



We assess and make graded judgments about how well each police force keeps people safe and reduces crime.

Our PEEL inspections

In 2017, we made our third complete PEEL assessment of the efficiency and effectiveness of the 43 police forces in England and Wales. As part of the PEEL programme, we assess and make graded judgments about how well each police force keeps people safe and reduces crime.

The PEEL programme consists of three pillars: effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy.

Effectiveness assesses whether each police force is providing the right services and how well those services work. It considers the range of the force's responsibilities, such as cutting crime, protecting the vulnerable, tackling anti-social behaviour, and dealing with emergencies and other calls for service.

£ Efficiency assesses whether the way each force provides its services represents value for money. It also considers how well the force understands and matches its resources and assets to the demands for its services, both in the present and in planning for the future.

Legitimacy assesses whether each force operates fairly, ethically and within the law. This includes how the force treats both the people it serves and its workforce.

Our PEEL assessment also examines how well each of the 43 English and Welsh forces understands, develops and shows leadership.



The operating context

The challenge of providing services throughout an entire police force area is affected by many things. These include the area's size, geography, road network and, most importantly, the people who live, work and spend time there. Police and crime plans – established by local policing bodies – contain statutorily mandated local priorities, and chief constables must have regard to them. Taken together, these and other factors are often called the operating context.

We take account of the operating context for each force, and we recognise that differing operating contexts create different needs for policing. Police forces aren't in competition with each other.

HMIs' assessments

At the end of the PEEL year (in this case, in March 2018), HM Inspectors of Constabulary produce a rounded annual assessment of each force, drawing on the PEEL assessments and other sources of information. We call these the HMIs' assessments and we publish them on our website.¹

We also publish national summary reports for each pillar of the PEEL programme, as well as supplementary reports on significant themes, such as leadership.

Understanding our graded judgments

It is important to emphasise that police forces aren't in competition with each other. Inevitably, some people will want to re-order our graded judgments into a form of league table. But representing the breadth and complexity of police performance, while taking account of the operating context, needs a more sophisticated approach.

Similarly, it is important to read beyond the headlines and consider the reasons why some forces have been graded more highly than others. The nuances are in the individual force reports on our website.²



A change to how we run PEEL inspections from 2018

We are moving to an integrated approach to our PEEL inspection and monitoring of police forces for 2018/19 and beyond. This will build on our established PEEL inspections and bring our inspection fieldwork together with our monitoring activity.

We will be able to make an even better assessment of forces thanks to the information they give us in their force management statements. This information will give us a wider view of how well prepared forces are to meet future demands.

We will also update our evidence more often through monitoring, to help forces improve their service. We are establishing an online, publicly-accessible register which will enable us and others to track forces' progress with our recommendations. It will also enable police and crime commissioners to record their comments on inspection reports, including their responses to our recommendations.

The main features of Integrated PEEL Assessments (IPA) will be:

- a single set of questions that covers all three PEEL pillars;
- just one period of inspection fieldwork for each force in the IPA inspections cycle (which will be risk-based);
- for most forces, fewer days of inspection than with the split approach we had before (for high-risk forces, the number of days could be greater);
- extra evidence from force management statements, which we will use in our risk assessments and our final judgments;
- three tranches of fieldwork (13–15 forces per tranche);
- single rather than multiple reports for each force; we will publish the reports in batches after each tranche;
- alongside each batch of force reports, a thematic report that draws out emerging or recurring themes;
- monitoring of each force's performance between each tranche, drawing on all the available evidence; and
- risk assessments for each force, which we will update three times a year; this will minimise the fieldwork we need to do.

We will be able to make an even better assessment of forces.

PEEL judgments table

	Effecti	veness					£ Efficiency
Force	How effective is the force at preventing crime, tackling anti-social behaviour and keeping people safe?	How effective is the force at investigating crime and reducing re-offending?	How effective is the force at protecting those who are vulnerable from harm and supporting victims?	How effective is the force at tackling serious and organised crime?	Effectiveness	Since 2016	How well does the force understand demand?
Avon and Somerset	Not Inspected	Good	Good	Good	Good	\leftrightarrow	Outstanding
Bedfordshire	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Good	Requires Improvement	1	Requires Improvement
Cambridgeshire	Not Inspected	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Not Inspected	Requires Improvement	↓	Good
Cheshire	Not Inspected	Not Inspected	Good	Good	Good	\leftrightarrow	Good
Cleveland	Good	Not Inspected	Requires Improvement	Not Inspected	Good	\leftrightarrow	Good
Cumbria	Not Inspected	Good	Good	Good	Good	\leftrightarrow	Good
City of London	Good	Not Inspected	Good	Good	Good	\leftrightarrow	Good
Devon and Cornwall	Good	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Not Inspected	Requires Improvement	\leftrightarrow	Requires Improvement
Derbyshire	Not Inspected	Not Inspected	Good	Not Inspected	Good	\leftrightarrow	Good
Dorset	Not Inspected	Not Inspected	Good	Not Inspected	Good	\leftrightarrow	Good
Dyfed-Powys	Not Inspected	Good	Requires Improvement	Not Inspected	Good	1	Good
Durham	Not Inspected	Not Inspected	Good	Not Inspected	Outstanding	\leftrightarrow	Outstanding
Essex	Good	Good	Good	Not Inspected	Good	\leftrightarrow	Good
Gloucestershire	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Good	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	\leftrightarrow	Good
Greater Manchester	Not Inspected	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Not Inspected	Requires Improvement	↓	No judgment given
Gwent	Not Inspected	Not Inspected	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	↓	Good
Hampshire	Not Inspected	Good	Good	Not Inspected	Good	1	Good
Hertfordshire	Not Inspected	Good	Requires Improvement	Not Inspected	Good	1	Good
Humberside	Good	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Not Inspected	Requires Improvement	\leftrightarrow	Requires Improvement
Kent	Not Inspected	Good	Good	Not Inspected	Good	\leftrightarrow	Outstanding
Lancashire	Not Inspected	Not Inspected	Requires Improvement	Not Inspected	Good	\leftrightarrow	Good
Leicestershire	Not Inspected	Good	Good	Not Inspected	Good	1	Requires Improvement
	↑ Improved	↔ Unchanged	ψ Declined				

Legitimacy

					_			
How well does the force use its resources?	How well is the force planning for demand in the future?	Efficiency	Since 2016	To what extent does the force treat all of the people it serves with fairness and respect?	How well does the force make sure that its workforce behaves ethically and lawfully?	To what extent does the force treat its workforce with fairness and respect?	Legitimacy	Since 2016
Good	Good	Good	\leftrightarrow	Outstanding	Good	Good	Good	\leftrightarrow
Good	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	\leftrightarrow	Good	Good	Good	Good	\leftrightarrow
Good	Good	Good	1	Good	Good	Good	Good	\leftrightarrow
Good	Outstanding	Good	\leftrightarrow	Good	Good	Good	Good	\leftrightarrow
Good	Good	Good	\leftrightarrow	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	\leftrightarrow
Good	Good	Good	\leftrightarrow	Good	Good	Good	Good	\leftrightarrow
Requires Improvement	Good	Good	1	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Good	Requires Improvement	↓
Good	Good	Good	1	Good	Requires Improvement	Good	Good	\leftrightarrow
Good	Good	Good	\leftrightarrow	Good	Good	Good	Good	V
Good	Good	Good	\leftrightarrow	Good	Good	Requires Improvement	Good	\leftrightarrow
Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	\leftrightarrow	Good	Good	Requires Improvement	Good	1
Outstanding	Outstanding	Outstanding	\leftrightarrow	Good	Good	Good	Good	\leftrightarrow
Good	Good	Good	\leftrightarrow	Good	Good	Good	Good	\leftrightarrow
Good	Good	Good	\leftrightarrow	Good	Good	Good	Good	1
No judgment given	No judgment given	No judgment given		No judgment given	No judgment given	No judgment given	No judgment given	
Good	Requires Improvement	Good	\leftrightarrow	Requires Improvement	Good	Good	Good	\leftrightarrow
Good	Good	Good	\leftrightarrow	Good	Good	Good	Good	\leftrightarrow
Good	Good	Good	\leftrightarrow	Good	Good	Good	Good	\leftrightarrow
Requires Improvement	Good	Requires Improvement	\leftrightarrow	Good	Good	Good	Good	\leftrightarrow
Good	Good	Good	\leftrightarrow	Outstanding	Good	Outstanding	Outstanding	\leftrightarrow
Good	Good	Good	\leftrightarrow	Good	Good	Requires Improvement	Good	\leftrightarrow
Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	₩	Good	Good	Good	Good	\leftrightarrow

PEEL judgments table continued

	☼ Effecti	veness					£ Efficiency
Force	How effective is the force at preventing crime, tackling anti-social behaviour and keeping people safe?	How effective is the force at investigating crime and reducing re-offending?	How effective is the force at protecting those who are vulnerable from harm and supporting victims?	How effective is the force at tackling serious and organised crime?	Effectiveness	Since 2016	How well does the force understand demand?
Lincolnshire	Not Inspected	Good	Requires Improvement	Not Inspected	Good	\leftrightarrow	Requires Improvement
Merseyside	Not Inspected	Not Inspected	Good	Not Inspected	Good	\leftrightarrow	Good
Metropolitan Police	Good	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Good	Requires Improvement	\leftrightarrow	Requires Improvement
Norfolk	Not Inspected	Not Inspected	Good	Not Inspected	Good	\leftrightarrow	Outstanding
Northamptonshire	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	\leftrightarrow	Good
Northumbria	Not Inspected	Good	Requires Improvement	Not Inspected	Good	\leftrightarrow	Good
Nottinghamshire	Good	Not Inspected	Requires Improvement	Not Inspected	Good	1	Good
North Wales	Not Inspected	Good	Good	Not Inspected	Good	\leftrightarrow	Good
North Yorkshire	Not Inspected	Good	Good	Good	Good	\leftrightarrow	Requires Improvement
Suffolk	Not Inspected	Not Inspected	Good	Not Inspected	Good	\leftrightarrow	Good
Staffordshire	Good	Good	Requires Improvement	Good	Good	1	Good
Surrey	Not Inspected	Good	Good	Good	Good	\leftrightarrow	Good
Sussex	Requires Improvement	Good	Good	Good	Good	1	Good
South Wales	Not Inspected	Not Inspected	Good	Not Inspected	Good	\leftrightarrow	Good
South Yorkshire	Good	Good	Requires Improvement	Not Inspected	Good	1	Requires Improvement
Thames Valley	Good	Requires Improvement	Good	Not Inspected	Good	\leftrightarrow	Outstanding
Wiltshire	Not Inspected	Not Inspected	Good	Not Inspected	Good	\leftrightarrow	Good
West Midlands	Not Inspected	Not Inspected	Inadequate	Good	Requires Improvement	↓	Requires Improvement
West Mercia	Requires Improvement	Not Inspected	Requires Improvement	Inadequate	Requires Improvement	↓	Good
Warwickshire	Requires Improvement	Not Inspected	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	↓	Good
West Yorkshire	Good	Requires Improvement	Good	Not Inspected	Good	\leftrightarrow	Good
	↑ Improved	\leftrightarrow Unchanged	ψ Declined				

Legitimacy

How well does the force use its resources?	How well is the force planning for demand in the future?	Efficiency	Since 2016	To what extent does the force treat all of the people it serves with fairness and respect?	How well does the force make sure that its workforce behaves ethically and lawfully?	To what extent does the force treat its workforce with fairness and respect?	Legitimacy	Since 2016
Good	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	₩	Good	Good	Requires Improvement	Good	\leftrightarrow
Good	Good	Good	\leftrightarrow	Good	Good	Good	Good	\leftrightarrow
Requires Improvement	Good	Requires Improvement	₩	Good	Good	Requires Improvement	Good	\leftrightarrow
Good	Good	Good	\leftrightarrow	Good	Good	Good	Good	\leftrightarrow
Requires Improvement	Good	Good	\leftrightarrow	Requires Improvement	Good	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	$ \downarrow $
Good	Good	Good	\leftrightarrow	Good	Good	Good	Good	\leftrightarrow
Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	\leftrightarrow	Good	Good	Requires Improvement	Good	\leftrightarrow
Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	₩	Requires Improvement	Good	Good	Good	1
Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	₩	Requires Improvement	Good	Good	Good	\leftrightarrow
Good	Good	Good	\leftrightarrow	Good	Good	Good	Good	\leftrightarrow
Good	Requires Improvement	Good	\leftrightarrow	Good	Requires Improvement	Good	Good	\leftrightarrow
Requires Improvement	Good	Good	\leftrightarrow	Good	Good	Requires Improvement	Good	\leftrightarrow
Requires Improvement	Good	Good	\leftrightarrow	Good	Good	Requires Improvement	Good	\leftrightarrow
Good	Good	Good	\leftrightarrow	Good	Requires Improvement	Good	Good	\leftrightarrow
Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	\leftrightarrow	Good	Good	Requires Improvement	Good	1
Outstanding	Good	Outstanding	1	Good	Good	Good	Good	\leftrightarrow
Good	Good	Good	\leftrightarrow	Good	Good	Good	Good	\leftrightarrow
Good	Outstanding	Good	₩	Good	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	V
Good	Good	Good	\leftrightarrow	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	$ \downarrow $
Good	Good	Good	\leftrightarrow	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	Requires Improvement	\downarrow
Good	Good	Good	\leftrightarrow	Good	Good	Good	Good	\leftrightarrow

Changes since last year

Across all three pillars of the PEEL programme, we graded most forces the same in 2017 as in 2016.

After the terrorist attack in Manchester on 22 May 2017, we agreed with Greater Manchester Police that we wouldn't carry out a full inspection. We carried out a limited inspection of the force, but we didn't make a graded judgment for the efficiency and legitimacy pillars. We have excluded Greater Manchester Police from the efficiency and legitimacy charts on these pages.

The **effectiveness** pillar had the largest movement in grades: we graded nine forces higher than the previous year; five forces got a worse grade.

For the **efficiency pillar:** the grades for 32 forces stayed the same, four got better and six got worse. For the **legitimacy pillar:** the grades for 32 forces stayed the same, four got better and six got worse.

No forces received different grades in 2017 in all of the three pillars. Of the 25 forces that received different grades this year, most (16) only received a different grade in one pillar.



