





# Part 2: Our inspections



# Our PEEL inspections

In 2018/19, we made our fourth PEEL (police effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy) assessment 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.



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## Effectiveness

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 preventing crime and anti-social behaviour; investigating crime and catching criminals; protecting vulnerable people and supporting victims; tackling serious organised crime; and providing specialist capabilities, such as an armed response.

## Efficiency

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

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.

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In 2018/19, we made our fourth PEEL assessment of the 43 police forces in England and Wales.

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**We can make an even better assessment of forces thanks to the information they give us in their force management statements.**

## **Integrated PEEL assessments**

In 2018/19, we adopted an integrated PEEL assessment (IPA) approach. This combined the effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy pillars into a single inspection.

The main features of IPAs were:

- a single set of questions covering all three PEEL pillars;
- just one period of inspection fieldwork for each force in the IPA inspection cycle;
- for most forces (unless high risk), fewer days of inspection than with the split approach we used before;
- extra evidence from force management statements (FMSs), which we used in our risk assessments and final judgments;
- three groups of fieldwork (with 14 to 15 forces in each group);
- single rather than multiple reports for each force (with reports published in batches after each group of inspections);
- alongside our force reports, published PEEL spotlight reports that draw out emerging or recurring national themes;
- monitoring of each force's performance between each group of inspections, drawing on all the available evidence; and
- risk assessments for each force, minimising the fieldwork we need to do.

## **Force management statements**

We can make an even better assessment of forces thanks to the information they give us in their FMSs. This information gives us a wider view of how well prepared forces are to meet future demands.

## **Risk-based assessment**

As part of the IPA approach, we looked for ways to reduce the intensity of inspection on forces. Based on our analysis of previous inspections and other information, we used a risk-based approach. This meant that well-performing forces were inspected on fewer areas.



We carried out pre-inspection work to inform our risk-based approach.

We carried out pre-inspection work to inform our risk-based approach. This included examining the quality of investigation files, assessing arrangements to tackle serious and organised crime, and reviewing stop and search records. This means that we now hold information about all forces in many areas of their work. We also inspected some areas in all forces.

Because we inspect forces using a risk-based approach, it is a realistic possibility that a small minority of results may be more positive than they would otherwise be.

### **PEEL spotlight reports**

We also publish PEEL spotlight reports. These bring out the themes we have identified during our PEEL inspections. We draw on the evidence we gather from all 43 England and Wales forces. This means we can give a clearer picture of how these areas of policing are performing.

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## We take account of the operating context for each force.

### 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, financial condition, levels of affluence and deprivation, industries and employment patterns and, most importantly, the people who live, work and spend time there. Police and crime plans – established by local policing bodies – contain priorities of special importance to which chief constables must have regard. Taken together, these and other factors are often called the operating context.

We take account of the operating context for each force and recognise that different contexts create different needs for policing. Information about each force's local context is included in the 'Force in context' section of our PEEL reports.

## 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 why some forces have been graded higher than others. The nuances are in the individual force reports on our website.

On the following pages, you can see our most recent graded judgments for all 43 forces in England and Wales. We split these into the effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy pillars. We show whether the current graded judgment is based on inspection fieldwork from 2018/19, or whether our risk-based approach means that the grade from 2017 or 2016 has been carried over. For the three pillar-level judgments, we indicate whether a force has improved, declined or not changed since our previous inspection of that force.



## A change to how we run PEEL inspections from 2020

We are evolving our PEEL inspection and monitoring of police forces from 2020. This builds on our integrated framework and risk-based approach in IPA 2018/19 to move towards an intelligence-led, continuous assessment model.

We are changing the structure of our inspection framework. It will better match the way forces are organised, the demands they face and what the public expect of them. Our questions will be more closely aligned with FMSs. We will then be able to make the fullest use of the data and analysis that forces are providing to us.

We will regularly assess forces using all the information we have about them. There will be less reliance on an intense annual inspection of a force. Instead, we will take an intelligence-led approach to the evidence we need to collect. This will mean we will be more dynamic and better able to help forces improve their performance.

