ownership/ Sponsorship

4.   KEY ACTIONS

          Relevant IMS Actions
          PNC Compliance Actions
          ACPO and ACPOS Councils
          NPT
          HMIC
          PITO
          Individual Forces

5.   THE WAY AHEAD

6.   APPENDIX "A" – PROPOSED PHOENIX PERFORMANCE
                 INDICATORS

FOREWORD

This strategy is subordinate to the National Police Information Management Strategy (IMS) and designed to be applied to PNC. The IMS is owned by Chief Constables' Council/ACPOS Council and was developed by the ACPO Information Management (IM) Committee.

The Service must recognise that Performance Indicators are needed for all national systems covering :-

- Accuracy
- Timeliness
- Completeness
- Relevancy

Strategy status and ownership

Chief Constables' Council and ACPOS Council own the strategy.

Her Majesty's Inspectorate and where appropriate ACPO IM Committee oversee the application of the strategy. Individual forces and agencies have responsibilities to implement the strategy.

Reasons For A PNC Compliance Strategy

The drivers for the development of this strategy have been identified in the IMS (see page 4) and will continue to be: –

Acknowledged shortfalls in data handling, accuracy and timeliness – as evidenced by the PRG report on Phoenix Data Quality.

Data Protection principles governing Subject Access and the move after transitional periods to full application of the new Act beyond 2000. At present the Service may not meet the Registrar's standards on Relevance, Accuracy and Timeliness. The Registrar has already seen the PRG Report and is aware of the issues which face the service. Given the Registrar's considerable enforcement powers concerning data handling, compliance is essential.

The Service is failing to maximise the full business potential of its major national crime reduction and investigative IT systems. As Mr M. O'Byrne C.C. Bedfordshire states in his report on proposed Phoenix Performance Indicators "given the current scrutiny which is being applied to the management of the service, the fact that the service has stated that the future of effective policing lies in an intelligence led approach….it is essential that the service puts its house in order as quickly as possible in the management of this key system."

We must be able to demonstrate that we can be trusted to deal with information about individuals with integrity – this requires adherence to agreed standards.

The Freedom of Information Act will be drafted so that it is compatible with the principles of the Data Protection Act.

The Human Rights Act will pose fundamental questions on how the Service handles and uses data – the Home Secretary has stated, " Rights flow from duties – not the other way round. One person's freedom is another person's responsibility."

If our systems are defective The Freedom of Information Act, the Human Rights Act and the Data Protection Act will increase the likelihood of litigation against the Service based on data handling procedures and use in operational situations.

The ACPO/ACPOS Information Systems Community Security Policy provides a set of security requirements for safeguarding sensitive information including procedural and compliance issues. All members of the Community are required to comply with its content.

Best Value demands that we " deliver services to clear standards – covering both cost and quality – by the most effective, economic and efficient means available " Best Value Policing, DETR 1998. This has clear implications given that the annual costs in 1998/99 for PNC services amounted to £17.6 million.

Strategy benefits

Full implementation of the Compliance Strategy will allow the service to demonstrate a more professional and ethical approach to data handling. This will enable the Service to continue to develop the investigative and crime reduction capacity of its national systems confident that it can stand scrutiny and is helping to improve operational performance. It will also allow the Service to approach issues of disclosure with greater confidence that the data will be relevant, timely and accurate.

Managing Information Strategically

The publication of a National Information Management Strategy recognises the need to shift from poor data quality management systems to a perspective where users understand their role both as providers and users of data and as a consequence, information being of a quality level which means it is fit for purpose.

This Compliance Strategy sets the framework and performance targets to ensure the service at large ensures effective management of National Police Data held in the PNC. The performance regime will require significant improvement in data quality in accordance with the principles enshrined in the IMS.

Key Action Areas

The areas this strategy identifies as requiring a response are collectively referred to as Key Action Areas. They are -

1. Resources
2. Leadership
3. Organisational Positioning
4. Training
5. Internal Scrutiny
6. Performance Indicators
7. Accountability
8. Ownership/Sponsorship

A more detailed breakdown of these Key Action Areas now follows

1.   Resources

a) In some Forces a significant under resourcing of data handling functions has contributed to present problems -

b) Forces should establish the present level of resources committed to the gathering, collation, input and use of data and should determine the level required to achieve the principles behind the IMS. The PNC Compliance Performance Indicators proposed may assist in defining the resource levels required and the appropriate competencies of staff.

2.   Leadership

a) To improve performance results senior managers need to understand the benefits of present systems and the potential for the future. Serious concerns surrounding the perceived lack of knowledge and commitment to PNC were clearly laid out in the Police Research Group Paper " Phoenix Data Quality". This stated " Line and Divisional managers, as well as Chief Officers, should be held accountable for compliance with these standards". Therefore -

b) Forces/ agencies should establish the level of awareness amongst senior staff of the capabilities of PNC/Quest/CCA/VODS and ensure that the full potential of these national systems is appreciated.
c) Senior staff should explore how best use can be made of these systems to improve force performance in both serious /series and volume crime. / (IMS ACTION NO. 13 - HOW THE IMS WILL SUPPORT A FORCES MEDIUM TERM PLAN).

d) Forces may wish to review their in-force crime reduction strategy to ensure that the national systems are integrated properly.

3. **Organisational Positioning**

a) The IMS recognises that each force is different but forces would benefit from viewing the national systems primarily as aids in crime investigation as opposed to functions of record keeping -

b) Forces should be mindful that where they place the local management of Police Information Systems within the organisation [e.g within C.I.D or Criminal Justice] can influence whether staff see their value as merely record keeping systems or powerful crime investigation tools.

c) The IMS action plan identifies the need to re-focus the management of information so that an organisation-wide perspective is achieved. (IMS ACTION PLAN No. 14-page 15)

4. **Training**

The present situation has three dimensions: -

a) The information user [operational officer] must be provided with sufficient awareness to understand the capabilities of the services available and their own responsibilities in providing source data.

b) The information provider [terminal operator] must have the requisite skills to use the systems to their full potential and offer guidance on capabilities to operational staff.

c) Line managers should be trained to recognise how information systems can best contribute to operational performance

All the above should be addressed by national training programmes and adherence to national training standards.