PEEL 2017: Summary of grades for each pillar



We graded one force (Durham) as outstanding, 30 as good, 12 as requiring improvement and none as inadequate.



We graded two forces (Durham and Thames Valley) as outstanding, 30 as good, 10 as requiring improvement and none as inadequate.

Legitimacy

We graded one force (Kent) as outstanding, 35 as good, six as requiring improvement and none as inadequate.

Outstanding

2017	1
2016	-
2015	-

Outstanding

2017	2
2016	2
2015	5

Outstanding

2017	1
2016	2
2015	1

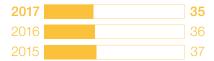
Good



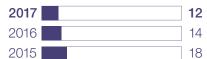
Good



Good



Requires improvement



Requires improvement

2017	10
2016	8
2015	8

Requires improvement



Inadequate

2017	0
2016	1
2015	0

Inadequate

2017	0
2016	0
2015	1

Inadequate



PEEL: Effectiveness

We considered the same question in the 2017 police effectiveness inspection as in the last two years: how effective are the police at keeping people safe and reducing crime?

We considered five areas:

- how well the police prevent crime and tackle anti-social behaviour;
- how well the police investigate crime and catch criminals;
- how well the police protect vulnerable people;
- how well the police tackle serious and organised crime; and
- how well the police use their specialist capabilities (for example, firearms capabilities).

Our findings

Overall, most forces are still effective at keeping people safe and reducing crime. Over two-thirds of forces are still performing at a good standard and one force is still outstanding. Slightly more forces got better than got worse.

How effective is the force at preventing crime, tackling anti-social behaviour and keeping people safe?	How effective is the force at investigating crime and reducing re-offending?
Outstanding	Outstanding
0	0
Good	Good
11	16
Requires improvement	Requires improvement
6	10
Inadequate	Inadequate
0	0
Not inspected	Not inspected
26	17

However, we are concerned that, in a minority of forces, the service is overwhelmed in some aspects of policing. These forces need urgently to put measures in place to make sure they are protecting vulnerable people well enough. Otherwise, the lives of vulnerable people could be at risk.

How well do the police prevent crime and tackle anti-social behaviour?

We have longstanding concerns about local policing being eroded and we have been tracking this throughout our PEEL inspection process. We are pleased there has been some improvement in this area.

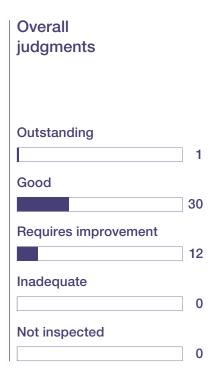
In 2017, we graded 34 forces as good at preventing crime and anti-social behaviour, four more than in 2016. We saw some forces changing their approach to neighbourhood policing to make sure they have enough officers and police community support officers (PCSOs) dedicated to preventing crime, engaging with communities and tackling anti-social behaviour.

We found it commendable that since 2016, nearly half of all forces have increased or maintained the number of staff assigned to neighbourhood policing. This was despite an overall 8 percent decrease in spending dedicated to this

force at protecting those who are vulnerable from harm and supporting victims? Outstanding Good Requires improvement Inadequate 1 Not inspected 0

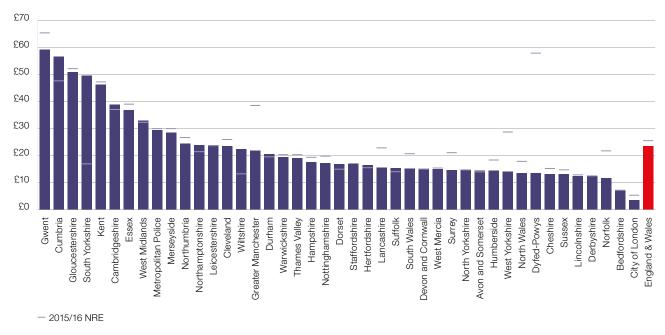
How effective is the

the force at tackling serious and	
organised crime?	
Outstanding	
	0
Good	
	11
Requires improvement	
	4
Inadequate	
	1
Not inspected	
	27



area (see figure 1). We also saw evidence of forces being creative in how they make sure local officers are visible and accessible enough to members of the public.

Figure 1: Net revenue expenditure (NRE) on neighbourhood policing per head of population, 2016/17



Source: Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy

However, some of the concerns we highlighted in 2016 are still there.

- Some forces still don't understand well enough to what extent their officers and PCSOs are being taken away from their local policing duties to handle immediate tasks elsewhere.
- There are still inconsistencies in tackling local problems in a structured way and using approaches the police service knows are effective.
- Despite having a range of powers they can use to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour, officers are using them less than in 2016. In too many cases, in forces that use these powers, we didn't find a sound rationale or clear evidence base to justify using them.

How well do the police investigate crime and catch criminals?

Responding in an emergency is the public's first priority for the police. In 2016, over 65 percent of the members of the public we surveyed rated this as the top priority (surpassing tackling crime and terrorism). In 2017, this had increased to over 67 percent.

Our 2017 inspection gave rise to some substantial concerns about how some forces respond to those contacting the police, particularly vulnerable people. This was both in terms of failing to respond promptly and appropriately, and what happens when an officer is in attendance. Just over a quarter of forces aren't meeting enough of their demand as promptly as we would expect, or are managing demand inappropriately.

Examples of failing to meet or appropriately manage demand include:

- thousands of emergency calls being held in queues, largely because officers were not able to respond to them; and
- officers not actively reassessing these emergencies during the delay.

Given the level of risk involved, we asked these forces to examine their practices immediately to make sure they are keeping victims safe.

Just over a quarter of forces aren't meeting enough of their demand as promptly as we would expect, or are managing demand inappropriately.

© West Midlands Police

Forces report that they have 17 percent fewer investigators than they need.

The initial response

Our inspection also revealed some problems when officers do respond to calls for service from the public, particularly vulnerable people. Although attending officers generally identify when victims are vulnerable, understand how to keep them safe and assess the level of risk appropriately, we saw some weaknesses in the initial response.

It is encouraging that nearly all forces have invested in body-worn video technology. This is an important tool for collecting initial evidence. However, not all forces have a clear policy on how and when to use it. We also found other areas of the initial investigation where forces aren't seizing all opportunities to look for evidence. In too many cases, officers don't do house-to-house enquiries or identify witnesses. Forces should also do more to look for evidence on smartphones, tablets and other devices.

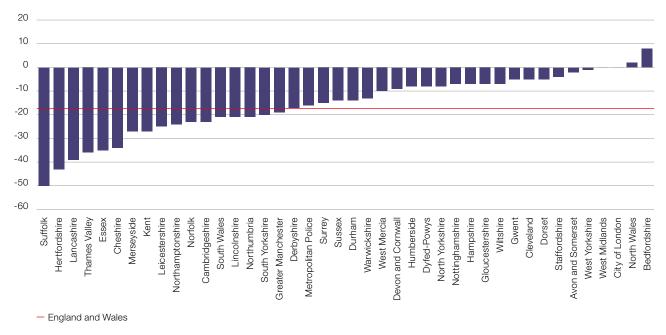
A shortage of investigators

Last year, we reported that there was a national crisis in the severe shortage of investigators. We recommended that the police service gain a better understanding of the scale of the problem and should draw up a coherent set of plans to meet the need. We are pleased that police leaders, through the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC), are working with the College of Policing to address this problem.

Despite these efforts, the shortfall is considerable at the moment. Forces report that they have 17 percent fewer investigators than they need (though the picture isn't the same for all forces – see figure 2). This amounts to a shortfall of over 5,000 investigators in England and Wales (as reported in July 2017), and there aren't enough trainee investigators to make up for this. Forces need to take more action, working with the NPCC lead on investigative resilience, to make sure they have enough investigative capacity.



Figure 2: Percentage shortfall in trained investigators – reported on 1 July 2017



Source: HMICFRS 2017 Effectiveness data collection

Many investigations depend on retrieving evidence from digital devices like smartphones, tablets and computers if prosecutions are to succeed. In 2016, we found 16,000 digital devices were still waiting to be examined. In 2017, we found that more forces had invested in facilities for investigators to download digital evidence more easily; others had contracted this out to the commercial sector. Overall, forces have reduced the backlogs we found in 2016 by 17 percent.

People wanted in connection with crimes need to be found quickly to protect the public, reassure victims and maximise the chance of a successful investigation. People who are wanted for offences may well keep causing harm until they are caught. This year, we still had concerns about the extent to which all forces were pursuing and tracking down wanted people.

Forces are working alongside mental health practitioners when responding to people with mental health problems.

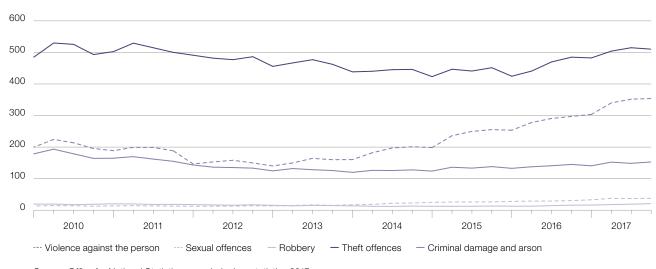
How well do the police protect vulnerable people?

We are encouraged by the improvements we are seeing in how forces identify and support victims of crime and vulnerable people. In most forces, we saw an improvement in the attitudes of frontline staff, who are now better trained and supported in dealing with vulnerable people. This means they are more able to deal with vulnerable people effectively.

This year, we graded 23 forces as being good at working with vulnerable people. When we first introduced graded judgments in 2014, only 12 forces achieved this grading.

This improvement is all the more commendable because it is taking place in the face of dramatic increases in demand on the police (see figure 3). Domestic abuse crimes now stand at half a million a year, an 88 percent increase from June 2013. Sexual abuse offences have doubled since 2013 and the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children estimates there are, on average, 152 cases of child abuse per day.

Figure 3: Police-recorded crime by offence in thousands, per quarter, 2010 to 2017



Source: Office for National Statistics recorded crime statistics 2017

While it is encouraging that many forces are improving how they keep vulnerable people safe, we are disappointed that almost half of forces (19) require improvement. Thirteen of these forces have struggled to improve their performance over the three years of our effectiveness inspections and still haven't managed to achieve a good grade.

We are still concerned about the limited capacity some forces have to manage the risk posed by the most dangerous offenders, such as registered sex offenders (RSOs). In 2017, as with the previous year, we found some forces struggling to assess the level of risk RSOs pose and to manage that risk effectively. Throughout England and Wales, the police have yet to assess the risk represented by 3,300 RSOs; this is an 18 percent increase from last year.

Mental health

This year, we considered for the first time in a PEEL inspection how well police forces respond to vulnerable people with mental health problems. We considered how well the police work with health and social services to:

- identify people with mental health problems when they first contact the police; and
- respond to people with mental health problems (often people who are in crisis and may need to be detained for their own safety).

This has allowed us to develop our understanding of how the police treat people with mental health problems. It will help us make a more in-depth examination of this issue in future inspections. Our initial findings are positive.

To make sure frontline staff are aware of their responsibilities to those with mental health problems, all forces include mental health training in their annual training programmes for officers and staff. We found frontline staff are confident in identifying people who might have mental health problems when they first contact the force, skilled at assessing their needs and professional at helping people in crisis.

Forces are also working alongside mental health practitioners when responding to people with mental health problems; for example, having a mental health practitioner in the response car. Where this is happening, forces are identifying more incidents involving people with mental health problems. They are also finding solutions for people in mental health crisis more quickly.

We still have concerns about the extent to which police officers keep domestic abuse victims safe. It is a credit to police forces that they have invested significant time and resources in supporting vulnerable people with mental health problems. The mental health professionals we spoke to were overwhelmingly positive about the care frontline officers give.

Domestic abuse

We have pledged to inspect forces every year on their handling of domestic abuse until the service victims receive from the police is of a consistently high standard across England and Wales.

We are pleased that, as with broader support for all vulnerable victims, forces are improving overall. When we surveyed people working with victims of domestic abuse, 63 percent felt the police response to domestic abuse had improved since we published *Everyone's Business:*Improving the Police Response to Domestic Abuse in 2014.3

We are also seeing more forces working with other agencies to support victims and their families. This year, 33 forces have information-sharing arrangements with schools to support children who witness domestic abuse, a 50 percent increase since last year.

However, despite these positive developments, we still have concerns about the extent to which police officers keep domestic abuse victims safe and bring their offenders to justice. Police officers can:

- arrest a suspect to protect the victim;
- use civil orders to prevent the suspect staying at the family home;
- bail a suspect after arrest with conditions while continuing an investigation; and
- collect enough evidence to charge the suspect with an offence.

In too many forces, police officers aren't doing these things well enough. We will examine this further in our specific report on domestic abuse.

How well do the police tackle serious and organised crime?

The nature and scale of organised crime is changing rapidly and has in many cases become global. Tackling it needs effective action at different levels of law enforcement. Broadly, this is something the police forces working with regional organised crime units (ROCUs) do well. We graded most forces (38 in total) as good. Of the 16 forces we inspected in 2017, six had got better.

To tackle serious and organised crime effectively, forces need to understand which groups pose the highest threat, risk and harm to their communities. Forces' understanding of this threat continues to improve. The police service assesses the criminal intent and capability of an organised crime group (OCG) through a process called mapping. We have found in previous years that forces do this inconsistently, which means there can be no reliable overall understanding of the threat. This is partly due to the limitations of the mapping system itself.

Our inspection this year found forces were applying the mapping principles more consistently. Also, forces are identifying an increasing number of OCGs involved in less traditional types of crime, such as modern slavery. The National Crime Agency has conducted a comprehensive review of mapping and improved the current approach. But it still needs to do more work to develop a more sophisticated model.



Forces are identifying an increasing number of organised crime groups involved in less traditional types of crime, such as modern slavery.

Forces are increasingly working with other agencies and local bodies to tackle serious and organised crime.

Prevention needs more focus

We have seen positive developments in how forces tackle serious and organised crime:

- forces are increasingly working with other agencies and local bodies to tackle serious and organised crime;
- neighbourhood policing teams are more aware of OCGs in their local areas; and
- forces are liaising better with ROCUs and other specialists at regional and national levels.