We will publish our reports more quickly. We will do this by publishing them as soon as they are ready, rather than in three tranches as before. We already provide feedback to forces after an inspection so that they can start improving swiftly. We will now be able to inform the public of our findings sooner. This will help local policing bodies hold their chief constables to account and, in turn, will help the public hold their local policing bodies to account.



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# PEEL judgments table



## Effectiveness

Force

**Avon and Somerset**

**Bedfordshire**

**Cambridgeshire**

**Cheshire**

**City of London**

**Cleveland**

**Cumbria**

**Derbyshire**

**Devon and Cornwall**

**Dorset**

**Durham**

**Dyfed-Powys**

**Essex**

**Gloucestershire**

**Greater Manchester**

**Gwent**

**Hampshire**

**Hertfordshire**

**Humberside**

**Kent**

**Lancashire**

**Leicestershire**

**Lincolnshire**

**Merseyside**

**Metropolitan Police**

Judgment

Trend

**Good**

Unchanged

**Good**

Improved

**Good**

Improved

**Good**

Unchanged

**Good**

Unchanged

**Inadequate**

Declined

**Good**

Unchanged

**Requires improvement**

Declined

**Good**

Improved

**Good**

Unchanged

**Outstanding**

Unchanged

**Good**

Unchanged

**Good**

Unchanged

**Good**

Improved

**Requires improvement**

Unchanged

**Good**

Improved

**Good**

Unchanged

**Good**

Unchanged

**Good**

Improved

**Good**

Unchanged

**Good**

Unchanged

**Good**

Unchanged

**Good**

Unchanged

**Good**

Unchanged

**Requires improvement**

Unchanged

**How effective is the force at preventing crime, tackling anti-social behaviour and keeping people safe?**

Judgment

Last inspected

**Good**

2016/17

**Good**

2018/19

**Good**

2018/19

**Good**

2016/17

**Good**

2017/18

**Inadequate**

2018/19

**Good**

2016/17

**Good**

2016/17

**Good**

2017/18

**Good**

2016/17

**Outstanding**

2016/17

**Requires improvement**

2018/19

**Good**

2017/18

**Good**

2018/19

**Requires improvement**

2018/19

**Good**

2016/17

**Good**

2016/17

**Good**

2016/17

**Good**

2017/18

**Good**

2016/17

**Good**

2018/19

**Good**

2016/17

**Requires improvement**

2018/19

**Good**

2016/17

**Good**

2018/19

**How effective is the force at investigating crime and reducing re-offending?**

Judgment	Last inspected
Good	2017/18
Good	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Requires improvement	2018/19
Good	2017/18
Requires improvement	2018/19
Requires improvement	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Good	2017/18
Good	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Requires improvement	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Good	2017/18
Good	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Requires improvement	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Requires improvement	2018/19

**How effective is the force at protecting those who are vulnerable from harm, and supporting victims?**

Judgment	Last inspected
Good	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Inadequate	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Requires improvement	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Requires improvement	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Requires improvement	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Requires improvement	2018/19

**How effective is the force at tackling serious and organised crime?**

Judgment	Last inspected
Good	2017/18
Good	2017/18
Good	2016/17
Good	2017/18
Good	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Good	2017/18
Outstanding	2016/17
Good	2016/17
Good	2016/17
Outstanding	2016/17
Good	2016/17
Good	2016/17
Requires improvement	2018/19
Outstanding	2016/17
Good	2018/19
Good	2016/17
Good	2016/17
Good	2016/17
Good	2016/17
Good	2016/17
Good	2016/17
Good	2016/17
Good	2016/17
Outstanding	2016/17
Outstanding	2018/19