5. **Internal Scrutiny**

The Service should recognise the benefits of taking a proactive approach to auditing to maximise performance -

a) Forces should comply with documentation and Manuals governing the use of PNC.

b) Individual forces should ensure that reporting lines exist to allow Data Protection Officers to raise matters at a senior level.

c) Where appropriate Internal Performance and Best Value Reviews should focus on optimum use of data and compliance to standards and make clear the links between effective data management and operational performance.

d) Forces should understand the reason for their performance against national P.I's and take action where appropriate.

6. **Performance Indicators**

Performance Indicators specifically for Phoenix data standards have already been developed by Mr M. O'Byrne. Details of the proposed P.I's are included as an appendix to this strategy. The Service should recognise the need for these P.I's on data standards, acknowledging that some are aspirational and influenced by other organisations. Their staged implementation in some areas presents a progress path for forces to follow designed to deliver sustainable compliance -

a) The Service should formally adopt the P.I.'s for Phoenix data standards.

b) Individual forces should establish their position in relation to existing and future P.I's, understand the reasons behind their performance and take appropriate action.

7. **Accountability**

The Service should recognise the increasing importance of information as a resource. Issues in relation to audit and accountability must assume a higher profile -

a) The Service will continue to be subject to separate PNC compliance audits by HMIC.

b) HMIC will be able to explore the linkage between efficient data management and operational effectiveness during inspections of forces.

c) HMIC will be able to audit forces against the nationally agreed data management P.I's.

d) HMIC will be able to inspect in-force audit processes.

8.   Ownership and Sponsorship

For the strategy to be implemented effectively, monitored and remain relevant in the event of change it must have an owner -

a) ACPO and ACPOS Councils own the PNC Compliance Strategy.

b) ACPO Information Management Committee will have on-going responsibility for the IMS which is the overarching framework within which this PNC Compliance Strategy sits.

c) The strategy will only work if the partners in the strategy fulfil their KEY ACTIONS and fully adopt the principles within them. The partners include:-

- NPT
- HMIC
- PITO
- Individual Forces

Their individual KEY ACTIONS now follow

KEY ACTIONS

The PNC Compliance Strategy assumes the actions in the IMS "action plan", will be carried out.   The action plan in the IMS and its relevance to the PNC Compliance Strategy is shown in the table below:-

	IMS ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	RELEVANCE TO PNC COMPLIANCE
1.	ACPO Council endorse the IMS as formal ACPO Policy.	ACPO Council	Provides the overarching framework for PNC Compliance Strategy.
2.	To use the agreed IMS policy statements as a basis for discussion with all non-police agencies about information exchange and new IT developments.	All agencies using PNC.	IMPLIED throughout this document.
6.	Identify where within the ACPO/PITO structures responsibility rests for Corporate (Service-wide) Information Management Policy. NB: The body which has responsibility for Service-wide Information Management Policy will be the final arbiter in respect of data standard and data management issues.	ACPO IM Committee	Establishes the role of IM Committee in ensuring on-going improvement in the strategic use of information across the service
7.	Identify (with the support of members of the ACPO IM Futures Group) which ACPO Committee is responsible for developing the high-level policy statements and ensuring all ACPO Committees take account of this Strategy in their development work.		
8.	Determine how the ACPO IM Committee will shift its focus from "Products" to "Information Management" and support the continued development of IMS.		
9.	Agree the basis of Service-wide Benchmarking of Information Management and Technology in support of the IMS both in terms of the methodology, process and resources.	ACPO IM Committee ACPO Council HMIC	Establish the IM Benchmarking approach includes section on Data Quality and IM Policy formation.
10.	Use the IMS/IT Benchmarking Tool Kit being developed by ACPO IM Committee (see 9) as the basis for evaluating the effectiveness of Information Management and Technology Services within Forces	Forces	As above

13.	Determine how the IMS will support the Force's medium/long term Strategic Plan and then where necessary re-align local IS/IT Strategies with the Service-wide Information Manage-ment Strategy. In doing so, Forces should ensure that local strategies support the high level policy statements.	Forces	Ensures Forces see PNC as a strategic crime fighting tool and a Chief Officer has overall responsibility for managing information as a corporate resource.
14.	Where Forces have "Computer Departments", these are to consider how the issues of managing information across the organisation will be delivered and where appropriate re-focus their organisation to ensure the high level policy statements can be implemented.		
15.	To carry out an information audit at Force level against the policy statements and determine what action needs to be taken locally to meet the agreed standards.	Force Chief Officers with responsibility for Information Management	Compliance with PI's.
17.	To commission a review of the impact of IMS on the current Service Training for IT Delivery and propose a way forward for a Service-wide Strategy of training and education which supports the IMS.	ACPO IM Committee	Training and education needs addressed.

Chief Constables' Council agreed at its meeting on 27 April 2000 to accept this PNC Compliance Strategy and to recommend to Chief Constables that they adopt it for implementation as appropriate in their forces. It was agreed further that the target date for implementation should be the end of the financial year 2000/2001.

In so doing Council also agreed:

a) That the PNC Compliance Strategy should be visited at least annually by ACPO IM and Crime Committees to assess its relevance to the Service and reflect developments in Police Information systems and new legislation.

b) To adopt the Phoenix Data Quality Performance Indicators (see Annex A).

c) To develop and implement a unified approach to Data Protection auditing by enhancing the ACPO Data Protection Audit Manual.

d) That ACPO IM Committee would consider the benefits of developing compliance strategies and where appropriate P.I's for all national systems covering accuracy, timeliness, completeness and relevance.

NPT is invited to: -

a) Establish competency levels required in the use of PNC for different generic roles within the service e.g. uniform patrol officer, detective and S.I.O.

b) Set minimum standards of training for PNC operators and quality assure training delivered via non-NPT sources.

c) Ensure that opportunities are taken in all training delivered to emphasise the linkage between operational performance and information systems e.g. regional detective training and SCIMITAR.

d) Develop a national skills profile to assist forces in selection of appropriate staff for training in the use of Police Information systems.

e) Maintain a database of nationally approved PNC trainers.