We are still concerned that forces are less able to prevent serious and organised crime than to pursue serious and organised crime groups.

Individual forces have patches of promising work to prevent serious and organised crime. But these can often be localised initiatives which aren't publicised effectively within the forces. Some forces still lack an overall strategy and a clear lead to make sure they are co-ordinating and sustaining work to prevent serious and organised crime.

Some offenders keep re-offending despite the efforts of law enforcement agencies or the risk of being prosecuted. There are several things forces can do to stop these people re-offending, but the police service doesn't co-ordinate or record them consistently enough.

How well do the police use their specialist capabilities (for example, firearms capabilities)?

We found that most forces have a good understanding of the firearms threats they face. We also saw areas of good practice. We are communicating these to the service to help all forces strengthen their threat assessments.

Some forces have also received extra funding to increase their armed capacity. These forces have made more armed response vehicles available to help them respond to attacks swiftly and effectively.



Most forces can show they are getting more efficient.

PEEL: Efficiency

We considered the same question in the police efficiency 2017 inspection as in the last two years: how efficient are the police at keeping people safe and reducing crime?

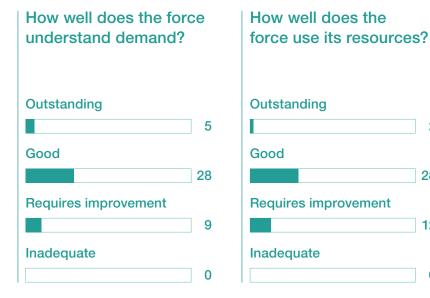
We focused on three areas:

- how well the police understand the demand for their services:
- how well the police use their resources; and
- how well the police plan.

Our findings

We found a broadly positive picture. Most forces can show they are getting more efficient. Although forces face considerable difficulties, our positive findings show they have made a substantial effort.

Policing is now more complex and the police deal with more complicated types of crimes. Although the police haven't suffered reduced budgets as much as some other public-sector organisations, forces still face difficult financial decisions.4



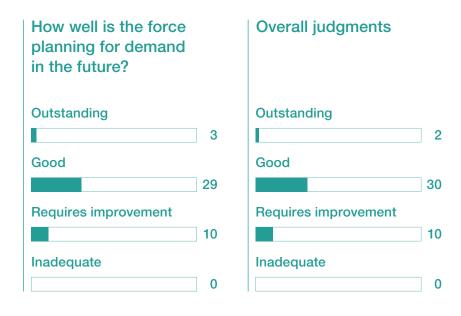
2

12

0

In 2017, we graded two forces as outstanding for efficiency, 30 forces as good, ten forces as requiring improvement and no force as inadequate. (We didn't grade Greater Manchester Police after the terrorist attack at Manchester Arena.)⁵ We graded two more forces as requiring improvement than in 2016.





The best forces collect a range of information to help them understand trends.

How well do the police understand the demand for their services?

To be efficient, police forces must understand the demand for their services. They need to understand what sorts of incidents people will report, and what the police need to do to prevent crime. They must also understand the crimes and other unlawful activities that are hidden or are less likely to be reported (for example, modern slavery and child sexual exploitation).

Almost every force understands the current demand for its services. The best forces collect a range of information to help them understand trends. They also use other people's research, in areas like protecting children and vulnerable adults, to predict demand for services when their own data isn't enough. Other forces should do the same, rather than just focusing on general crime types. From 2018, force management statements will help forces take a sound and sustainable approach to understanding future demand for their services.

Police forces should be able to identify and reduce unnecessary work, and find more efficient ways of working. They must also decide their priorities and how to respond to them. They should be able to show this process didn't mean they overlooked any of the demand for their services.

The governance arrangements for police change programmes aren't usually as effective as they could be at helping forces achieve as much as they can from them. In 2017, however, we saw some excellent examples of strong governance arrangements. Through these arrangements, forces found processes that weren't efficient and improved them. It is important that these arrangements don't cause the police to suppress demand for their services.



How well do the police use their resources?

Police forces have only so many resources for the increasingly complicated job they do. They must make sure they use these as well as possible.

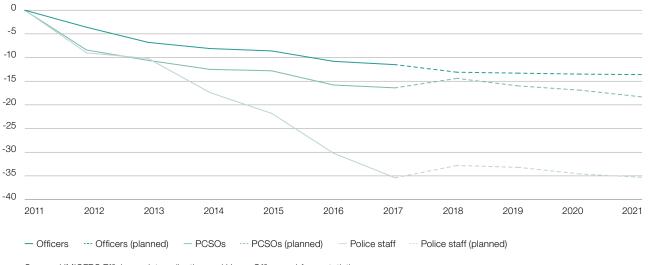
The most valuable and complex resource of every police force is its people. In most cases, the pay bill is well over 75 percent of the force's budget. So improving the force's efficiency and effectiveness is mainly linked to the quality of officers and staff, their skills, how they work, and how well they are trained and supervised.

Because of the changing nature of crime and disorder, and the advances of modern technology, the skills officers and staff needed in the past won't, in many cases, be the skills they will need to tackle the demands of the future.

Numbers

The number of people in the police is going down at the same time as crimes such as modern slavery and cybercrime are making policing considerably more complex.

Figure 4: Percentage of actual and planned workforce change from 2011 to 2021



Source: HMICFRS Efficiency data collection and Home Office workforce statistics

The solid lines in figure 4 show the percentage reductions in the numbers of police officers, PCSOs and police staff since 2011. The dotted lines show the changes planned to 2021. By then, there are expected to be around 13 percent fewer police officers, 35 percent fewer PCSOs and 18 percent fewer support staff than in 2011.

Protecting the public, including preventing crime, isn't the responsibility of the police alone.

Collaborations

No public-sector budget is unlimited. All public-sector services must try to meet as much demand as they can, to an acceptable standard, making efficient use of the resources they have.

Protecting the public, including preventing crime, isn't the responsibility of the police alone; every citizen has an obligation to every other. In the same way, other public authorities can often be most effective in preventing crime and disorder, safeguarding vulnerable people and diverting others from offending.

As well as collaborations with other forces, the police can, must and do work with others: for example, public authorities concerned with education, health, housing, children's and adult services. They also work with charities and other voluntary organisations, and fire and rescue services. When they work well, these arrangements are impressively efficient and effective, to the enormous benefit of the public. They are to be commended and encouraged.

In 2017, we were pleased to find that forces were increasingly appreciating the value of their collaborative work, and intensifying their efforts to improve it further.

Skills

We are still concerned that few forces have done enough to understand fully what skills their people need. Although more forces have started to audit the skills they need in specific roles, most aren't doing enough to understand, develop or recruit the new skills they need now and in the future.

For example, many forces have now carried out a skills audit of their workforces. But often these focus on specific operational skills (for example, public order skills, self-defence and first-aid training, detective skills, firearms training and driver qualifications). As a result, training and recruitment also tend to focus on these skills.

Resource decisions

More forces use risk-based models to decide which calls from the public to deal with first. In too many respects, some forces still fail to match their resources effectively enough to demand.

Many forces use their resources flexibly. However, we still haven't seen many examples where forces have enough analysis to understand the effect of some of their choices. For example, they must understand what will happen if they move people from one area of the force to support another area at times of peak demand or crisis.

How well do the police plan?

Forces plan to make savings of approximately £0.9 billion in the next five years. The majority plan to invest some of those savings to improve their services.

The forces that best understand trends in current demand are best able to predict future demand. We found that the best forces use predictive technology to analyse a wide variety of data. However, too many forces still rely on very general assessments, or assume that current demand will stay more or less the same.

Forces know they must take account of growing public expectations and developments in technology. But many forces aren't planning well enough to meet the constant developments in these areas.



Forces plan to make savings of approximately £0.9 billion in the next five years.

The pace of wider change in society and technology is so rapid that a force that doesn't change will fall behind.

Most force plans set out a clear vision for the direction the force will take. Almost all forces have changed how they operate as a result of years of austerity, and will change further to meet future budgets and public expectations. However, too many still don't have plans that are innovative enough to significantly change how they operate to meet the demand of the future. Of even greater concern are those forces that aren't planning on making any significant changes in this respect.

It can be very difficult for some forces to build enough momentum to change, and pausing to assess opportunities can be tempting. However, inevitably, forces that don't act will struggle in future. The pace of wider change in society and technology is so rapid that a force that doesn't change will fall behind.

Our recommendations

We said forces needed to take urgent action in two areas.

Workforce skills

Not all forces recognise well enough the important connection between demand and capability. Most forces are improving their understanding of current demand. Their understanding of future demand, and the skills and capabilities their people will need to meet it, is getting better. But they still need to do more.



The College of Policing is doing some work to support this; for example, recognising expert skills by developing new 'advanced practitioner' roles. Chief constables, with the support of the College of Policing, should assess the skills and capabilities the police will need over the next five years and show how they plan to recruit and develop the right people. These plans should take into account how demand is changing and likely shifts in public expectations.

Forces must do more to develop digitally-enabled services.

Digital transformation

We have said regularly over the last few years that, in too many respects, police information and communication technology is outdated and of poor quality. It often fails to connect people within an individual police force, let alone across all forces in England and Wales or with other public-sector organisations.

Forces must do more to develop digitally-enabled services. They must use technology to change the way they operate rather than just replicate paper-based systems online.

Almost all forces are doing some work in this area, but this is often hampered by the skills their people have. This problem needs urgent attention.

Several national programmes have been set up to improve the systems. However, our evidence is of a fragmented picture at local level. Local forces' systems don't always work together. In some cases, different systems within individual forces aren't linked, which creates unnecessary work.

There is also more frustration at the lack of practical direction and support at national level. In too many forces, there are pockets of digitally-enabled services that have been developed in isolation, rather than as part of a coherent plan.

Overall, the police forces of England and Wales are good at treating the people they serve fairly and with respect.

PEEL: Legitimacy

When we assess forces' legitimacy, we assess to what extent they operate fairly, ethically and within the law. In particular, we assess how forces treat people. These things are essential to maintaining public support and co-operation, which are the cornerstone of the British model of policing by consent.

This year, we considered:

- how well workforces understand unconscious bias;
- how forces scrutinise and use coercive powers;
- how forces handle complaints; and
- whether police workforces are treated fairly and respectfully.





Our findings

Overall, our assessment was positive. We graded one force as outstanding, 35 forces as good, six forces as requiring improvement and none as inadequate. (We didn't grade Greater Manchester Police after the terrorist attack at Manchester Arena.)⁶ This was largely consistent with our overall legitimacy judgments in 2016.

Do forces treat all the people they serve fairly and with respect?

Overall, the police forces of England and Wales are good at treating the people they serve fairly and with respect. We were pleased to find that police leaders see the value of this, and are encouraging the same attitude in their workforces.

Although there is still more to do, forces are increasingly training their officers and staff in communication skills and how to avoid unconscious bias. This aims to improve the way officers and staff interact with the public and enhance the public's view that they are treated fairly and with respect.



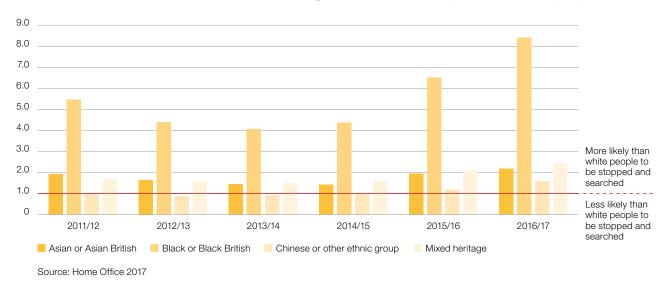


Stop and search

Workforces generally have a good understanding of how to use coercive powers fairly and with respect. But how effectively forces record, monitor and scrutinise how they use these powers varies across the country and, in some cases, this must improve.

Many forces are getting better at monitoring how they use stop and search powers, including regularly examining data on ethnicity and age. But few have all the data they need. That makes it difficult for them to show a good enough understanding of how they are using these powers, and how this might affect local people and communities. We are particularly concerned that black people are over-represented in stop and search figures (see figure 5), and that most forces can't explain the reasons for this well enough. For example, in 2016/17 black people were more than eight times more likely to be stopped and searched than white people.

Figure 5: Likelihood of different ethnic groups experiencing a stop and search in England and Wales compared with white people



Our assessment of stop and search forms found that drug searches involving black people were less likely to result in police finding drugs than those involving white people or other ethnic groups. This suggests that using stop and search on black people might be based on weaker grounds for suspicion than white people, particularly where drugs are concerned. So it is vital that the service explains and justifies this or makes changes.

Forces need to do more to show the public that there is a sufficient link between using stop and search, and tackling local and force priorities.

Use of force

In April 2017, the NPCC introduced a national recording requirement for the use of force. This includes firearms, Tasers, batons, handcuffs, leg restraints, spit-guards, incapacitant spray, and control and restraint techniques. The new requirement aims to make sure the use of force is monitored and analysed at local and national levels, to check if it is being used unfairly or inappropriately, and to highlight good practice to help protect officers.⁷

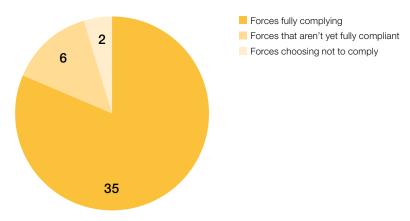
We found that 35 forces were complying with the new requirement (see figure 6). Of the other eight forces, six weren't yet fully compliant because of IT problems, but were in the process of resolving this. However, two forces were choosing not to comply. These forces are less able to understand what type of force they use, how, why and to what effect. We urge the forces that aren't already complying with the requirement to do so.

We are particularly concerned that black people are over-represented in stop and search figures.



Too many forces had external scrutiny groups that don't represent the diversity of their local communities well enough.

Figure 6: Number of forces that aren't yet compliant with new recording requirement for use of force



Source: HMICFRS Legitimacy 2017 data collection

The Home Office's Centre for Applied Science and Technology, the NPCC, the College of Policing and other interested parties need to give more thought to how effective, safe and legitimate it is to use spit-guards. Forces and the public would benefit from national guidance that encourages police to use them safely and proportionately.

External scrutiny of use of force and stop and search

We found that the vast majority of forces used one or more forms of external scrutiny. These arrangements aim to challenge forces and give them independent advice. How effective they are varied from force to force, but we found evidence of good practice.