## PEEL judgments table continued



### Effectiveness

Force	Judgment	Trend	Judgment	Last inspected
<b>Norfolk</b>	Good	Unchanged	Good	2018/19
<b>North Wales</b>	Good	Unchanged	Good	2016/17
<b>North Yorkshire</b>	Good	Unchanged	Good	2016/17
<b>Northamptonshire</b>	Requires improvement	Unchanged	Requires improvement	2018/19
<b>Northumbria</b>	Requires improvement	Declined	Requires improvement	2018/19
<b>Nottinghamshire</b>	Good	Unchanged	Requires improvement	2018/19
<b>South Wales</b>	Good	Unchanged	Good	2018/19
<b>South Yorkshire</b>	Good	Unchanged	Good	2017/18
<b>Staffordshire</b>	Good	Unchanged	Good	2017/18
<b>Suffolk</b>	Good	Unchanged	Good	2016/17
<b>Surrey</b>	Good	Unchanged	Outstanding	2018/19
<b>Sussex</b>	Good	Unchanged	Good	2018/19
<b>Thames Valley</b>	Good	Unchanged	Good	2017/18
<b>Warwickshire</b>	Good	Improved	Good	2018/19
<b>West Mercia</b>	Requires improvement	Unchanged	Good	2018/19
<b>West Midlands</b>	Good	Improved	Good	2016/17
<b>West Yorkshire</b>	Good	Unchanged	Good	2017/18
<b>Wiltshire</b>	Good	Unchanged	Good	2016/17

#### Totals

<b>Outstanding</b>		1		2
<b>Good</b>		35		34
<b>Requires improvement</b>		6		6
<b>Inadequate</b>		1		1



### How effective is the force at investigating crime and reducing re-offending?

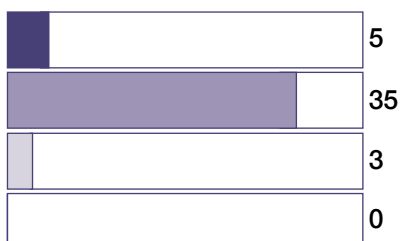
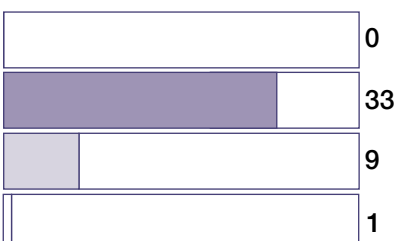
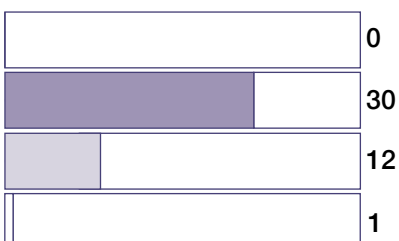
Judgment	Last inspected
Requires improvement	2018/19
Good	2017/18
Good	2017/18
Inadequate	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Good	2016/17
Good	2016/17
Good	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Requires improvement	2018/19
Good	2017/18
Good	2017/18
Requires improvement	2018/19
Requires improvement	2018/19
Requires improvement	2018/19
Good	2016/17
Requires improvement	2018/19
Good	2016/17

### How effective is the force at protecting those who are vulnerable from harm, and supporting victims?

Judgment	Last inspected
Good	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Requires improvement	2018/19
Requires improvement	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Requires improvement	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Requires improvement	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Requires improvement	2018/19
Requires improvement	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Good	2018/19

### How effective is the force at tackling serious and organised crime?

Judgment	Last inspected
Good	2016/17
Good	2016/17
Good	2017/18
Requires improvement	2018/19
Good	2016/17
Good	2016/17
Good	2016/17
Good	2016/17
Good	2017/18
Good	2016/17
Good	2017/18
Good	2017/18
Good	2016/17
Good	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Good	2017/18
Good	2018/19
Requires improvement	2018/19



# PEEL judgments table

Force

**Avon and Somerset****Bedfordshire****Cambridgeshire****Cheshire****City of London****Cleveland****Cumbria****Derbyshire****Devon and Cornwall****Dorset****Durham****Dyfed-Powys****Essex****Gloucestershire****Greater Manchester****Gwent****Hampshire****Hertfordshire****Humberside****Kent****Lancashire****Leicestershire****Lincolnshire****Merseyside****Metropolitan Police**