HMIC is invited to:-

a) Utilise inspections to advise forces of the links between force performance and use of Police Information systems.

b) Identify and advise the Service on the links between efficiency plans, best value and data management.

c) Consider including within the inspection process an assessment of individual force action plans designed to deliver their obligations to the strategy.

PITO is invited to: -

a) Ensure production and maintenance of relevant user manuals for PNC.

b) Ensure all users [including non-police users] are aware of the IMS and the PNC Compliance Strategy and HMIC's role in policing the system.

c) Provide a marketing strategy to support the thrust of the Service in moving the focus of Police Information systems from record keeping to crime investigation and performance improvement, in keeping with the IMS.

Individual Forces should: -

a) Comply with the IMS and PNC Compliance action plans.
b) Be aware of and comply with, the ACPO Data Protection Audit Manual and other system manuals. When new systems are developed they should be used according to the operating rules provided.

c) Ensure that appropriate staff are selected for training in PNC, and where appropriate apply the national competency profile [generated by NPT] and train to the national standard where these have been set.

d) Establish the present level of resources committed to gathering, collation, input and use of data and determine the level required to achieve the principles in the IMS. The P.I's proposed may assist in defining resource levels required and the appropriate competencies those staff will need.

e) Establish the level of awareness amongst senior staff of the capabilities of PNC/Quest/CCA/VODS and ensure that the full potential of these national systems is appreciated.

f) Establish robust quality assurance processes in line with the IMS action plans.

g) Ensure that reporting lines exist to allow Data Protection Officers to raise matters at a senior level.

h) Ensure that internal Best Value and Performance Reviews focus on optimum use of data and compliance to standards and make clear the links between effective data management and operational performance.

i) Understand the reason for their performance against national P.I's and take action where appropriate.

j) Be aware of the importance of the Phoenix source document. Periodic reviews of the submission process should be carried out to ensure efficiency.

It is important for the Service to recognise that non-compliance by a single force can undermine not only the strategy but the integrity of the whole Service.

THE WAY AHEAD

This document represents the start of a continuous process of monitoring, evaluation and development for the Service and should be examined at least annually. It is important that the PNC Compliance Strategy is also visited on an annual basis through a formal process by ACPO Crime and IM Committees and Chief Constables' Council to ensure that it remains relevant to the Service's needs and sympathetic to future developments.

This strategy should be considered as any new national system is developed.

PHOENIX PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

<u>TIMELINESS PERFORMANCE INDICATORS</u>

Arrest and Charge

1. Initial details satisfying operational need 90% within 24 hours.
2. Full entry - 90% within 5 days.
3. Once compliance with 1 and 2 above is obtained then a staged improvement to 90% within 24 hours for full entry.

Bail Conditions

1. Police bail 100% within 24 hours.

Eventually the Service should aspire to establishing an identical PI standard in relation to court bail conditions. Appropriate technology and agreements need to be in place before this can be realised.

Court Case Results - Police Entered

1. 100% entered within 72 hours of coming into police possession.

This PI standard will remain valid only whilst work is continuing on the computerised link between forces and magistrates courts.

Court Case Results - Court Entered

1. 100% within 24 hours.

<u>QUALITY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS</u>

These indicators must be supported by in-force dip sampling.

1. Number of offences with method recorded - 90%
2. Number of offences with location postcode recorded - 95%
3. Number of addresses with postcode recorded - 95%
4. Number of offences (England and Wales) recorded to the 4th level ACPO Offence Code - 95%
5. Number of marks, scars, abnormalities created with at least one keyword included - 95%

It is important to note that whilst forces could (and currently do) use the skeleton record approach to achieve the timeliness PI - they would need to complete a full record to achieve the quality P.I.'s. So using the 2 suites of indicators would solve the current problem of forces getting skeleton records on quickly and not pursuing full records. It would also permit the fast entry of essential operational information.

The strategy which has been developed by the working group details the nature and depth of development forces need to undertake to deliver the improvements required across all Police Information Systems but particularly PNC applications. It is the groups' belief that not until aspects of the strategy (e.g. resourcing) are implemented will the capacity and approach exist within forces to deliver performance to the PI standards proposed, albeit that the standards are correct.

It is recognised that a significant number of forces do not achieve the present PI standards. This is likely to be even more pronounced given the more exacting targets proposed. Without commitment of resources and application of the strategy the working group feel performance will not improve and could worsen (some forces who have tackled part of their under performance to PI's by dedicating resources to areas such as backlogs have suffered alarming drops in performance to phoenix PI's in other areas). To ensure that only appropriate inferences are made over future PI

performance, forces undertaking such development work should firstly notify and agree with PITO a work schedule. PITO in turn can then attach explanatory notes to any published PI performance data.

The working group recognise the urgency that needs to be attached to the whole area of data quality and believe the above approaches will secure the committed response required.

Appendix Three

Critical Time for the Calculation of Performance

The text below explains how the two main performance indicators used in this inspection were generated, including targets where relevant.

Arrest/Summons

This report is published as a PNC statistic every calendar month.

From information received, the PNC inputter will enter an event date into the data field labelled 'Stage Process Date'. Performance is measured from the date of the event to the date the information is input into this field .To comply with the ACPO strategy the 'Stage Process Date' field must be completed not more than 24 hours after the event.

An event is when a person is;
- Arrested
- Charged
- Reported
- Summonsed

Arrested only applies to offences which are not dealt with in one of the other three ways (identified above), such as Prevention of Terrorism, Breach of the Peace, and where the subject is not dealt with for the offence for example, because of a mental health problem. It should be used when a suspect is remanded on 47(3) Police Bail.[30]

Where a person has been cautioned for the offence, the reported option will be used.

If the arrest/summons input is delayed other forces/agencies will not be aware of the impending prosecution**.**

Impending Prosecutions

This statistic is not based on timelines but on the total number of arrest/summons reports without a court result. This is measured in six-month time bands from the start of Phoenix on the 22nd May 1995 and before; i.e. the arrest/summons was created in that time band. At the conclusion of the inspection the timeliness measure will be re-introduced.