However, too many forces had external scrutiny groups that don't represent the diversity of their local communities well enough, including a lack of young people or other groups who are likely to have lower levels of confidence in the police. Some force scrutiny groups are chaired by members of the force, and so could be seen as not independent enough. Others have had the same members for some time, or their members don't have the knowledge and skills they need to scrutinise and challenge forces effectively and confidently.

Other forces couldn't give us compelling evidence that they were responding effectively enough to challenges external scrutiny had raised, or communicating about what they had done in response, either to members or wider communities.



More forces are intensifying their focus on ethics as part of their decision making.

These factors are likely to limit how effective external scrutiny can be. They give forces fewer opportunities to understand, reassure and learn, and to treat the people they serve even more fairly and respectfully.

How well do forces make sure their workforces behave ethically and lawfully?

Overall, the police forces of England and Wales are good at making sure their workforces behave ethically and lawfully. We were pleased to find more forces are intensifying their focus on ethics as part of their decision making, and that this is featuring in training and guidance across forces.

Complying with national vetting policy

Some forces still haven't put right their shortcomings in complying with national vetting policy. After our 2016 inspection, we recommended that, within six months, all forces not already complying with current national vetting policy should have a good enough plan in place to do so, and should have started to implement it. We also recommended that, within two years, all members of the police workforce should have received at least the lowest level of vetting clearance for their roles.

During this year's inspection, we assessed progress in these forces. Of the 30 forces we re-inspected, we found 23 had adequate plans to reduce vetting backlogs, which we assessed as being achievable by December 2018. The lack of progress in the rest is still cause for concern. Unvetted officers and staff pose a significant risk to forces' integrity.

Forces are still making progress on getting their workforces to reflect the diversity of local communities better.

Dealing with complaints

Force handling of complaints is a mixed picture. We carried out a file review of 1,038 public complaints. Overall, we found forces were reasonably good at giving the complainants the initial and final information they needed. But we also found 114 cases (11 percent) where we felt complainants needed more support. We were disappointed to find that these files showed forces had given appropriate support in only 68 of these 114 cases (60 percent). Some forces need to do more to inspire public confidence in the complaints system.

We reviewed 1,035 complaint and misconduct case files that we thought might contain allegations of discrimination that forces had missed, to assess how promptly and routinely forces are responding. We were pleased to find that only 32 (3 percent) contained allegations of discrimination that forces had missed. We also reviewed 422 discrimination complaint files and were pleased to find that 364 cases (86 percent) had been handled satisfactorily in line with the relevant guidelines.

However, forces failed to refer 43 percent of the misconduct cases we assessed that should have been referred to the Independent Office for Police Conduct (formerly the Independent Police Complaints Commission).⁸



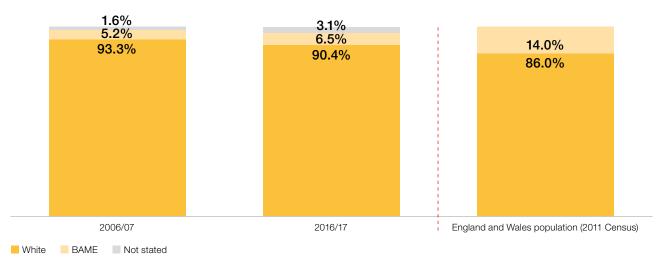
To what extent do forces treat their workforces fairly and with respect?

Most police forces of England and Wales are good at treating officers and staff fairly and with respect. But nearly a third of forces need to improve here. We found forces are making improvements in response to concerns, and they generally handle grievances well. However, leaders need to do more to show their people that they have acted effectively to address their concerns to improve fairness at work.

Creating more diverse workforces

We were also pleased to find that forces are still making progress on getting their workforces to reflect the diversity of local communities better. Many forces have created more representative workforces through recruitment; in particular, addressing under-representation of black and minority ethnic (BAME) officers and staff. The percentage of officers joining the police service who are from BAME backgrounds increased from 5.2 percent in 2006/07 to 6.5 percent in 2016/17 (see figure 7).

Figure 7:
Percentage of police workforce from BAME backgrounds compared with England and Wales population



Source: Home Office 2017

Women made up 29 percent of all officers and only 24 percent of all senior officers. However, we are not seeing this diversity higher up. The recruitment and promotion figures may be following a similar trajectory, but they are still well below those in the wider community. As of 31 March 2017, only 3.7 percent of senior officers⁹ were from the BAME community.

Meanwhile, women made up 29 percent of all officers and only 24 percent of all senior officers.

Looking after people's wellbeing

A happy and healthy workforce is likely to be more productive, because people take fewer sick days and are more committed to what they do. We found police leaders across England and Wales still prioritise and promote wellbeing. They support individual, team and force-wide wellbeing needs through senior leadership, governance processes, plans, accreditation and learning.

Officers and staff from most forces recognised that their leaders were taking action to improve wellbeing, although there is more to do before workforces feel the benefits more widely.

We were encouraged to find that most forces now regularly do some sort of analysis of wellbeing data, including sickness data and staff survey results. This helps them identify patterns and trends, shape wellbeing plans and act to address concerns.





Some forces showed they were targeting support for wellbeing at people and groups most in need. But most could still do more. Wellbeing support still varies, and many supervisors still lack confidence in identifying and supporting people with wellbeing concerns.

Managing and developing individual performance

We have said before that over three-quarters of forces didn't have processes for managing individual performance that were fair and effective enough. This year, we asked forces to give us data on the percentage of the workforce who had gone through an annual performance review process in the 18 months from 1 August 2015 to 31 January 2017.

Eight forces couldn't give us this data, 14 forces had completion rates of less than 50 percent, and only 10 forces had completion rates of 80 percent or more. Only three forces could say that all their officers and staff had been through a performance and development review process in that period.

We found that many forces are planning for, or establishing, new processes and software to address some of the problems we found last year, in line with College of Policing guidance.¹⁰ For example, we were pleased to find that, in some forces, chief officers were leading reviews of individual performance processes.

We expect to see improvement at our next inspection.

Abuse of position for a sexual purpose¹¹

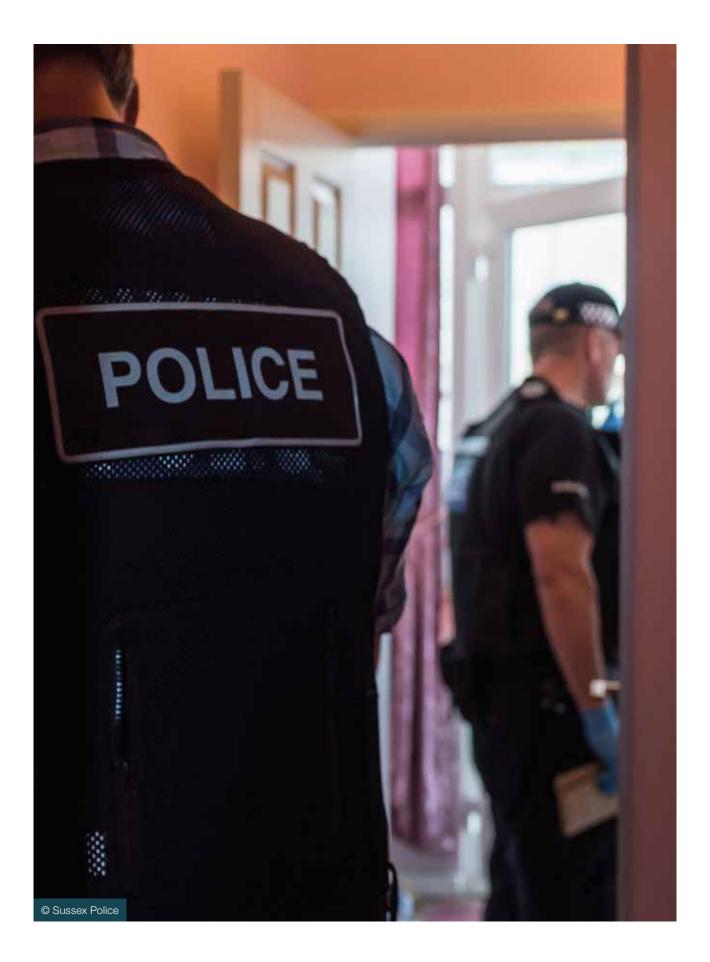
When police officers and staff abuse their position for a sexual purpose, it has a devastating effect on the lives of victims. It also corrodes trust and confidence in the police. In December 2016, we recommended that all police forces in England and Wales have plans in place to look for intelligence on potential abuse of position for a sexual purpose.

In our 2017 review of this issue, we found that most forces still have work to do. We asked forces to give us their plans by 31 May 2017. We found:

- eleven plans didn't contain enough information;
- fifteen forces had plans but had not yet started implementing them;
- fifteen had plans in place and had started implementing them: and
- two already had all elements in place.

We will carry out a full inspection of this and other elements of police legitimacy in 2018. This gives forces another opportunity to show they have understood how important this issue is, and to make progress.

There has also been work on this issue at a national level. It is part of the NPCC national strategy, and the Independent Police Complaints Commission¹² has changed its referral criteria.¹³ There is also guidance from the College of Policing. We believe forces have all the information they need to get this right, so we expect to see improvement at our next inspection.



Police leaders are committed to fair and ethical treatment, both of the workforce and the public.

PEEL: Leadership

Leadership, both as a skill and as a way of thinking, is important at every level of policing; it doesn't just apply at the most senior levels. So we inspect leadership in ranks and grades. We acknowledge that good leadership has a range of styles.

Through our inspections, we are assessing how forces develop and show good leadership throughout policing, not just whether senior members of the workforce are good leaders. For example, we consider whether the workforce feels able to challenge senior leaders, contribute ideas and suggest new ways of working. This is a sign of a culture in which officers and staff feel empowered.

This year, our inspection of leadership across the three PEEL pillars covered:

- fair and ethical leadership;
- diversity and innovation;
- workforce development; and
- whether leaders are taking effective action.



Fair and ethical leadership

An essential part of police leadership is being a role model for treating the public respectfully and making fair decisions. This is also known as procedural justice.

In any organisation, it is important that leaders are seen to be fair in how they treat people, and that they are open to challenge. It is also important for police leaders to show openness, accountability and fairness. Our main findings were:

- police leaders are committed to fair and ethical treatment, both of the workforce and the public. But they could improve how they communicate and disseminate information to their workforces:
- forces should treat the development of frontline officers' approach to ethics and values as a priority; and
- most police leaders said they were open to challenge from their workforces. But the extent to which workforces are confident in their leaders in this respect varies a great deal.

Most police leaders said they were open to challenge from their workforces.



Leaders recognise the need to treat people fairly and respectfully.

Setting an example

Until relatively recently, policing has been heavily focused on operational leadership. Forces have started to broaden their focus to include other aspects of their role, such as organisational development.

Part of that change is an increasing emphasis on ethical behaviour. The Code of Ethics¹⁴ provides a guide for principles and standards of behaviour. Leaders should be showing the values the code promotes, setting an example for their workforces. The code is now well understood in almost all forces.

We found that, in all forces, leaders recognise the need to treat people fairly and respectfully and understand why it is important.

Our IPSOS MORI survey of public views of policing in England and Wales¹⁵ showed that 59 percent of people agree the police in their local area treat people fairly and with respect.

Promoting an ethical culture

We found good evidence that most forces are developing and promoting an improved culture of ethical decision making.

We saw that leaders in most forces have processes and systems in place to help them make ethical decisions and that the workforce generally use these forums to talk about ethical problems. But we found less evidence that leaders were communicating these decisions openly enough to the workforce.

Being open to challenge

As well as establishing an ethical culture, leaders in policing should be fostering an environment where communication goes both ways. People should feel they can challenge their leaders, and leaders should be asking for feedback in a meaningful way.

Force leaders need to do more to make sure support to improve workforce wellbeing is accessible.

Most police leaders said they were open to challenge from their workforces. But the degree to which the workforce has confidence in leaders in this respect varies considerably.

Overseeing cultural change – diversity and innovation

This part of the inspection was about how forces are leading cultural change in policing.

We considered whether leadership teams were creating and maintaining a culture of innovation: one that accepts change to adapt.

We looked for evidence of the kind of cultural change we expect to see in well-performing forces. We explored how forces were improving their approaches to workforce wellbeing (physical and mental health) and fair processes for promotion, and whether they were following the recommendations of national bodies.

Our main findings were:

- force leaders need to do more to make sure support to improve workforce wellbeing is accessible;
- forces need to work with the College of Policing to improve their processes for choosing people to promote; in a large number of forces, the workforce didn't always feel the processes for identifying and selecting talent were fair and/or legitimate; and
- in most forces, leaders are promoting innovation from within the workforce, listening to the workforce, accepting challenge, taking feedback and giving it themselves.

It is critical that when police leaders are promoting wellbeing, the workforce believes they are doing it meaningfully and legitimately.

Identifying and acting on wellbeing concerns

Broadly, while police leaders (generally senior leaders) are good at understanding and promoting the benefits of wellbeing, forces still need to do more to identify and act on wellbeing concerns. Staff at all ranks need to understand wellbeing is important. But sergeants need the clearest understanding of what they can do to improve workforce wellbeing because they have the most direct contact with frontline officers, as well as management responsibilities.

In the Police Federation for England and Wales' annual pay and morale survey,¹⁶ nearly two-thirds (60 percent) of officers said their personal morale was low. This was nearly five percentage points higher than last year. As many as 85 percent attributed this to the way the police as a whole were treated. This shows how important it is to understand workforce wellbeing and for managers and leaders at all levels to be able to identify and act on concerns.

There is still a lot of room for improvement in how effectively police leaders identify and prevent workforce wellbeing problems. We found many examples where committed police leaders had set up well-intentioned initiatives that various members of the workforce didn't know about or use.

We also saw a discrepancy between senior managers' positive long-term objectives for wellbeing and middle managers' ability to think about and tackle wellbeing problems. In many cases, this was because officers and staff didn't feel they had time to engage in wellbeing initiatives or discussions.

It is critical that when police leaders are promoting wellbeing, the workforce believes they are doing it meaningfully and legitimately, and that leaders support wellbeing actively.