## £ Efficiency

Judgment

Trend

**Outstanding**

Improved

**Good**

Improved

**Good**

Unchanged

**Good**

Unchanged

**Good**

Unchanged

**Inadequate**

Declined

**Good**

Unchanged

**Requires improvement**

Declined

**Good**

Unchanged

**Good**

Unchanged

**Outstanding**

Unchanged

**Requires improvement**

Unchanged

**Good**

Unchanged

**Good**

Unchanged

**Requires improvement**

Declined

**Good**

Unchanged

**Good**

Unchanged

**Good**

Unchanged

**Good**

Improved

**Outstanding**

Improved

**Outstanding**

Improved

**Good**

Improved

**Requires improvement**

Unchanged

**Good**

Unchanged

**Good**

Improved

### How well does the force use its resources to meet the demand it faces?

Judgment	Last inspected
Outstanding	2017/18
Good	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Good	2017/18
Good	2017/18
Inadequate	2018/19
Good	2017/18
Requires improvement	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Good	2017/18
Outstanding	2017/18
Requires improvement	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Good	2017/18
Requires improvement	2018/19
Good	2017/18
Good	2017/18
Good	2017/18
Good	2018/19
Outstanding	2017/18
Good	2017/18
Good	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Good	2017/18
Good	2018/19

### How well does the force plan for the future?

Judgment	Last inspected
Outstanding	2018/19
Requires improvement	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Requires improvement	2018/19
Inadequate	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Requires improvement	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Outstanding	2018/19
Requires improvement	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Requires improvement	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Outstanding	2018/19
Outstanding	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Requires improvement	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Good	2018/19



# PEEL judgments table continued

## £ Efficiency

Force	Judgment	Trend
<b>Norfolk</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>	Improved
<b>North Wales</b>	<b>Good</b>	Improved
<b>North Yorkshire</b>	<b>Good</b>	Improved
<b>Northamptonshire</b>	<b>Inadequate</b>	Declined
<b>Northumbria</b>	<b>Requires improvement</b>	Declined
<b>Nottinghamshire</b>	<b>Requires improvement</b>	Unchanged
<b>South Wales</b>	<b>Good</b>	Unchanged
<b>South Yorkshire</b>	<b>Good</b>	Improved
<b>Staffordshire</b>	<b>Good</b>	Unchanged
<b>Suffolk</b>	<b>Good</b>	Unchanged
<b>Surrey</b>	<b>Requires improvement</b>	Declined
<b>Sussex</b>	<b>Requires improvement</b>	Declined
<b>Thames Valley</b>	<b>Good</b>	Declined
<b>Warwickshire</b>	<b>Requires improvement</b>	Declined
<b>West Mercia</b>	<b>Requires improvement</b>	Declined
<b>West Midlands</b>	<b>Good</b>	Unchanged
<b>West Yorkshire</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>	Improved
<b>Wiltshire</b>	<b>Good</b>	Unchanged

### Totals

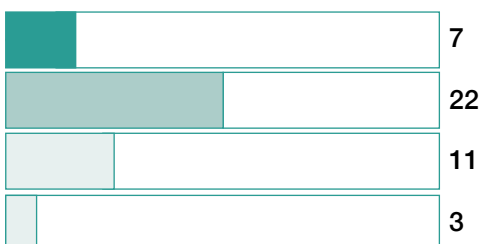
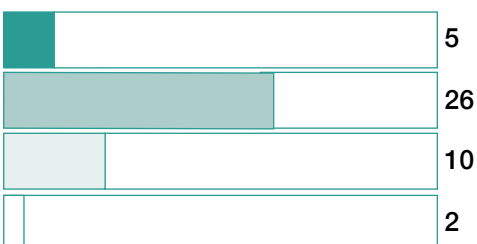
<b>Outstanding</b>	<div><div></div></div>	6
<b>Good</b>	<div><div></div></div>	25
<b>Requires improvement</b>	<div><div></div></div>	10
<b>Inadequate</b>	<div><div></div></div>	2

### How well does the force use its resources to meet the demand it faces?

Judgment	Last inspected
Outstanding	2017/18
Good	2017/18
Good	2018/19
Inadequate	2018/19
Requires improvement	2018/19
Requires improvement	2018/19
Good	2017/18
Good	2018/19
Good	2017/18
Good	2017/18
Requires improvement	2018/19
Requires improvement	2018/19
Outstanding	2017/18
Requires improvement	2018/19
Requires improvement	2018/19
Requires improvement	2017/18
Good	2017/18
Good	2017/18