All forces should reduce Impending Prosecutions first recorded prior to the 1st July 2000 by 4% per two-week period. This is a reduction from 100% to zero over 25 two-week periods. A final total of zero will rarely be achieved, there will always be legitimately impending cases, however, preliminary results from forces that are performing well indicate this represents 5% or less of the total.

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[30] **The 47(3) instruction is contrary to the PNC User Manual, which is awaiting update.**

Appendix Four

<u>Instructions to Courts re Timely Delivery of Results[31]</u>

<u>Home Office Circular 24/1991: Provision of Court Results to the Police.</u>

3 June 1991

To: The Clerk to the Justices
The Clerk to the Magistrates Courts Committee

The purpose of this circular is, first, to draw to the attention of justices' clerks the conclusion of the Home Affairs Select Committee 1989-90, in its Report on Criminal Records, that it is very important that verified court results should be provided quickly to the police; and, second, to suggest, as a matter of good practice, a target time within which copies of the verified register should normally be available to the police.

1.   The Select Committee report reflected its concern about the time taken for information contained in court results to reach the police National Identification Bureau, and the consequent difficulties in providing courts in subsequent proceedings with up to date information about defendants' previous convictions. The Government's response to the Committee's report confirms its agreement that, when the computer systems and communications interfaces are in place which would permit the direct electronic flow in information about court results to the national collection of criminal records, the courts should assume responsibility for transferring this information. In the meantime, however, justices' clerks are asked to look at ways of reducing so far as is possible delays in the provision of verified results to their local forces.

2.   At present the ability of courts to provide this information varies markedly from area to area, with some courts finding it hard to provide results in less than two weeks. There appears to be no clear correlation between performance and court size or computerisation: manual courts and some large metropolitan courts can provide results very quickly.

3.   The Select Committee recommended that court results should be supplied to the police within a specified time. The Home Secretary recognises that the priority which this work should receive relative to the other work of the courts must be a matter for local management in the light of local circumstances. But in the interests of the effective operation of the criminal justice system as a whole, the Home Secretary considers that every effort should be made to supply the police with copies of verified court results within <u>3 working days</u> of each day's sitting. This is a national target; and clearly where courts can or already do better they are encouraged to do so. It is not intended that courts should introduce charges for providing the police with court records.

4.   Results include all completed cases, and interim results e.g. bail decisions etc, and ideally should be in the form of a copy of the register. However, it is not intended that, in meeting the aim of this circular, existing mutually agreed arrangements between courts and their local forces should be disrupted. Rather the aim should be to upgrade the arrangements in an effort to meet the recommended target.

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[31] The continuation of this criteria has been agreed with the Lord Chancellors Department.

Crown Courts

Court Business Extract B2208[32]
September 1991

At the conclusion of Crown Court proceedings, case results must be notified to the police. The police use the information to update their local records and, where appropriate, pass information on to victims of crime. They are also required to notify the result of more serious offences to the National Information Bureau (NIB) which maintains a national criminal records database. The data collected in this way is used to prepare the antecedent history of defendants for use by judges and magistrates when dealing with bail applications, breaches of sentences and sentencing. It is therefore vital that information passed to the police for these purposes is given quickly and accurately. The ensure that this happens the following procedures must be followed;

- Details of case results should be sent to the police by sending a copy of the court record sheet. This information should be sent even if other offences or trials of co-defendants are outstanding.

- The court record sheet and any accompanying information must be sent within 3 working days of each hearing.

- The information should be sent to the police in accordance with arrangements made locally. This will normally be to the Crown Court Liaison Officer who will act as the focal point for relaying the information to those who require it.

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[32] **Court Business is a monthly internal Court Service publication.**

Appendix Five

(A) Arrest/Summons - National Performance

The ACPO compliance standard for arrest/summons entry onto PNC is 90% of the records entered within one day. Indicating which forces are achieving this does not give an indication of the underlying trend. For example a force could over period of months have improved from, say 35 to 89% in one day but still not be compliant.

The illustration below indicates the national average number of cases recorded by forces in one day.

	Apr-01	May-01	Jun-01	Jul-01	Aug-01	Sep-01
Percentage of Cases entered within One Day	**38**	**40**	**43**	**48**	**51**	**55**
Number of Days to Achieve 90%	**55**	**39**	**38**	**35**	**28**	**37**
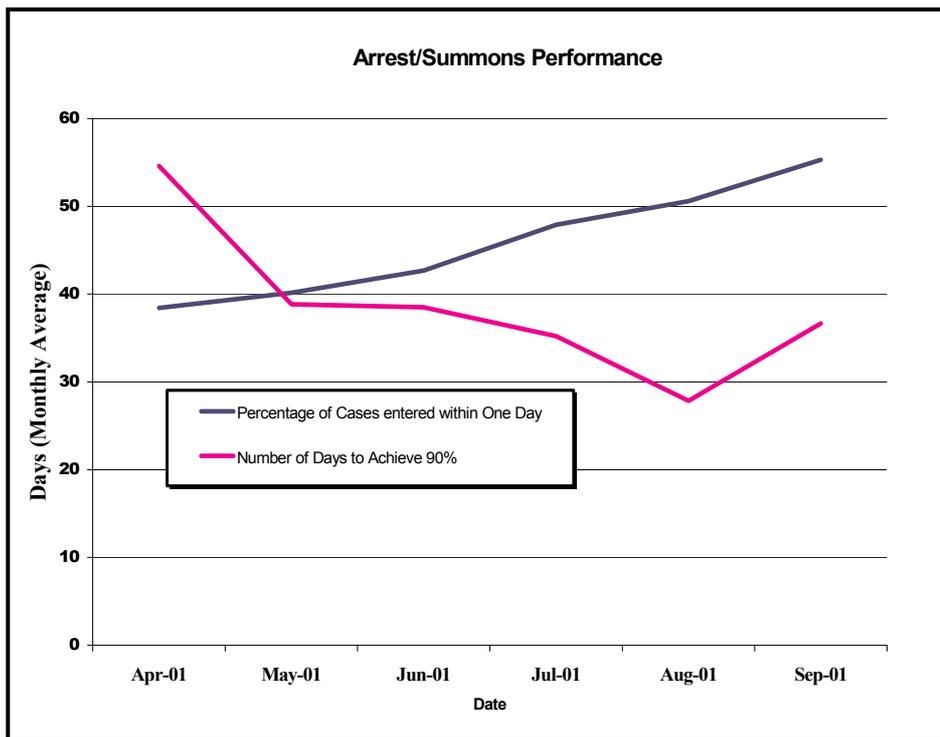
(B) Impending Prosecutions – National Performance

The chart indicates a reduction in the number of cases first recorded prior to the 1st July 2000. if present performance continues the only cases left by the 1st April 2002 are those that are still 'live'.