Workforce development

We considered the work police leaders are doing to keep up and increase leadership capability in their forces. We assessed how well they planned strategically and built capability in the workforce fairly, and in a targeted way.

This element of our inspection was mostly about workforce development, including whether forces are taking advantage of new opportunities for selecting and developing talent.¹⁷ This area is vitally important for the continued capability of police leaders. Our main findings were:

- most forces need to do more to understand the skills and capabilities of leaders within the workforce, as they are not using this information effectively for succession planning;
- forces need to make better use of performance and development reviews; only three forces (out of 43) could prove that, between 1 August 2015 and 31 January 2017, all officers and staff had been through a performance and development review process; and
- forces need to be better at identifying talent, promoting diversity and planning effectively for the future; to do this, they need to understand the future needs of the force.

Forces need to be better at identifying talent, promoting diversity and planning effectively for the future.



Many force leaders couldn't give teams the time and space they needed to plan strategically, innovate or, in some cases, make sound decisions.

Taking effective action

For the first time in our inspection of police leadership, we focused on how effective leadership is in terms of crime prevention (how effective the force is at preventing crime, tackling anti-social behaviour and keeping people safe) and protecting vulnerable people (how effective the force is at protecting those who are vulnerable from harm, and supporting victims).

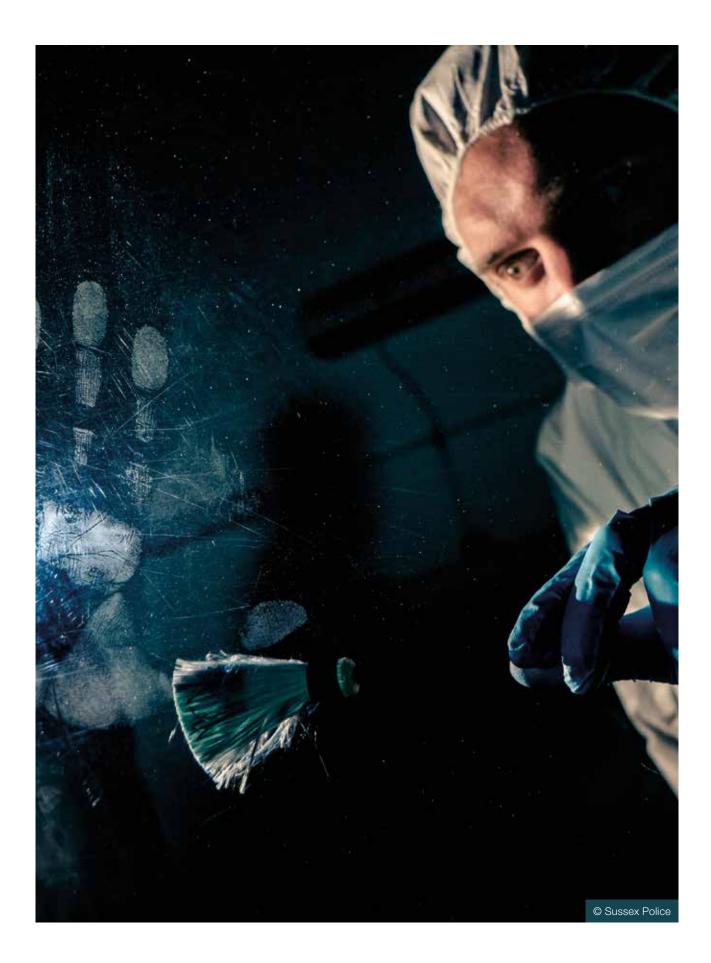
There are principles of good leadership that apply to both these areas of policing. These include:

- giving the workforce a clear sense of purpose;
- giving teams the right skills and capabilities, and enough time, to do their jobs effectively;
- delegating appropriately; and
- being accountable for their decisions.

We found some leaders working to a high standard and taking commendable steps to give the public a good service in both crime prevention and protecting vulnerable people. In particular, we have seen improvements in leadership on the latter, although there is still much more to do.

Our main findings were:

- force leaders are generally giving their workforces clear information about what they expect from them in terms of crime prevention and protecting vulnerable people; but leaders still face some difficulties in making sure their workforces have the capacity and capability to carry out the work; and
- many force leaders couldn't give teams the time and space they needed to plan strategically, innovate or, in some cases, make sound decisions – particularly in terms of crime prevention.



Nationally, the police's senior leaders and staff are clearly committed to improving the protection of vulnerable children.

Our child protection inspections

National child protection

We started the national child protection inspection programme in April 2014. By the end of March 2018, we had published inspection reports on 20 police forces. We had also gone back to visit 16 of those forces to assess their progress against the recommendations we had made. As well as this, at the request of the Home Secretary, we published quarterly reports in 2017 on the Metropolitan Police Service's progress, because our 2016 inspection of that force had revealed such serious failings.

Nationally, the police's senior leaders and staff are clearly committed to improving the protection of vulnerable children. When we went back to police forces we had inspected, we found that every force had made some progress in achieving better results for children who were at risk of harm.



How the police treat vulnerable children

We continue to see improvement in how the police treat children who may be experiencing mental health problems. The number of children taken to a police station instead of to a hospital, when they need to be taken to a "place of safety", 18 has gone down significantly.

However, children are still being unnecessarily held in police stations when they have been charged with a criminal offence and denied bail. It is almost always best for a child to be taken elsewhere (unless, for example, the weather is extremely bad). The local authority is responsible for this. In rare cases – for example, if a child is likely to do serious harm to others – there might be a need for secure accommodation.

Police forces understand that they shouldn't be holding children in police stations. We found some evidence of forces using alternative options, such as bail, more effectively. However, we found that appropriate accommodation wasn't always available. This meant that children were often held in police stations, which goes against the relevant code of practice.

Children at risk

We found that, in too many respects, the police don't recognise or evaluate risk to children well enough. Forces usually deal with straightforward cases of child abuse and neglect promptly and efficiently. However, complex investigations are often less effective and can be badly delayed.

We found that sometimes officers and staff haven't had extra training before they carry out complex investigations. They don't always have the necessary skills and experience to investigate effectively or to make appropriate plans to protect the child.

We found that, in too many respects, the police don't recognise or evaluate risk to children well enough. Officers didn't always understand that children who regularly go missing from home might be at risk of being groomed for sexual abuse.

Children who go missing

We found that the police need to respond better when a child goes missing or is absent from home. The police often gave priority to initial efforts to find the child. But, too often, they didn't then take opportunities to intervene early or make long-term plans with other agencies to protect the child.

We also found that officers didn't always understand that children who regularly go missing from home might be at risk of being groomed for sexual abuse. This showed that the police didn't always fully understand how much children are at risk of being sexually exploited.

Updates on the Metropolitan Police Service child protection inspection

Between February and May 2016, we inspected the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) to assess how effective its arrangements to protect children were. We found fundamental problems in the way the MPS understood and responded to child abuse and sexual exploitation. These problems were putting children in London at risk.

After we published the report in December 2016, the Home Secretary commissioned us to publish quarterly updates on how well the MPS was carrying out our recommendations. In February 2018, we published the fourth and final of these updates.

Overall, we found that, despite the scale and complexity of the difficulties, the MPS had made some progress in a number of areas since our initial report. This included putting in place new structures, training and appointing a senior leader with overall responsibility for child protection in the force. However, many of the improvements were recent at the time of the inspection, so hadn't yet had an effect.

The MPS has much more to do to make sure it keeps up its focus and momentum on giving children in London a better service. For that reason, we intend to go back to the MPS at least once next year to establish to what extent they have improved. We will also seek clear evidence that the new safeguarding structures are effective.

Support for learning

We are committed to helping forces improve how they protect children in England and Wales. We work closely with the College of Policing and the NPCC to make sure the findings from our inspections help forces learn.

We do this by contributing to national training and improvement plans. We provide tailored learning events and support to develop training. These help the forces we have inspected to focus on our findings and keep up the momentum to improve.

Where we have used this approach, we have started to see police forces work more constructively with us. We also see a better understanding of the problems we have found and (most importantly) better outcomes for children. We keep reviewing how we inspect to make sure our findings help forces learn and improve.

Because of positive feedback and the improvements we have seen, we now run quarterly learning events for the forces we haven't yet inspected (or inspected some time ago). These events allow police leaders and the other organisations they work with to hear from survivors of abuse about their experiences of the police. That powerful context helps forces consider how they can tackle difficult problems successfully.

We work closely with the College of Policing and the NPCC to make sure the findings from our inspections help forces learn.



Agencies could do more to make sure all children and young people get consistently good support.

Changes we are making to our national child protection inspections

We are nearly halfway through our national child protection inspection programme.

We are reviewing:

- how we inspect, to take into account new and emerging risks to children – these include the exploitation of children across county lines (where they are often used to transport and sell drugs),¹⁹ the growth of offending online and abuse by people in a position of trust;
- how we choose which forces to inspect, so we can find and promote good practice more effectively; and
- how we can reflect the fact that local tripartite safeguarding arrangements (health, the police and the local authority) will replace local safeguarding children's boards during 2018.

We consult with our external reference group on any significant proposed changes to how we inspect.

Joint targeted child protection inspections

By the end of March 2018, we had carried out joint in-depth inspections focusing on child sexual exploitation, children living with domestic abuse and children at risk of neglect in 17 local authority areas.

The findings showed there can be effective joint work to support children at risk of sexual exploitation, domestic violence and neglect. But agencies could do more to make sure all children and young people get consistently good support in all areas. Poor practice by some professionals and agencies means that some children at risk of exploitation and abuse still don't get the response they need quickly enough.



We started this programme of focused child protection inspections in 2016.

We started this programme of focused child protection inspections in 2016. We carry them out jointly with Ofsted, the Care Quality Commission and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation. These inspections test how effective the partnership arrangements between police, education, health and social services are at helping children in need of protection.

In these inspections, we consider how all agencies together:

- respond to child abuse, neglect and exploitation as soon as they come to light;
- make sure their assessment, planning and decision making on notifications and referrals are high quality and effective;
- protect children and young people at risk of different types of harm;
- support and care for children looked after away from their families, and those leaving this care;
- lead and manage this work; and
- make sure the local safeguarding children's board is effective.

Too little is done to prevent domestic abuse in the first place, and to repair the damage it causes afterwards.

Children living with domestic abuse

In September 2017, we published a report on the findings of the six inspections of the multi-agency response to children living with domestic abuse.

The report strongly recommended a new approach to tackling domestic abuse – one that focuses more on prevention and repairing the long-term damage to child victims. Individual agencies can tackle these complex problems but, because there is so much domestic abuse, they can't succeed alone. All parts of the public sector need to work together on this.

We found that social workers, the police, health professionals and other agencies, such as youth offending teams and probation services, are often doing a good job to protect victims. But too little is done to prevent domestic abuse in the first place, and to repair the damage it causes afterwards.

The report established that:

- professionals have made progress in responding to the large number of cases of domestic abuse; however, domestic abuse is a widespread public health issue that needs a long-term strategy to reduce how often it happens;
- while there is much good work to protect children and victims, there is far too little work to prevent domestic abuse and repair the damage it causes;
- work with families often takes place in reaction to individual crises; keeping children safe over time needs long-term solutions;
- because there is a focus on immediate crises, agencies too often only consider the people at immediate risk; agencies don't always consider the right things and, in particular, aren't focusing enough on the abuser;
- it still isn't clear how agencies can share information with each other without breaking the rules on protecting personal data; and
- the definition of harm and the understanding of whose rights come first should be more consistent.

Next steps

Child sexual exploitation will still be an in-depth theme for 2018, with a focus on the link to children's exposure to gangs. In particular, we will consider the problems of criminality and exploitation across county lines.

A small number of inspections in 2018 will investigate the theme of children living with domestic abuse. The focus will then move on to the multi-agency response to children at risk of sexual abuse in the family.

We are also working with colleagues from the Welsh education and social care inspectorates to develop an integrated inspection programme. Still in the early stages of development, the programme will assess the effectiveness of partnership arrangements to protect children in Wales.

Youth Offending Services

We carry out joint inspections of Youth Offending Services (YOSs) with Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation (HMI Probation). YOSs are multi-agency teams, co-ordinated by local authorities, which aim to reduce offending by young people. They deal with some of the most vulnerable young people in society.

Police forces have a statutory responsibility to support YOSs, and to share information with them. We inspected six force areas to assess how well the police were carrying out these responsibilities.



A small number of inspections in 2018 will investigate the theme of children living with domestic abuse.

Preventing children from starting to offend, or from getting into the habit of offending, is good for potential victims and good for the children themselves. We found that the police are generally committed to preventing young people from re-offending. However, in some cases, they could do more to share information with other agencies. This happens most effectively when police officers work within YOS arrangements or local youth offending teams, alongside other staff. We were also concerned that some police officers working in YOSs hadn't had enough training in multi-agency public protection arrangements and how to respond to child sexual exploitation.

Together with HMI Probation, we are now revising our joint inspection programme, and will start using a new methodology in 2018/19. Changes will include a formal assessment of how the agencies involved in YOSs work together, and a new system that will grade YOSs from 'outstanding' through to 'inadequate'.

Out-of-court disposals

Preventing children from starting to offend, or from getting into the habit of offending, is good for potential victims and good for the children themselves. It also saves the considerable costs of these offences.

With HMI Probation, we carried out a joint inspection of one aspect of the prevention work carried out by YOSs: the use of out-of-court disposals. The police can use these to deal with children who have committed low-level offences without taking them to court.



Our findings

This is not a soft option for children, as people sometimes think. We found YOSs often did good and effective work. They make it less likely that children will offend again and help them change their lives for the better. However, with some specific changes, this work could be better still. More children could benefit, as well as local communities and society as a whole.

People generally see the work to divert children from going into the criminal justice system as a success. Our inspection supports that view. But it is difficult to prove, because there is little monitoring. We only know that far fewer children have gone into the criminal justice system over recent years.

We were pleased to find most areas had schemes for out-of-court disposals that were better than the minimum requirements set out in government guidance, and sometimes much better. In terms of how they were planned and how they operated, the schemes linked well to other local initiatives to prevent children from offending.

We found relationships and joint working between YOSs and the police were good everywhere. Increasingly, decisions on what should happen to a child are taken jointly. These decisions take into account the YOS's knowledge of the child.