### How well does the force plan for the future?

Judgment	Last inspected
Outstanding	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Requires improvement	2018/19
Requires improvement	2018/19
Requires improvement	2018/19
Requires improvement	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Requires improvement	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Inadequate	2018/19
Inadequate	2018/19
Outstanding	2018/19
Outstanding	2018/19
Good	2018/19



# PEEL judgments table



## Legitimacy

Force

Judgment

Trend

**Avon and Somerset**

**Good**

Unchanged

**Bedfordshire**

**Good**

Unchanged

**Cambridgeshire**

**Good**

Unchanged

**Cheshire**

**Good**

Unchanged

**City of London**

**Requires improvement**

Unchanged

**Cleveland**

**Inadequate**

Declined

**Cumbria**

**Good**

Unchanged

**Derbyshire**

**Good**

Unchanged

**Devon and Cornwall**

**Good**

Unchanged

**Dorset**

**Good**

Unchanged

**Durham**

**Good**

Unchanged

**Dyfed-Powys**

**Requires improvement**

Declined

**Essex**

**Good**

Unchanged

**Gloucestershire**

**Good**

Unchanged

**Greater Manchester**

**Good**

Unchanged

**Gwent**

**Requires improvement**

Declined

**Hampshire**

**Good**

Unchanged

**Hertfordshire**

**Good**

Unchanged

**Humberside**

**Good**

Unchanged

**Kent**

**Outstanding**

Unchanged

**Lancashire**

**Good**

Unchanged

**Leicestershire**

**Good**

Unchanged

**Lincolnshire**

**Good**

Unchanged

**Merseyside**

**Good**

Unchanged

**Metropolitan Police**

**Good**

Unchanged



**How well does the force treat the people it serves with fairness and respect?**

Judgment	Last inspected
Good	2018/19
Good	2017/18
Good	2017/18
Good	2017/18
Requires improvement	2018/19
Inadequate	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Good	2017/18
Good	2018/19
Good	2017/18
Good	2017/18
Good	2016/17
Requires improvement	2018/19
Good	2017/18
Good	2017/18
Good	2018/19
Outstanding	2017/18
Good	2017/18
Good	2017/18
Good	2017/18
Good	2017/18
Good	2017/18
Good	2018/19

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

Judgment	Last inspected
Good	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Requires improvement	2018/19
Inadequate	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Requires improvement	2018/19
Requires improvement	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Requires improvement	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Requires improvement	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Requires improvement	2018/19

**How well does the force treat its workforce with fairness and respect?**

Judgment	Last inspected
Good	2017/18
Good	2017/18
Good	2017/18
Good	2017/18
Good	2017/18
Inadequate	2018/19
Good	2017/18
Good	2017/18
Good	2017/18
Good	2018/19
Good	2017/18
Requires improvement	2018/19
Good	2017/18
Good	2017/18
Good	2018/19
Good	2017/18
Good	2017/18
Good	2017/18
Outstanding	2017/18
Good	2018/19
Good	2017/18
Good	2017/18
Good	2018/19
Good	2017/18
Good	2018/19
Good	2018/19