Cases Recorded			
Date	**Pre-July 2000**	**Post-July 2000**	**Total**
11/03/01	216891	233698	450589
25/03/01	209634	238926	448560
08/04/01	202596	246717	449313
22/04/01	198142	256483	454625
06/05/01	191095	263362	454457
20/05/01	183824	266904	450728
03/06/01	175232	271603	446835
17/06/01	162093	272998	435091
01/07/01	152995	273487	426482
15/07/01	143883	275280	419163
29/07/01	134786	274154	408940
12/08/01	127454	272554	400008
26/08/01	120364	273980	394344
09/09/01	113731	273842	387573
23/09/01	106053	271930	377983
07/10/01	98296	270336	368632
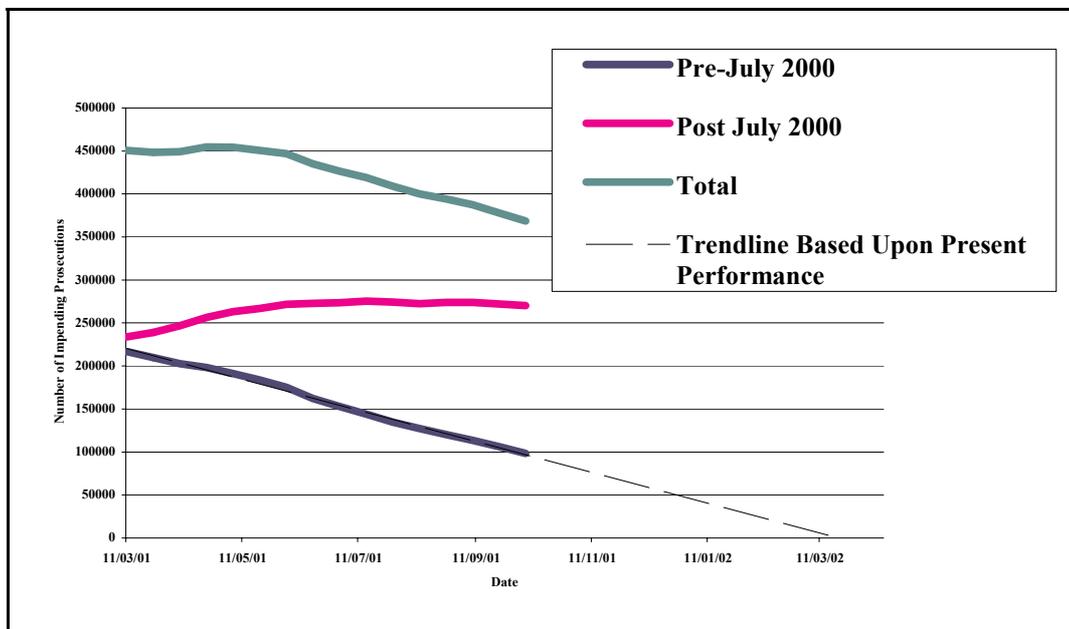
Appendix Six

(A) Arrest/Summons Force Performance - 11th March 2001.

For example, as shown in column (1), Avon and Somerset took 30 days to enter the first 90% of arrest/summons inputs onto PNC. Column (2) shows that the force entered 84% within the 24 hours target, i.e. the remaining 6% took a further 29 days to enter.

	(1)	(2)
Force	**Days[33]**	**%[34]**
Cambridgeshire Constabulary	1	90
Lancashire Constabulary	1	93
Kent Constabulary	1	94
City of London Police	1	96
Metropolitan Police	4	77
Ministry of Defence	5	65
Gloucestershire Constabulary	7	14
Humberside Police	12	65
Devon and Cornwall Constabulary	12	73
Guernsey Police	13	39
Dorset Police	13	62
Hampshire Constabulary	13	69
West Mercia Constabulary	16	73
Essex Police	17	9
Cumbria Constabulary	18	71
North Yorkshire Police	20	0
West Yorkshire Police	22	51
Derbyshire Constabulary	23	36
Leicestershire Constabulary	23	50
Norfolk Constabulary	24	86
Dyfed Powys Police	26	1
Sussex Police	26	76
Northamptonshire Police	30	9
Bedfordshire Police	30	21
Avon and Somerset Constabulary	30	84
Northumbria Police	32	0
South Yorkshire Police	32	80
Nottinghamshire Police	41	1
Greater Manchester Police	44	3
Merseyside Police	47	21
Thames Valley Police	49	10
West Midlands Police	49	53
Cleveland Police	51	75
Gwent Police	52	0
Staffordshire Police	55	11
Suffolk Constabulary	62	3
British Transport Police	68	4
Hertfordshire Constabulary	69	0
Wiltshire Constabulary	73	38
Surrey Police	74	17
Cheshire Constabulary	84	0
South Wales Police	86	20
North Wales Police	86	39

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[33] **The number of days taken to enter the first 90% of cases onto PNC. The ACPO compliance standard is one day.**

[34] **The percentage of cases entered onto PNC within one day. Compliance with the ACPO standard requires 90%.**

Isle of Man	107	1
Lincolnshire Police	109	14
Jersey	146	6
Warwickshire Constabulary	369	42
Durham Constabulary	448	1
National Average	**55 Days**	**38%**