The future

We understand this work is a priority for the Government, as it has been for previous administrations. It is in everyone's interests to make sure it continues, is effective and improves the life chances of children.

Most areas had schemes for out-of-court disposals that were better than the minimum requirements set out in government guidance.

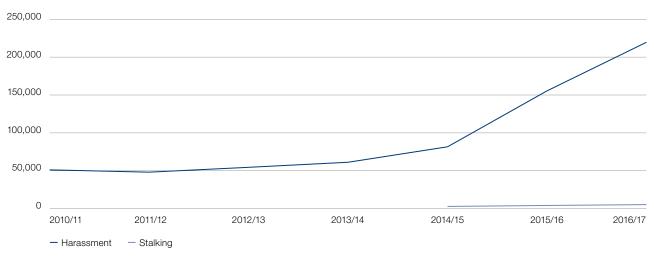
Our specialist thematic inspections

Harassment and stalking

We carried out a joint inspection with Her Majesty's Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate, assessing how the police and the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) tackle stalking and harassment. This was the first inspection to focus on this area. We published the inspection report, *Living in Fear:* the Police and CPS Response to Harassment and Stalking, on 5 July 2017.²⁰

Harassment and stalking crimes can devastate lives. Many victims suffer over a long period; many are very vulnerable, having experienced domestic abuse or left coercive and abusive relationships. Digital technology and social media mean it is now much easier for perpetrators to harass and stalk their victims.

Figure 8: Recorded harassment and stalking offences, 2010/11 to 2016/17²¹



Source: Office for National Statistics recorded crime statistics

Our findings

We found that the police and the CPS often fail to recognise fully when harassment and stalking are taking place. Our report recommended that the police service should improve the way it records these crimes. We also recommended that the police shouldn't use police information notices²² to make alleged perpetrators aware that what they are doing might constitute an offence. This is because we found strong evidence that police were using them inappropriately and inconsistently.

We also considered the benefits of stalking protection orders. The Government introduced these measures in December 2016, with the intention of protecting stalking victims at the very earliest stages of an investigation. Our report welcomed the new approach, but also found that some victims of harassment are left unprotected. Stalking protection orders will only work if the police service gets better at recognising when these crimes are taking place.

Stalking protection orders will only work if the police service gets better at recognising when these crimes are taking place.



In too many respects, police didn't have enough knowledge and training about disclosure.

Disclosure

Disclosure of evidence is an important part of a fair trial. The prosecution must disclose all material evidence in its possession for or against the accused. That includes evidence that weakens its case or strengthens that of the defence.

On 17 July 2017, after a joint inspection with Her Majesty's Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate, we published a thematic report on disclosure (Making it Fair: A Joint Inspection of the Disclosure of Unused Material in Volume Crown Court Cases).²³

This report found many problems with the way the CPS and the police manage the disclosure process in the Crown Court. Among other things, we found that, in too many respects:

- police didn't have enough knowledge and training about disclosure;
- the CPS wasn't challenging the police enough on poor disclosure practice;
- the CPS wasn't giving the police enough advice or direction on how to respond to defence statements;²⁴
- the police and CPS weren't communicating with each other effectively enough; and
- there was some evidence of a culture of accepting poor disclosure practices within the police and CPS.

The inspection found that these problems often led to cases being delayed or failing. The report made nine recommendations about how to improve the disclosure process. These included introducing disclosure champions in forces, who could give officers expert advice on the process. We also made recommendations aimed at helping the police and the CPS communicate better.



A number of cases that failed because of disclosure problems featured prominently in the media during December 2017 and January 2018, including two CPS London rape prosecutions (R v Liam Allan and R v Isaac Itiary). The Justice Minister, Dominic Raab, described the cases as 'deeply worrying'. The Metropolitan Police Service responded by launching a review of disclosure practices in rape and serious sexual offence cases.

While it tends to be big cases that attract publicity, our inspection showed that disclosure failures lead to the collapse of many volume crime trials across England and Wales every week.

We concluded that police leaders urgently need to change the air support service.

Police air support

The NPCC (National Police Chiefs' Council) asked us to carry out an inspection of police air support, including helicopters, fixed-wing aircraft and drones. This was after concerns from some police forces about how effective and efficient the national arrangements for police air support were.

Our inspection included information from all 43 police forces in England and Wales, as well as interviews with senior and frontline officers from 32 forces.

Our findings

Overall, we concluded that police leaders urgently need to change the air support service. This was because of:

- the low and inconsistent support the National Police Air Service (NPAS) gives police forces;
- financing difficulties;
- the lack of an up-to-date strategy for police air support; and
- weaknesses in governance.



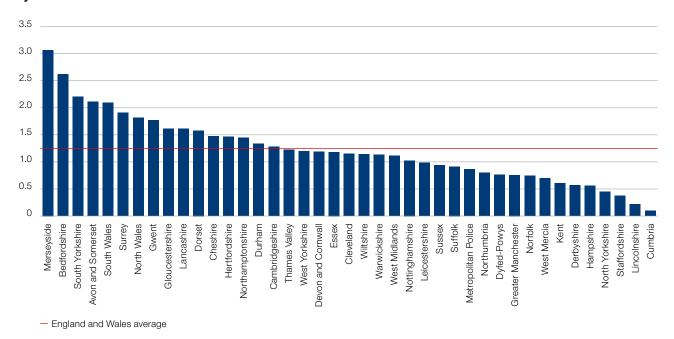
In particular, we urged police leaders to consider the option of replacing the existing NPAS collaboration agreement. This would allow them to put better arrangements in place within the next three years.

How police use the air service

We learned that, over the last ten years, the number of police airbases had halved and the number of aircraft had reduced by a third. Although this had reduced costs, we found that savings had mostly come from cutting the service to forces rather than making it more efficient.

We found that how much forces used the NPAS varied a great deal (see figure 9). While the proximity of NPAS bases played a part here, there were clearly other factors at work too. We recommended that the NPCC analyse them to establish the reasons for these differences.

Figure 9: Requests for air support, per 1,000 population, by force in 2016²⁵



Source: Data given to us by NPAS in January 2017



Although a few forces got a quick response from NPAS, many didn't.

Response times

We also found that, although a few forces got a quick response from NPAS, many didn't.

On average, it took more than 30 minutes to respond to a crime taking place that didn't involve an immediate threat to life. In over 40 percent of cases, police forces cancelled the call for support because the incident was over before an NPAS helicopter could arrive.

NPAS met its response time targets. But this was because the targets were too lenient and calls that didn't result in an aircraft attending weren't included in the assessment of response time. On average, it took more than 10 minutes to despatch an aircraft to the most urgent calls and almost 22 minutes to despatch an aircraft to a crime in action.

Contributing to the costs

We found that it also varied considerably how much forces contributed to the costs of NPAS (see figure 10).

The method for calculating force contributions led to people in one force area paying 5p a year per head towards police air support, whereas in another force area people paid £1.98 – nearly 40 times as much.

0.8 0.7 0.6 0.5 0.4 0.3 0.2 0.1 South Yorkshire Suffolk Dorset Gwent Cheshire Essex Northumbria Norfolk Dyfed-Powys Cleveland North Wales Merseyside South Wales Lancashire Durham Warwickshire **Devon and Cornwall** Surrey West Yorkshire Cambridgeshire Nottinghamshire Gloucestershire **Northamptonshire** Bedfordshire West Midlands West Mercia Metropolitan Police North Yorkshire Lincolnshire Avon and Somerset 3reater Manchester Derbyshire Leicestershire Staffordshire Hertfordshire Hampshire Thames Valle

Figure 10: Percentage of 2016/17 net revenue expenditure (NRE) spent on NPAS, by force

Source: Data given to us by NPAS in January 2017 and Police Objective Analysis estimates 2016/17

NPAS's investment strategy was to use capital funding to upgrade aircraft it already had, rather than buy new ones. Because of this approach, a number of aircraft were nearing the end of their working lives, without established plans and funding for acquiring new ones.

Evaluating the benefits of drones

Our report highlighted that, although most forces had bought drones, no force had rigorously evaluated the benefits of using them.

As a result, the police service hadn't developed a common view on their relative merit as a form of police air support. There is a risk that the service won't have the evidence it needs to capitalise on the developments in drone capability that the Government anticipates in the coming years.

While the police have a duty to refer people to immigration and the criminal justice system, they should always consider whether these people may be victims themselves.

Modern slavery and human trafficking

In the UK, today and every day, thousands of men, women and children who are victims of modern slavery and human trafficking are degraded and dehumanised.

These crimes are complicated. Cases may involve one or more offenders or victims. They may be national or international. They may be organised or opportunistic. They can take place in both rural and city areas, in places as different as nail bars and construction sites. They can involve domestic servitude or the trafficking of children for sexual exploitation.

Our findings

It is vital that police forces are aware of the signs that these harmful and frequently hidden crimes are being committed, so they can tackle them appropriately. In this inspection, we examined how the police in England and Wales deal with modern slavery and human trafficking, including how they use the powers in the Modern Slavery Act 2015.

We found clear evidence at national and regional levels that people wanted to improve how the police respond to modern slavery and human trafficking. Some forces – Greater Manchester Police in particular – are, commendably, leading the way on this. They show how commitment and dedication to dealing with this type of crime can produce effective results.

Overall, however, we found that the police urgently need to identify victims much more consistently and effectively. People in contact with the police are not always recognised as victims of these crimes, so they stay in the hands of the criminals who exploit them. Others are arrested as offenders or illegal immigrants. While the police have a duty to refer people to immigration and the criminal justice system, they should always consider whether these people may be victims themselves.



We reviewed current and recent cases of modern slavery and human trafficking in ten police forces. We had serious concerns about the quality of investigations. The police are winding up some investigations too early, with lines of enquiry still available. In some cases, police did not even speak to victims and witnesses.

Too much police work in this area consists only of reacting.

As a result of these failings, victims are left unprotected. Offenders are not brought to justice, leaving them free to continue to exploit people as possessions.

Too much police work in this area consists only of reacting, and shows little understanding of the nature and scale of modern slavery and human trafficking. We were disappointed to find that some frontline officers didn't consider modern slavery a problem in their force area.

We were also concerned that some neighbourhood officers said they didn't discuss modern slavery and human trafficking with local communities. This was because they didn't think the public were either interested in, or sympathetic to, victims of these crimes. Police forces must do much better, both with their own staff and with their communities, to improve people's awareness and understanding of these abhorrent crimes.

National Crime Agency response

We found that the National Crime Agency (NCA) and forces need to share intelligence about modern slavery and human trafficking more consistently and immediately. We are encouraged by recent changes in the NCA, and accept that there have been more since our inspection fieldwork. But at the time of our inspection, forces didn't always recognise that these changes were happening.

We also found that there were opportunities for the NCA to give information and intelligence more quickly to forces to let them respond effectively to victims in their areas. We found evidence of this in our audit of police case files. Since this kind of crime crosses borders, it is crucial that there are good relationships and effective co-ordination at national, regional and local levels.

The future

Overall, we found that there has been some progress and major developments in operations and strategy both during our inspection and afterwards. But the police service still has much to do to develop an effective, coherent and consistent response to modern slavery and human trafficking. Our inspection identified the problems and established a starting point for the police to address them.

We wanted to answer the question: how well prepared is the police service to respond effectively to a terrorist attack?

Counter-terrorism

During 2017, we carried out the second inspection of our three-year counter-terrorism inspection programme. The inspection took place before the terrorist attacks in London and Manchester in spring and summer 2017.

The inspection focused on the immediate police response to a terrorist attack; in particular, the first few hours of a marauding terrorist (firearms) attack (MTA/MTFA). We wanted to answer the question: how well prepared is the police service to respond effectively to a terrorist attack? We considered the command and control arrangements in place and how well forces and the Counter-Terrorism Network were working together.

We assessed documents and interviewed staff in 19 police forces, including 16 local forces and three national forces (the Ministry of Defence Police, the Civil Nuclear Constabulary and the British Transport Police).





Forces' planning and preparation

We were particularly interested in local forces' plans and preparations for their response to an MTA/MTFA.

In this inspection, we assessed whether forces had done all they could reasonably be expected to do. We wanted to know if their planning and preparation minimise the risks and make an effective response as likely as possible.

In our report, we recognised that planning alone doesn't guarantee an effective response. We analysed the preparations for command and control, and the supporting infrastructure that forces would rely on in responding to a terrorist attack.

Our recommendations

We made recommendations at national, regional and force levels. Because of the sensitive nature of counter-terrorism work and legal constraints in place to protect national security, we didn't publish the report.

Police response to the Manchester and London attacks

It is clear that the Metropolitan Police Service, City of London Police, British Transport Police and Greater Manchester Police responded very quickly and decisively to the attacks, which happened after our inspection; an independent report on the emergency service response to the Manchester attack praised the remarkably fast deployment of armed officers.²⁶

The fact that armed and unarmed officers were so effectively co-ordinated shows that the forces had prepared well. From each of these incidents, there are also lessons to be learned to make the police response more effective.

Planning alone doesn't guarantee an effective response.

If the police fail to record crime accurately, victims and their communities might not get justice.

Our specialist rolling inspections

Crime data integrity

The police must take crime data integrity (CDI) very seriously. If the police fail to record crime accurately, victims and their communities might not get justice. The safety of the public might also be put at risk.

In April 2016, we started a new programme to inspect all 43 forces in England and Wales on how they record crime. The programme builds on our 2014 crime-recording inspection. This found that, at a national level, the police failed to record 19 percent of the crimes reported to them.

Our CDI inspection programme

Our inspections cover several areas:

- how accurately the police record crime overall;
- how accurately the police record violence and sexual offences;
- how accurately the police record reports of rape;
- how well victims of domestic abuse are treated; and
- how accurately the police record modern slavery crimes.

We sample some reports that have gone to specialist police departments dealing with vulnerable victims to see if the reports of crime have been recorded. We also examine cases where the police have decided to amend crime reports to show that no crime has been committed.

Our findings

So far, we have found most forces are determined to get crime recording right. This is so that the force has a clearer understanding of the criminality affecting its communities. The force can then respond more effectively to demand and to what the victims of crime need.

Some forces are already recording crime accurately. We found that, where this is the case, systems and processes work well, leadership is good and oversight is effective.