## PEEL judgments table continued



### Legitimacy

Force

Judgment

Trend

**Norfolk**

**Good**

Unchanged

**North Wales**

**Good**

Unchanged

**North Yorkshire**

**Requires improvement**

Declined

**Northamptonshire**

**Requires improvement**

Unchanged

**Northumbria**

**Good**

Unchanged

**Nottinghamshire**

**Good**

Unchanged

**South Wales**

**Good**

Unchanged

**South Yorkshire**

**Good**

Unchanged

**Staffordshire**

**Good**

Unchanged

**Suffolk**

**Good**

Unchanged

**Surrey**

**Good**

Unchanged

**Sussex**

**Good**

Unchanged

**Thames Valley**

**Good**

Unchanged

**Warwickshire**

**Good**

Improved

**West Mercia**

**Requires improvement**

Unchanged

**West Midlands**

**Good**

Improved

**West Yorkshire**

**Good**

Unchanged

**Wiltshire**

**Good**

Unchanged

**Totals**

**Outstanding**

1

**Good**

35

**Requires improvement**

6

**Inadequate**

1

### How well does the force treat the people it serves with fairness and respect?

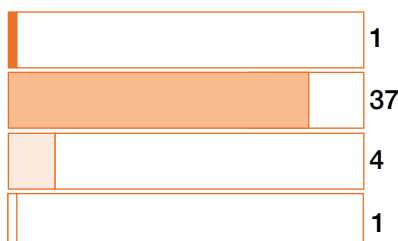
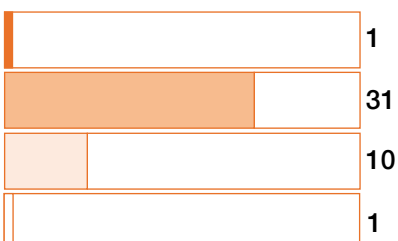
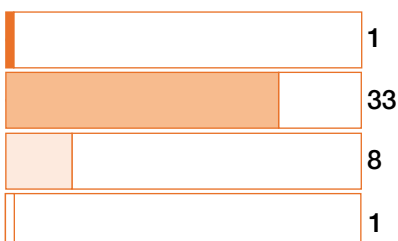
Judgment	Last inspected
Good	2017/18
Requires improvement	2018/19
Requires improvement	2018/19
Requires improvement	2018/19
Requires improvement	2018/19
Good	2017/18
Good	2018/19
Good	2017/18
Good	2017/18
Good	2017/18
Good	2017/18
Good	2017/18
Good	2017/18
Good	2017/18
Requires improvement	2018/19
Requires improvement	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Good	2017/18
Good	2017/18

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

Judgment	Last inspected
Good	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Requires improvement	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Outstanding	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Requires improvement	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Requires improvement	2018/19
Requires improvement	2018/19
Good	2018/19

### How well does the force treat its workforce with fairness and respect?

Judgment	Last inspected
Good	2017/18
Good	2018/19
Good	2017/18
Requires improvement	2018/19
Good	2017/18
Requires improvement	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Good	2017/18
Good	2017/18
Good	2018/19
Good	2017/18
Good	2018/19
Good	2017/18
Good	2018/19
Requires improvement	2018/19
Good	2018/19
Good	2017/18
Good	2018/19





## Our 2018/19 PEEL inspections

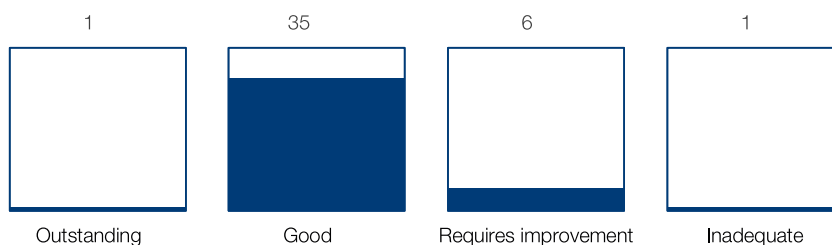
We published our PEEL reports in three groups, in May 2019, September 2019 and February 2020.

Because we inspect forces using a risk-based approach, it is a realistic possibility that a small minority of these results may be more positive than they would otherwise have been.

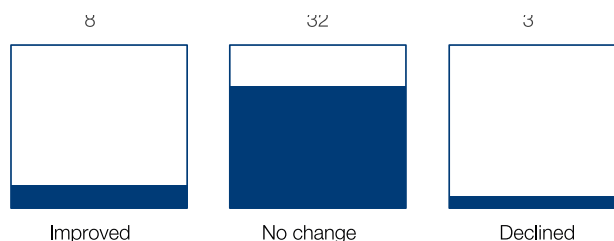
After the terrorist attack in Manchester on 22 May 2017, we agreed with Greater Manchester Police that we wouldn't make a graded judgment for the efficiency and legitimacy pillars in 2017. The changes in Greater Manchester Police's grades are measured from its 2016 graded judgments for efficiency and legitimacy.