(B) Impending Prosecutions Force Performance - 11th March 2001

Force	(1)[35]	(2)	(3)	(4)
Avon & Somerset	2308	5460	7768	92
Bedfordshire	1532	1870	3402	61
British Transport Police	7124	3093	10217	285
Cambridgeshire	622	2322	2944	25
Cheshire	3738	3902	7640	150
City of London	900	607	1507	36
Cleveland	4541	3374	7915	182
Cumbria	1158	2692	3850	46
Derbyshire	888	3176	4064	36
Devon & Cornwall	766	3378	4144	31
Dorset	450	1755	2205	18
Durham	2674	2407	5081	107
Dyfed-Powys	420	1276	1696	17
Essex	2372	5974	8346	95
Gloucestershire	3120	3282	6402	125
Greater Manchester	15357	13607	28964	614
Guernsey	20	110	130	1
Gwent	2979	2815	5794	119
Hampshire	3595	6515	10110	144
Hertfordshire	2606	2448	5054	104
Humberside	1217	5221	6438	49
Isle of Man	146	122	268	6
Jersey	401	293	694	16
Kent	6257	7708	13965	250
Lancashire	7311	6810	14121	292
Leicestershire	1630	3775	5405	65
Lincolnshire	1167	1587	2754	47
Merseyside	20446	11360	31806	818
Metropolitan	65448	33825	99273	2618
Ministry of Defence	60	201	261	2
Norfolk	961	2833	3794	38
North Wales	4615	3071	7686	185
North Yorkshire	722	1802	2524	29
Northamptonshire	6106	3157	9263	244
Northumbria	2558	6296	8854	102
Nottinghamshire	3216	4649	7865	129
South Wales	3657	6061	9718	146
South Yorkshire	3248	9695	12943	130
Staffordshire	2786	3615	6401	111
Suffolk	749	1593	2342	30
Surrey	1924	2555	4479	77
Sussex	2529	4568	7097	101
Thames Valley	3152	6147	9299	126
Warwickshire	313	1450	1763	13
West Mercia	2271	3920	6191	91
West Midlands	12704	19235	31939	508
West Yorkshire	3075	9993	13068	123
Wiltshire	1052	2093	3145	42

[35] **Key: (1) Number recorded prior to 1-7-00; (2) Number recorded after 1-7-00; (3) Total (1) and (2); (4) Number to be cleared bi-weekly to reduce (1) to zero by 1st April 2002.**

Appendix Seven

(A) Arrest/Summons Force Performance - 7th October 2001[36]

	Force	Days	%
1	City of London Police	1	90
2	Lancashire Constabulary	1	90
3	Avon and Somerset Constabulary	1	91
4	Kent Constabulary	1	91
5	South Wales Police	2	86
6	Cambridgeshire Constabulary	2	89
7	Norfolk Constabulary	2	89
8	Metropolitan Police	3	79
9	West Yorkshire Police	3	82
10	Gloucestershire Constabulary	7	21
11	Guernsey Police	7	29
12	Hampshire Constabulary	7	76
13	Warwickshire Constabulary	8	48
14	Durham Constabulary	9	47
15	West Midlands Police	9	72
16	Derbyshire Constabulary	10	47
17	Humberside Police	10	68
18	Merseyside Police	13	32
19	Bedfordshire Police	14	43
20	Devon and Cornwall Constabulary	14	78
21	Thames Valley Police	14	82
22	Northumbria Police	18	30
23	Cheshire Constabulary	19	53
24	West Mercia Constabulary	22	76
25	North Yorkshire Police	25	1
26	Wiltshire Constabulary	26	65
27	Staffordshire Police	28	52
28	Sussex Police	28	79
29	Cumbria Constabulary	29	72
30	Jersey	31	30
31	South Yorkshire Police	31	85
32	Surrey Police	32	55
33	Greater Manchester Police	37	32
34	Dorset Police	37	66
35	Dyfed Powys Police	38	9
36	Leicestershire Constabulary	38	69
37	Essex Police	47	23
38	North Wales Police	47	47
39	Suffolk Constabulary	47	58
40	Cleveland Police	48	84
41	Hertfordshire Constabulary	50	56
42	Ministry of Defence	56	67
43	Gwent Police	57	26
44	Nottinghamshire Police	79	23
45	Northamptonshire Police	112	9
46	British Transport Police	119	1
47	Lincolnshire Police	134	55
48	Isle of Man	387	2
	Average	**37**	**55%**

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[36] **'Days' total taken on 30-9-01, '%' total is average of all September 01.**

(B) Impending Prosecutions Force Performance - 7th October 2001

	Force	(1)[37]	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
1	South Wales	461	7479	7940	1778	August 2001
2	Avon & Somerset	639	5618	6257	1511	
3	City of London	221	745	966	541	
4	Guernsey	5	111	116	14	
5	Gwent	503	3691	4194	1600	September 2001
6	Lincolnshire	142	2409	2551	203	
7	Norfolk	145	2760	2905	889	
8	North Yorkshire	156	2155	2311	213	
9	Bedfordshire	459	1898	2357	1045	
10	Cleveland	758	3850	4608	3307	
11	Hertfordshire	459	3273	3732	1322	
12	Northumbria	543	8277	8820	34	October 2001
13	Warwickshire	85	1197	1282	481	
14	West Mercia	569	4366	4935	1256	
15	West Yorkshire	742	10640	11382	1686	
16	Derbyshire	293	3376	3669	395	
17	Devon & Cornwall	258	3549	3807	337	
18	Hampshire	947	7355	8302	1808	November 2001
19	Humberside	373	5149	5522	916	
20	Merseyside	5947	11482	17429	14377	
21	Staffordshire	705	4138	4843	1558	
22	Cumbria	318	3162	3480	370	
23	Cambridgeshire	281	2330	2611	333	
24	Dorset	154	2458	2612	-407	
25	Dyfed-Powys	181	1607	1788	-92	December 2001
26	South Yorkshire	1419	10666	12085	858	
27	Surrey	627	2714	3341	1138	
28	Wiltshire	412	2005	2417	728	
29	Durham	920	2793	3713	1368	
30	Kent	2846	8629	11475	2490	January 2002
31	Lancashire	2658	9074	11732	2389	
32	Gloucestershire	933	2600	3533	2869	March 2002
33	Suffolk	174	1967	2141	201	
34	Essex	1177	5326	6503	1843	
35	Sussex	965	6981	7946	-849	Aril 2002
36	West Midlands	6915	23891	30806	1133	
37	Cheshire	1781	4571	6352	1288	May 2002
38	Leicestershire	590	4061	4651	754	
39	Greater Manchester	8052	17319	25371	3593	July 2002
40	Nottinghamshire	1759	5534	7293	572	
41	Metropolitan	40356	40537	80893	18380	August 2002
42	Ministry of Defence	45	274	319	-58	September 2002
43	Thames Valley	1489	7069	8558	741	October 2002
44	Isle of Man	69	230	299	-31	December 2002
45	Jersey	91	272	363	331	January 2003
46	North Wales	2913	2911	5824	1862	March 2003
47	Northamptonshire	2680	3749	6429	2834	
48	British Transport Police	4081	4088	8169	2048	July 2004