But, overall, we are finding too many forces aren't recording crime accurately and are complying inconsistently with crime-recording standards. In some forces, this needs improving significantly and urgently.

This isn't just about following a set of rules properly.

The police also need to be aware of the problems for victims and communities if they don't record crime well.

Only then will the victim's voice carry the weight it deserves.



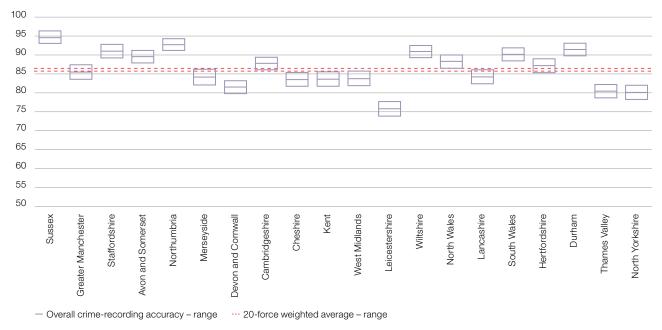
Too many forces aren't recording crime accurately.

Accuracy of crime recording

We published the findings of our CDI inspections of 20 police forces. These have shown that the police still have problems with accuracy, despite the commitment and dedication of senior police leaders and many officers and staff.

We produced weighted estimates of overall crime-recording accuracy. The combined recording accuracy for all reported crime in the 20 forces we have inspected so far²⁷ was 85.9 percent (see figure 11); for violent offences it was 80.8 percent, and for sexual offences 91.5 percent.²⁸ The results for the 20 forces we have inspected so far show they need to get even better at this.

Figure 11: Overall crime-recording accuracy by force



Source: HMICFRS CDI inspections

Note: Forces are displayed in the order in which we carried out the inspections. The overall crime-recording accuracy is displayed as a range for each force. The middle line is the central estimate within this range.

What works

The spread of results in figure 11 shows that some forces do record crime accurately. This isn't the result of any one factor. The factors that have the most beneficial effect are leadership, strong supervision and quality assurance, and skilled people. Having a crime registrar²⁹ who is scrupulously objective and has a strong influence over local crime-recording decisions is particularly helpful.

Strong supervision improves standards. In Durham Constabulary, two inspectors must agree before police officers or staff can close a crime-related incident without creating a crime record. This makes sure victims who report a crime will almost certainly have a crime recorded. It means victims are more likely to be referred to victim support organisations, and investigations are more likely to take place. Victims and communities are then more likely to get justice.

Where forces have good systems to identify when crimes aren't being recorded properly, and a way of providing feedback to officers and staff, standards will improve.

Merseyside Police has developed a system that identifies which officers and staff aren't recording crimes accurately. The force uses this information, together with other information such as the quality of prosecution files submitted by officers and staff, to improve standards and performance. Again, this makes sure more victims will have their crimes recorded and will be more likely to achieve justice.



Strong supervision improves standards.

We are still finding some reports of rape going unrecorded.

Problem areas

Appointment systems

Where forces record crimes when they are reported rather than later, standards of crime recording are better.

We have found problems with crime recording in forces that use appointment systems. When there is a delay between the original report and an officer speaking to the victim, the police may not record the crime. Victims can become disillusioned because of the delay and distance themselves from the process. The police can then close the original report without any further contact with the victim.

Forces that use appointment systems need to make sure crimes are recorded properly and victims get the level of service they deserve.

Rape

We are still finding some reports of rape going unrecorded.

In 2015, the Home Office introduced a new category for recording complaints of rape. When a complaint of rape is made, the police must record that complaint as a crime. That rule applies when the person making the complaint says he or she is the victim, and when someone else makes the complaint.

An example of the latter case is when a friend or relative of the alleged victim makes the report. In some of these cases, the alleged victim can't be found or denies that a rape has taken place. In those cases, we found that the reports aren't always recorded.

In July 2016, there was a further change in the way rape is recorded. If there is a complaint of rape involving more than one alleged offender, the police must record a separate crime for each. We found police forces were slow to implement this change.

There are strict rules about cancelling any reported crime of rape. People responsible for cancelling these crimes must be qualified, and they can only do it if extra, verifiable information leads them to do so. An example of this would be where the report is proved to be false. We have found that, in most cases, forces follow these rules.

Forces must make sure victims of domestic abuse, who are among the most vulnerable of victims, get the best possible service.

Modern slavery

Since July 2015, police forces have been expected to record all modern slavery crimes. Modern slavery and human trafficking are often hidden, with victims being from different cultures. We have found that police forces don't always understand the offences under the Modern Slavery Act 2015 and their responsibilities to record them all.

Domestic abuse

We have found that forces still have a problem with recording domestic abuse crimes.

The reasons for this are complex and include the sometimes controlling and coercive relationship between the victim and abuser. Nevertheless, forces must make sure victims of domestic abuse, who are among the most vulnerable of victims, get the best possible service. This starts with accurately recording complaints of crimes committed against them.

Pressure not to record

Formally recording every report of crime is an important step in protecting victims and making sure they get the service they are entitled to. In 2014, there was widespread public concern that pressures on the police to reduce crime and solve the crimes that did take place were affecting the quality of the data the police recorded. Concerns included suggestions that these pressures affected decisions on whether to record something as a crime.

In our 2014 report, we found there was pressure not to record a crime in some forces. In our latest round of inspections, we saw a welcome improvement. Officers and staff are clear they no longer feel under any pressure to help meet performance targets by minimising the number of crimes they record. Between March 2017 and the end of March 2018, we published ten reports after unannounced inspections of police custody suites.

Next steps

We intend to inspect the remaining 23 forces to build a better understanding of the factors that affect how accurately forces record crimes. We aim to find what works well and assess how well forces have implemented the recommendations from our 2014 crime-recording inspection report.

Custody inspections

We are one of 21 statutory bodies that make up the National Preventive Mechanism (NPM). The NPM strengthens the protection of people in detention through independent monitoring. As members of the NPM, we carry out inspections jointly with Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons (HMI Prisons). We are expanding our 2018/19 inspection programme to include Terrorism Act custody suites.

We also continue to contribute to the wider work of the NPM, particularly relating to vulnerable people. We have improved our approach to inspections, in response to recommendations made by a former Lord Advocate during a review of deaths and serious incidents in police custody.³⁰

Between March 2017 and the end of March 2018, we published ten reports³¹ after unannounced inspections of police custody suites.



We carry out follow-up visits to forces one year after their inspection. During these visits, we found that some forces are developing comprehensive action plans to improve their custody services and address our recommendations. If we find forces not making enough progress, we take this into account when deciding which forces to inspect each year.

How police treat detainees

Our inspections show that custody officers treat most detainees respectfully. On the whole, officers and staff assess and manage risks well. Most detainees, particularly children and vulnerable adults, receive good care while in custody. Some forces have invested in their custody facilities to give detainees a better environment.

However, the problems that concerned us the most last year are still there. We were still finding potential ligature points³² in most of the custody suites we visited. The lack of capacity in other agencies has led to little improvement in outcomes for children and people with mental ill-health. This is despite the willingness of the police, health services and local authorities to work together.

Forces have made some progress. Fewer people are being detained under section 136 of the Mental Health Act 1983. This is because forces are diverting people into the healthcare system rather than taking them to custody suites.

Working with other agencies to minimise the time children spend in custody has also improved. In some forces, monitoring work with these agencies is creating a better understanding of how long children are detained for, why this is the case, and how they can minimise detention time.

Children and people with mental ill-health

The police need to work with other agencies better to improve outcomes for these groups. We welcome efforts to divert people away from custody and into the healthcare system. But in many forces, this means officers are spending time away from their main duties, waiting at healthcare facilities.

Many children who enter custody are still being held overnight.

When people with mental ill-health commit an offence, there is limited support for officers to find an alternative to arrest and custody. Some forces have triage arrangements that involve mental health professionals offering advice and help. These arrangements are making a substantial and valuable difference. Many officers told us these arrangements help them avoid arrest and custody for very vulnerable people. But not all forces have them in place.

The custody sergeants we speak to say they try to minimise the time children spend in custody. In general, police officers try to avoid bringing children into custody at all. Despite this, many children who enter custody are still being held overnight. This is generally because there are ongoing investigations, or because officers are waiting for support from appropriate adults.³³

When the police have charged a child with an offence and refused bail, the child should be moved to suitable accommodation. Local authorities have a statutory duty to take responsibility for these children, but in practice they are rarely moved. In some cases, children need secure accommodation, but there is a shortage across the country. This means children stay in custody when they should be in more suitable accommodation.

Forces need to improve in several areas

There are several areas where forces have made little progress since our last annual report.

The police aren't always complying fully with various aspects of the relevant Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (PACE) Code of Practice. This sets out the requirements for the detention, treatment and questioning of suspects in police custody by police officers.³⁴ In particular, inspectors aren't always reviewing detention to make sure it is still appropriate and that detainees understand their rights and entitlements.

In most forces, performance management arrangements for custody aren't sufficiently effective. We found inaccurate data, gaps in information and a lack of scrutiny. This makes it hard for forces to assess how well they are doing and where they need to improve.

These problems also apply to the use of force on detainees. Most forces have got better at collecting data about this because of new requirements of the Home Office and the NPCC. However, there are limited internal governance arrangements in place to make sure force is being used appropriately, or that data about the use of force is accurate. Some forces can't say for sure that their officers' use of force is always proportionate.

Few of the forces we inspected reliably monitor data on the ethnicity or other characteristics of people going into custody. Even when forces gather some of this information, there is little evidence to show they are using it to make sure detainees are treated fairly, or to identify and address any over-representation of particular groups.

It is disappointing that forces have made such limited progress to improve outcomes for detainees or address problems we raised last year.



Few of the forces we inspected reliably monitor data on the ethnicity or other characteristics of people going into custody.

We found ACRO complied with the relevant sections of the PNC Code of Practice, but we found the Code to be seriously out of date.

Our specialist inspections of non-Home Office forces

The ACRO Criminal Records Office

The ACRO³⁵ Chief Executive Officer invited us to inspect ACRO's use of the Police National Computer (PNC). The inspection focused on three areas:

- ACRO's compliance with the PNC Code of Connection;³⁶
- its compliance with the PNC Code of Practice;37 and
- how efficiently and effectively it uses the PNC.

We found that ACRO complied with most aspects of the PNC Code of Connection, and that all the necessary certification was up to date. ACRO was auditing how its staff use the PNC. However, it wasn't auditing to the same standard how staff use other databases containing data downloaded from the PNC.

We found ACRO complied with the relevant sections of the PNC Code of Practice, but we found the Code to be seriously out of date.

We found that ACRO uses the PNC effectively and efficiently. Members of staff were fully trained and they were working to a high standard. The ACRO workforce was well motivated and was giving UK police forces a vital and cost-efficient service.

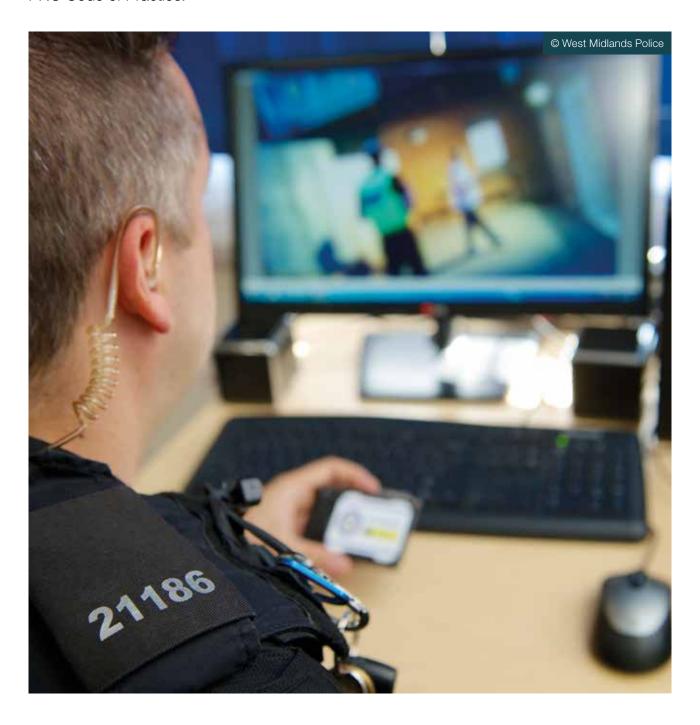
Our recommendations

In our report, we recommended that ACRO:

- improve its audit processes;
- monitor its IT systems better; and
- develop and test a business continuity plan.

We also recommended that the Home Office update the PNC Code of Practice.

Members of staff were fully trained and they were working to a high standard.





British Transport Police

In October 2016, the Under Secretary of State for Transport commissioned us to inspect the efficiency, legitimacy and leadership of British Transport Police. We used the methodology set out in our spring 2016 PEEL all-force inspection programme.

We focused on three areas:

- how efficient the force is at managing its resources;
- how legitimate the force is in the way it treats its workforce and the public; and
- how well the force understands, develops and shows leadership.

Efficiency

We found the force has a limited understanding of the current and future demand for its services. It does have plans in place to reorganise its resources, and has clear processes for prioritising its activities. But at the time of the inspection, the force wasn't matching its resources well enough to the demand it faces.

The force doesn't have a consistent process in place to manage projects or assess how successful they were. The force also needs to improve its planning; at the time of the inspection, it didn't have a medium-term financial plan established for the period to 2021.

We found the force's IT needs upgrading significantly and urgently. It should quickly put in place a clear, realistic and costed IT plan to address this, with robust systems to monitor the IT plan and track its progress. The force doesn't have good enough plans to reduce costs or to improve its services as a result of any savings it makes.

Officers and staff are confident about reporting concerns to their supervisors.

Legitimacy

The force works hard to make sure it treats all the people it serves with fairness and respect. It asks for feedback from the communities it serves in a range of ways, including surveys, text messaging, a mobile app and social media. It analyses the feedback and uses it to give the public a better service.

New recruits and special constables receive good training based on the force's values, ethics and professionalism. The workforce was aware of the Code of Ethics and the force's values. Security vetting for staff was up to date at the time of the inspection, but the force's vetting policy wasn't in line with current national guidance.