### Summary of grades

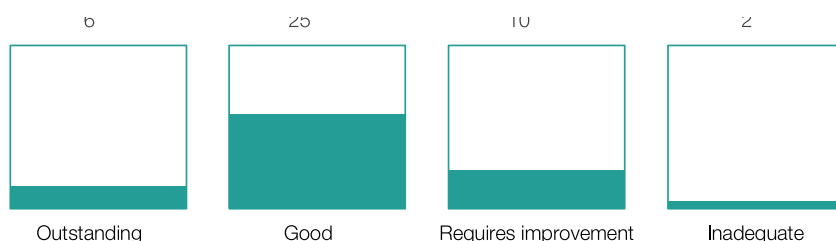
On **effectiveness**, we graded one force as outstanding, 35 as good, six as requiring improvement and one as inadequate.



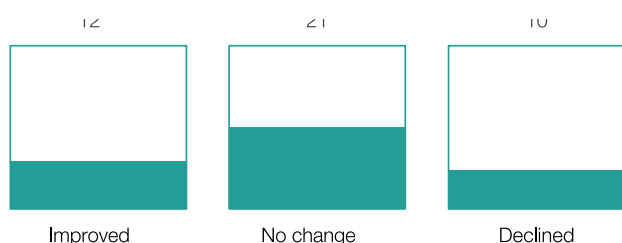
Compared with our 2017 effectiveness inspection, the grades for 32 forces stayed the same, eight got better and three got worse.



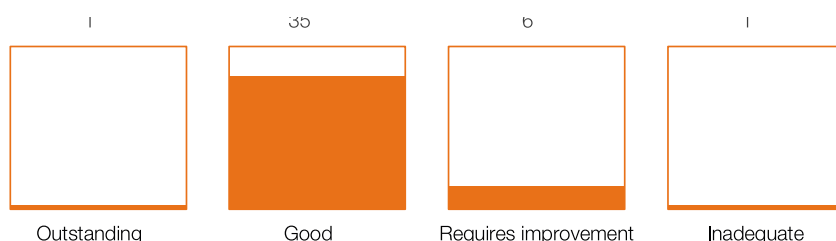
On **efficiency**, we graded six forces as outstanding, 25 forces as good, 10 as requiring improvement and two as inadequate.



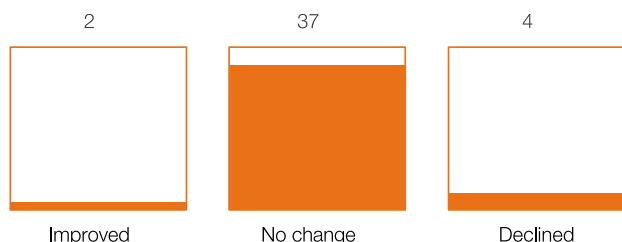
Compared with our 2017 efficiency inspection, the grades for 21 forces stayed the same, 12 forces got better and 10 got worse.



On **legitimacy**, we graded one force as outstanding, 35 forces as good, six as requiring improvement and one as inadequate.



Compared with our 2017 legitimacy inspection, the grades for 37 forces stayed the same, two got better and four got worse.



Our inspections show that policing across England and Wales is generally good.

## Our findings

Our inspections show that policing across England and Wales is generally good. Most forces are:

- keeping people safe and reducing crime;
- using their resources efficiently; and
- treating their communities and their workforces fairly and with respect.

But there are still significant difficulties for policing. Forces are providing services under the joint pressures of rising demand and falling resources, and these pressures haven't fallen equally across police forces. Some forces have risen exceptionally well to the challenge; others are struggling.

## Effectiveness

We have seen sustained improvement in forces' ability to protect vulnerable people and support victims. And forces continue to improve how effectively they tackle serious and organised crime.

We are pleased to see that forces are increasingly protecting their neighbourhood officers' time. This means they are dealing with problems in their communities rather than being diverted from their main role to support colleagues in responding to other incidents.

But too many forces are having difficulties investigating crime. And there are rising numbers of investigations that are closed because the victim no longer supports any police action. There is a real risk that the inability of forces to investigate high-volume crimes successfully is causing a loss of public confidence in policing.

### **Forces have greatly improved their ability to protect vulnerable people and support victims**

Almost all the frontline staff we spoke to have a good understanding of vulnerability and its importance. This area has seen the greatest improvement in grades since our previous inspection in 2017.