[37] **Key: (1) Number recorded prior to 1-7-00; (2) Number recorded after 1-7-00; (3) Total (1) and (2); (4) Total number of impending prosecutions cleared, a negative value indicates an increase in the overall total; (5) Indicates a date, based upon current performance, when all records created before 1st July 2000, that can be finalised will be cleared.**

Appendix Eight

Explanation of Graphical Representation.

Impending Prosecution statistics for each force are presented in a graphical format for ease of interpretation and comparison (see pages 70 to 77).

To ensure that forces did not concentrate on clearing old records to the detriment of new, the number of outstanding Impending Prosecutions in each force was measured in two ways;

- Records created prior to 1st July 2000 and
- Records created after.

The intention is that all records in the first category should be cleared or validated as being correctly outstanding by the 1st July 2002 at the latest without creating a backlog of post July 2000 cases. The 1st July 2000 was chosen as a date when records were a year old halfway through the (March-August) inspection period. The period of one year was chosen as the majority of court proceedings have been concluded within one year.

In the example shown, on the 11th March the force had 2,833 records created since the 1st July 2000 and still outstanding. They now have 2,760. In the same period the force had outstanding 961 records that were created prior to the 1st July 2000, this has now been reduced to 145.

Avon & Somerset

Bedfordshire

BTP

Cambridgeshire

Cheshire

City Of London

Cleveland

Cumbria

Derbyshire

Devon & Cornwall

Dorset

Durham

Dyfed-Powys

Essex

Gloucestershire

Greater Manchester

Guernsey

Gwent

Hampshire

Hertfordshire

Isle of Man

Humberside

Jersey

Kent

Lancashire

Leicestershire

Lincolnshire

Merseyside

Metropolitan

Ministry of Defence

Norfolk

North Wales

North Yorkshire

Northamptonshire

Northumbria

Notinghamshire

South Wales

South Yorkshire

Staffordshire

Suffolk

Surrey

Sussex

Thames Valley

Warwickshire

West Mercia

West Midlands

West Yorkshire

Wiltshire

Appendix Nine

ACPO Structure

OPERATIONAL

Crime Business Area	General Policing Business Area	Road Policing Business Area	Race & Community Relations Business Area	Terrorism & Allied Matters Business Area
Portfolios	Portfolios	Portfolios	Portfolios	Portfolios
Crime Reduction Through Partnership	Operational & Local Policing	Road Safety	Race	Operations
Criminal Justice	Public Order & Protection of Police	Technology	Sectarian & Religious	Legislation
Forensic Science	Management of Emergencies	Strategic Road Network	Lesbian & Gay	Training
Intelligence	Custody & Related Issues	National Road Policing Strategy	Vulnerable Youth	Technology
Market Crime		Road Policing Criminal Justice	Mental Health/Disability/Elderly	International
Personal Crime			Gender	
Property Crime			Social Exclusion	
Standards, Competencies & Training			Asylum Seekers & Refugees	
Technology			Travellers & Gypsies	

SUPPORT

Finance & Resources Business Area	Performance Management Business Area	Personnel Management Business Area	Information Management Business Area	Presidential Business Area
Portfolios	Portfolios	Portfolios	Portfolios	Portfolios
Procurement	Standards & Quality	Discipline & Complaints	Emerging Systems	International
Finance	Performance Measurement	Pay & Conditions of Service	In-Service Systems	Research & Development
Activity Based Costing	Best Value	Pensions & Resettlement	Futures	Media
CIPFA/Statistics	Audit, Inspection & Scrutiny	Ethics, Professional Standards	Communications	Police Constitution
Property Services Managers' Group	Process Management & Systems	Equality of Opportunity & Managing Diversity	PNC	Human Rights
Sponsorship & Income Generation		Workforce Modelling & Recruitment	Freedom of Information/ Data Protection	
Charging Methodology		Personnel Practice	Criminal Justice System	
		Performance Management of Personnel	Information Security	
		Career Development		
		Organisational Health, Safety & Welfare		
		Uniform Development		
		Training		

Appendix Ten - Force Profiles - Sorted by percentage of cases one year old or less.