The force is clear about what constitutes acceptable behaviour and reinforces this to its workforce. Officers and staff are confident about reporting concerns to their supervisors. The force doesn't have a formal assessment of the risks of corruption or a comprehensive plan for controlling those risks. At the time of the inspection, the force was in the very early stages of developing a policy on the abuse of position for a sexual purpose.

The force treats its workforce with fairness and respect. It uses a range of methods to understand what affects the workforce's perceptions of fair and respectful treatment. The force takes good care of all its people and has invested in this significantly. Officers and staff felt there was a firm commitment to their wellbeing, and that they could get support if they needed it.

The force recognises that a diverse workforce is important.

Leadership

Supervisors receive good training and understand their responsibilities towards their staff's welfare. The force uses a good range of techniques to develop leadership capability among its staff. It accepts that it doesn't yet fully understand which leadership skills are lacking among its staff and has introduced a new personal development review process to address this.

The force recognises that a diverse workforce is important. It has developed programmes to encourage more diverse groups of people in middle management to seek out leadership positions. However, the force needs to think about how diversity in other areas (for example, experience, skills or management style) could enrich its leadership teams.

Preparing to transfer British Transport Police's Scottish operations to Police Scotland

With HMIC Scotland, we also considered how well British Transport Police was preparing to transfer its Scotlish operations to Police Scotland.³⁸ There was no detailed and authoritative business case which sets out the benefits, disadvantages or costs of the transfer to Police Scotland. This was because the decision to transfer the British Transport Police's functions in Scotland was entirely political.

We found that the force has only recently done some limited planning to prepare for the transfer. This was partly because British Transport Police and Police Scotland had only recently been invited to the Joint Programme Board. (This was set up in January 2016 and co-chaired by the Department for Transport and the Scottish government to prepare for the devolution of railway policing.)

British Transport Police has started to cost its support for the transfer. In corporate areas such as ICT, the force has given some basic thought to separating the computer network in Scotland from the wider British Transport Police network. The force has taken a similar approach to the force-wide plan to provide body-worn video cameras. However, the force has further work to do in considering the impact of the transfer on its estate strategy.



The force needs to work with all the parties involved in the transfer to resolve some critical issues, including:

- the pension arrangements and terms and conditions of transferring staff;
- identifying which assets and liabilities will be transferred;
- renegotiating and renewing funding through Police Service Agreements;³⁹ and
- operational policing integration and cross-border co-operation.

British Transport Police and the British Transport Police Authority must communicate effectively with staff who will be affected by the transfer. With the support of the Joint Programme Board, they should also develop and put in place a communications and engagement plan for the transfer. There was a significant backlog of cases waiting to go to the serious crime analysis section.

National Crime Agency specialist operations

In 2017, we published our inspection report on the NCA's specialist operations centre,⁴⁰ crime operational support⁴¹ and serious crime analysis section.⁴²

Our findings

We found there was strong demand for the services these teams provide. But there was a significant backlog of cases waiting to go to the serious crime analysis section. There were also large numbers of historic cases in that section waiting for input and analysis.

We saw a lack of registered intermediaries (who are there to help communicate with vulnerable witnesses during criminal proceedings). There was an urgent need for more so the NCA could meet requests for support.

The NCA needed to address backlogs of requests made to the national injuries database team and historical cases that were waiting to be added to their database. The team was also relying on yearly placement students to maintain the Operation Marshall database,⁴³ which meant a lack of continuity.

The NCA needs to consult more with forces across the UK on what services they need. The Home Office, in conjunction with the NCA, needs to make sure the statutory code of practice for the serious crime analysis section is formally laid before Parliament.



Recommendations and areas for improvement

We made eight recommendations based on these findings. We also recommended that the teams improve in four areas:

- how they record management decisions;
- how they give information to one another;
- their understanding of demand; and
- their feedback process.

Overall, the three teams provide an effective and efficient service. But to meet the needs of present-day policing, they should make a concerted effort to respond to the recommendations and areas for improvement in our report.

The NCA needs to consult more with forces across the UK on what services they need.

Operation Lynemouth started well and had clear governance arrangements.

Tower Hamlets

On 21 March 2017, the Mayor of London's Office for Policing and Crime asked us to inspect Operation Lynemouth. This is a Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) operation into alleged criminal offences during the 2014 mayoral election in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets.

The MPS investigated these allegations at the time, and after an election court ruling that declared the election result void. The court found corrupt practices at the elections of both the mayor and the councillors for the 20 wards of Tower Hamlets.

However, there were concerns when there were no criminal convictions after initial MPS investigations. As a result, the MPS set up Operation Lynemouth in 2017, to review and reassess the allegations.

Our findings

We were asked to carry out quarterly inspections of the operation and to publish reports of our findings. So far, we have published three reports.

Operation Lynemouth started well and had clear governance arrangements. In most areas, the operation is still making good progress, but it is clear it will take longer than the MPS first thought.

The operation has identified lines of enquiry that weren't fully considered during the initial investigation, and senior officers will need to decide now how to address them.

Pursuing these lines of enquiry will take time and resources.



Royal Military Police

We inspect the investigations that the police forces of each of the three armed services carry out, and report the results to the Secretary of State for Defence. One of these police forces is the Royal Military Police (RMP).

In September 2016, we inspected how effectively the RMP investigates the deaths of British soldiers overseas. These investigations also cover the deaths of civilians who are subject to service law. In particular, we examined how well the RMP supported grieving families throughout the investigations.

We think the RMP could do much more to give bereaved families information, care and support, sensitively and compassionately.

How well does the RMP support bereaved families?

According to military policy, bereaved families are victims and they should have access to trained family liaison officers if they need them.

We found evidence of good practice, but we also met families who were critical of the service they had received. We think the RMP could do much more to give bereaved families information, care and support, sensitively and compassionately.

We found the service the Ministry of Defence (MOD) provided to families was inconsistent. It varied depending on the type of death, where the family lived and local military policies.

Our recommendations

We recommended that, to give bereaved families better support, the MOD should:

- revise its procedures;
- check it is consistently complying with them; and
- ask families for feedback about whether the standards are being met.



We also recommended the RMP revise its policy on family liaison officers to match national guidance and training. This is to make sure RMP family liaison officers perform to the same standard as those from Home Office police forces.

How effective are RMP investigations into overseas deaths?

We found that, in most cases, the RMP investigates overseas deaths effectively.

However, we were concerned that the RMP didn't have enough qualified military investigators to deal with more fatalities than it had in recent years. This could cause problems in working promptly and effectively.

We saw little evidence of governance in place for how the RMP, the Royal Navy Police and the Royal Air Force Police work together. The RMP leads most of the decisions about resources, priorities and planning, and the other two forces have limited influence.

The RMP has no formal role (and no explicit statutory powers) to act abroad on behalf of a UK coroner. In our view, this means it does not carry out all its investigations as effectively as it could.

Our recommendations

We recommended that:

- the Provost Marshals (Navy, Army and Royal Air Force) and the MOD should agree governance arrangements for how the service police work together, so they can find opportunities to do so more effectively and efficiently; and
- the MOD should, in consultation with the Chief Coroner, formalise the role of the RMP when acting on behalf of a coroner in investigating overseas deaths.

We also recommended that the RMP should set up a system to monitor performance. This should include:

- how well it supports victims of crime;
- how well it records crime and allocates investigations;
- whether it uses investigative tactics appropriately;
- how well it supervises investigations and assures their quality;
- whether it provides training to national standards; and
- how well it learns from experience.

We made other recommendations about training, learning lessons from cases, and reducing delays.

How effectively does the RMP work with others?

We found that the Provost Marshal (Army) had set up regular high-level meetings and agreements with interested organisations so that there was contact and mutual support. He had also delegated, to the Commanding Officer of the Special Investigation Branch, his authority to investigate overseas deaths and to engage with other interested organisations. These arrangements were generally effective.

RMP investigators generally had effective working relationships with police forces and other parties in countries where the Army was based. But there were some problems about working with other MOD departments.

In most cases, the RMP investigates overseas deaths effectively.

We found that the PSNI had a good understanding of how to manage the demands on its services.

We found the RMP had difficulties in investigating offences where another law enforcement body had jurisdiction. It also wasn't exchanging enough information with the Defence Safety Authority and there were problems with some of the arrangements with others over informing and supporting bereaved families.

We didn't find any structured process for professionals outside the RMP to review how independent and effective RMP investigations into overseas deaths are.

Our recommendations

We recommended that:

- the Provost Marshal (Army) and the heads of the Joint Casualty and Compassionate Centre, the defence inquests unit, and the Army bereavement aftercare service, should revise the agreement on how they work together; they should regularly ask families for feedback about the service they receive; and
- the Provost Marshal (Army) should introduce a process for professionals outside the RMP, such as Home Office police forces, to review how independent and effective RMP investigations into overseas deaths are.

Police Service of Northern Ireland

Every year, the Minister for Justice commissions us to carry out an inspection of the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI). Like our other PEEL inspections, this evaluates the efficiency and effectiveness of the service.

Efficiency

We found that the PSNI had a good understanding of how to manage the demands on its services. Since last year, it has improved the way it gathers information from other agencies, including health services and local councils. It has become more aware of crimes such as human trafficking, modern slavery and domestic abuse. The service also deals with problems specific to Northern Ireland, including cross-border criminality and the illegal trade in abortion drugs.



We judged the PSNI to be good at preventing crime, tackling anti-social behaviour and keeping people safe.

The service uses this information to help make decisions about how to allocate staff and resources. It generally does this efficiently, using a system called priority-based resourcing. A specialist team, the resource delivery group, helps make sure that the service has enough trained staff to deal with demand. We found that this could be better co-ordinated.

The PSNI is good at planning for future demand. Its workforce, assets and ICT systems are all strong. It works well with a range of other agencies, including: other law enforcement agencies, such as police forces in England, Scotland and Wales, and An Garda Síochána, Ireland's national police and security service; HMRC and the Revenue Commissioners; and the National Crime Agency.

But its ability to plan is constrained by the short-term, annual nature of funding (and also by the uncertainty caused by the absence of an elected Assembly). Unlike forces in England and Wales, the PSNI can't build up reserves to fund longer-term projects because it can't carry forward any savings it makes.

Effectiveness

We judged the PSNI to be good at preventing crime, tackling anti-social behaviour and keeping people safe. In the year covered by the inspection, recorded crime in Northern Ireland was stable and below the recorded rate for England and Wales. The service works closely with local communities to understand the threats and risks they face.

On anti-social behaviour, the service works well with other organisations to identify problems and respond early.

We recommended the service improve how it investigates less complex crimes such as theft and burglary.

The PSNI developed an approach to problem solving in which officers are encouraged to use the national decision model⁴⁴ and the problem analysis triangle.⁴⁵ These help them identify problems, and develop and assess potential solutions.

Where the service was using this approach, it was effective, but we found it wasn't being used consistently. We recommended the service extend the approach.

The PSNI is good at investigating crime and reducing re-offending. The standard of investigations is generally good, especially in more serious or complex cases. We recommended the service improve how it investigates less complex crimes such as theft and burglary. Similarly, the service is good at pursuing suspects who are wanted for serious offences, but could do more in less serious cases.

The service works well with others, including probation, council services and voluntary agencies, to tackle prolific offenders and reduce re-offending. It has good systems in place to manage the threat posed by dangerous and sexual offenders, although increasing demand is putting a strain on resources.

However, the political context the service operates in means some people who work in other agencies are reluctant to support the police openly, for fear of reprisals from dissident elements. This affects the service's performance in some areas, such as offender management.

Serious and organised crime

The PSNI is good at tackling serious and organised crime. It has a deep understanding of the threat and risk that serious and organised crime and dissident terrorism pose to the communities of Northern Ireland.

The service works with a wide range of other organisations, including law enforcement agencies throughout Great Britain and in the Republic of Ireland. It has effective processes in place to tackle organised crime groups, and makes good use of serious crime prevention orders to manage the most dangerous offenders. The service also has effective strategies for deterring people from getting involved in terrorism or organised crime.

Our monitoring arrangements

Our monitoring process is a vital part of our work to help forces become more efficient and effective, based on our inspection judgments and other information we have about them. It informs the inspections we do under section 54 of the Police Act 1996.

We routinely scan data and information from a range of sources to see what forces are doing well and what challenges they might face in the future. We also use the data to assess forces' progress in dealing with any causes of concern. This helps us design and run future inspections – for example, by highlighting where there are particular risks which merit inspection, or enough concerns to affect the timetabling of an inspection. We review all forces regularly as part of this monitoring cycle.

The monitoring phases

We monitor forces in two phases: the Scan phase and the Engage phase.

During the Scan phase, we collect and analyse data and information about forces' performance. We use data and information from several sources to identify good things forces are doing and potential areas of concern. This also helps us establish if a force is performing poorly or getting worse.

If a force isn't making enough progress with any areas of concern, we move it from the Scan phase to the Engage phase.

In the Engage phase, we help forces find ways to improve and resolve any areas of concern if they haven't been able to do so on their own. We also help them get advice and support from other organisations, such as the College of Policing and the NPCC.

Work will carry on throughout 2018, as part of the Integrated PEEL Assessment programme, to incorporate the monitoring process more fully into our inspection activities.

We monitor forces in two phases: the Scan phase and the Engage phase.

In 2017, we produced 11 reports on applications for funding from ten different forces.

Special grants

Forces should include reasonable contingencies within their policing and budget plans for unexpected events in their areas. But there may be exceptional events that generate unforeseen pressure on a police force.

The threshold for an application for a special grant is normally where the extraordinary expenditure is more than one percent of the force's net revenue grant from the Home Office. The Home Office criteria also mention cases where the refusal of a special grant might threaten the financial stability of the force or its ability to provide effective policing. In these cases, police and crime commissioners can apply to the Home Office for special grant funding under the Police Act 1996, section 48; the Local Government Act 2003, section 31; or the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994, section 170.

The Home Office may refer applications to us to review. We are normally asked to consider whether the resources the force used were reasonable and proportionate to the aims of the operation or investigation, and the risks associated with it. Our reports aren't published but, based on our findings, Home Office officials advise ministers, who then make the final decision about funding.

In 2017, we produced 11 reports on applications for funding from ten different forces. The applications related to 20 different police operations; they involved major or critical incidents and serious criminal offences, including homicide, sexual assault, missing persons, terrorist attacks and the Grenfell Tower fire.