	Year Ending	31/12/1995	31/12/1996	31/12/1997	31/12/1998	31/12/1999	31/12/2000	31/12/2001
	Force	0.51%	0.47%	0.82%	1.43%	3.05%	11.59%	75.36%
1	Guernsey	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.81%	1.61%	6.45%	91.13%
2	Dorset	0.43%	0.34%	0.34%	0.43%	1.45%	5.93%	91.09%
3	Lincolnshire	0.16%	0.28%	0.31%	1.34%	1.46%	6.69%	89.76%
4	Devon & Cornwall	0.34%	0.32%	0.66%	1.16%	2.36%	6.23%	88.94%
5	Northumbria	0.02%	0.19%	0.30%	0.55%	2.28%	7.97%	88.68%
6	Warwickshire	0.00%	0.22%	0.72%	1.44%	2.23%	6.84%	88.55%
7	Norfolk	0.07%	0.07%	0.14%	0.59%	1.28%	9.98%	87.88%
8	Dyfed-Powys	0.31%	0.21%	0.89%	2.04%	4.08%	5.75%	86.73%
9	West Yorkshire	0.37%	0.20%	0.39%	0.99%	1.91%	9.48%	86.65%
10	North Yorkshire	0.84%	0.69%	0.94%	1.19%	1.99%	7.84%	86.50%
11	Humberside	0.15%	0.27%	0.32%	0.81%	2.35%	9.62%	86.48%
12	South Wales	0.36%	1.01%	0.57%	0.99%	1.27%	9.85%	85.94%
13	Cumbria	0.35%	0.12%	0.58%	0.85%	2.30%	10.35%	85.45%
14	Derbyshire	0.17%	0.30%	0.25%	0.58%	2.46%	11.12%	85.12%
15	Suffolk	0.32%	0.09%	0.51%	1.53%	2.74%	10.06%	84.74%
16	Avon & Somerset	0.68%	0.59%	0.89%	1.82%	2.82%	9.74%	83.47%
17	Cambridgeshire	1.11%	0.84%	1.49%	2.17%	2.55%	8.73%	83.12%
18	West Mercia	2.14%	0.42%	0.76%	1.38%	2.80%	10.53%	81.97%
19	Hampshire	0.58%	0.97%	1.32%	1.32%	3.30%	11.61%	80.91%
20	Leicestershire	0.04%	0.07%	0.30%	1.33%	3.55%	14.06%	80.66%
21	Hertfordshire	0.27%	0.52%	0.87%	1.39%	3.35%	13.39%	80.19%
22	Gwent	0.34%	0.67%	1.06%	2.61%	4.71%	10.79%	79.81%
23	South Yorkshire	0.21%	0.14%	1.30%	1.83%	4.30%	12.87%	79.34%
24	Wiltshire	3.39%	0.84%	1.80%	3.06%	3.23%	8.76%	78.92%
25	Staffordshire	0.25%	0.85%	1.27%	2.12%	5.75%	11.38%	78.36%
26	Sussex	0.22%	0.19%	0.44%	0.72%	4.70%	15.69%	78.04%
27	Ministry of Defence	0.33%	0.00%	0.98%	2.94%	5.88%	13.07%	76.80%
28	Thames Valley	1.29%	1.16%	1.45%	2.63%	4.44%	13.47%	75.55%
29	Bedfordshire	4.93%	1.99%	1.91%	2.65%	3.15%	9.86%	75.51%
30	Cleveland	0.13%	1.17%	1.45%	2.98%	4.78%	14.03%	75.47%
31	Essex	1.40%	1.74%	2.41%	3.09%	4.93%	11.98%	74.46%
32	Nottinghamshire	0.67%	1.28%	5.43%	4.61%	6.71%	8.13%	73.16%
33	Durham	18.39%	1.04%	0.57%	0.46%	1.09%	6.60%	71.85%
34	Surrey	2.92%	1.66%	1.54%	2.83%	4.88%	14.46%	71.71%
35	Lancashire	4.03%	2.19%	2.55%	2.90%	4.35%	13.24%	70.74%
36	Gloucestershire	2.03%	1.14%	2.91%	4.75%	6.78%	12.53%	69.86%
37	City of London	0.10%	2.51%	2.41%	6.07%	5.76%	14.03%	69.11%
38	Cheshire	6.08%	2.79%	3.81%	4.24%	6.10%	10.18%	66.79%
39	Kent	3.49%	0.87%	2.64%	3.91%	7.40%	15.13%	66.57%
40	West Midlands	1.05%	0.38%	0.83%	4.64%	7.95%	20.23%	64.93%
41	Isle of Man	0.89%	0.44%	1.78%	0.89%	17.78%	13.33%	64.89%
42	Jersey	2.71%	1.63%	2.98%	2.44%	11.11%	17.62%	61.52%
43	Greater Manchester	3.94%	2.77%	4.59%	4.98%	8.16%	17.43%	58.13%
44	Merseyside	3.33%	2.42%	2.99%	5.62%	10.44%	17.98%	57.22%
45	Northamptonshire	9.25%	2.69%	3.55%	5.07%	4.89%	21.44%	53.10%
46	North Wales	21.93%	3.93%	3.46%	5.39%	6.72%	8.62%	49.94%
47	Metropolitan	14.87%	4.75%	5.92%	7.25%	10.40%	13.65%	43.16%
48	British Transp. Police	10.72%	2.61%	5.64%	7.09%	11.26%	22.98%	39.70%

Index

(Only includes forces mentioned in text.)

Glossary of Terms

ACPO	The Association of Chief Police Officers.
ACPOS	Association of Chief Police Officers Scotland.
APA	Association of Police Authorities
Arrest/Summons Report	The first notification of an event on PNC. An offender may have one or a number of offences recorded against on report. The report must be recorded on PNC within 24 hours of an arrest or report for summons.
BTP	British Transport Police
BVR	The Best Value Review process requires all services to be reviewed over a five years period.
CJIU	The Criminal Justice Integration Unit (formerly know as the IBIS unit). A joint Home Office, Lord Chancellor's Department and Crown Prosecution Service initiative to facilitate the fast and accurate exchange of information.
CRB	The Criminal Records Bureau
GMP	Greater Manchester Police
HMIC	Her Majesty's Inspector Of Constabulary
IBIS	See CJIU.
Impending Prosecution	An arrest/summons report without a court result.
Interface Force	A force that connects one or more of its local computer systems directly to PNC.
NSPIS	The National Strategy for Police Information Systems. An ACPO led initiative to deliver standardised computer systems to the police service.
Phoenix	The Phoenix project delivered enhancements to the PNC Nominal Database in 1995. Although now part of the PNC nominal index, the term 'Phoenix' is often used as a shortcut abbreviation for this functionality.
Phoenix Source Document (PSD)	The document used to collect data for entry onto PNC. In some forces this document is created and transmitted in electronic format.
PITO	The Police Information Technology Organisation. The none departmental government body charged with delivering NSPIS
RDS	Home Office Research Development and Statistics Department.
Recordable Offence	All offences that carry the possibility of imprisonment and offences listed in the

	National Police Records (Recordable Offences) Regulations 2000.
Skeleton Record (PNC)	A record on PNC comprising 28 data items the minimum required to create an arrest/summons report.
Source Input Document (SID)	See Phoenix Source Document.
STIF Interface	The standard interface linking local force computer systems to PNC.
VODS	Vehicle On-Line Descriptive Search. A method of identifying a motor vehicle which makes use of descriptive details and does not rely on using the vehicles full registered number.

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