But too many forces still have problems assessing the risk posed to vulnerable people quickly enough. This includes assessing risk in the control room, in responding to domestic abuse victims, and in managing registered sex offenders. These problems mean that many vulnerable people still aren't getting the protection and support they need.

### **Forces continue to improve how effectively they tackle serious and organised crime**

Most forces are getting better at identifying the threats to their communities from serious and organised crime. They are using intelligence to prioritise their response to those they believe to be causing greatest harm. And, generally, they are accessing regional and national support when they need to.

But many forces don't fully understand the impact they are having on organised crime. There isn't enough longer-term analysis of the effect of police action on future threats to the community, and there is little evidence that forces are drawing enough on community intelligence to inform this.

## There remains a national shortage of trained investigators.

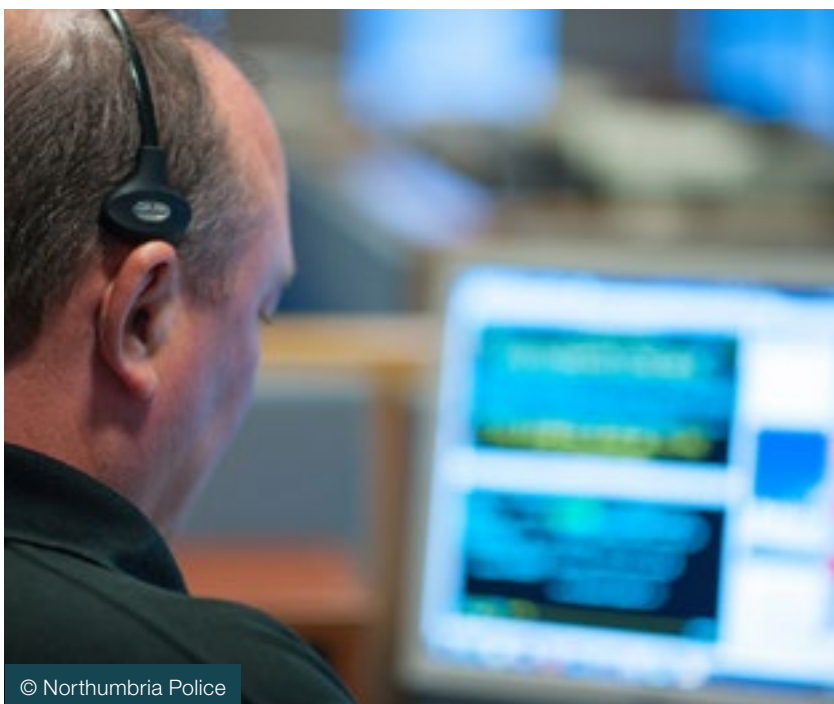
### More neighbourhood officers are spending their time solving problems in their communities

In our early IPA 2018/19 inspections, we saw that forces were often moving neighbourhood officers to other duties. This was damaging their crime prevention work and limiting their community engagement. We are pleased that this was not the case with our later inspections. We saw that most forces were protecting their neighbourhood officers' time in their communities, even though, in some cases, those teams had been reduced in size.

But we continue to find a lack of capacity in neighbourhood policing to analyse and use intelligence. And a lack of analysis and exchanging of good practice between neighbourhood teams within a force reduces how effective this type of policing is at keeping people safe.

### Crime investigation is failing too many victims

Most forces are prioritising their investigation of the most serious crimes, such as child abuse, rape and serious violence. These investigations are usually conducted to a high standard. But there remains a national shortage of trained investigators, and forces are less able to meet the demands of other high-volume crimes such as burglary, assault and theft.



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Some forces are having problems allocating new incidents to people with the right skills to investigate them. And there are some very long delays in recovering evidence from digital devices.

We continue to see investigations suffering because of a lack of supervision. Direction and support are needed, particularly for less experienced investigators. We have seen too many examples of unmanageable workloads and lengthy waits for victims.

The likelihood of the police bringing someone to justice following a criminal investigation is falling. The proportion of crimes closed because the victim doesn't support a prosecution is rising. And there is limited understanding as to why so many victims seem to be losing faith in the criminal justice system.

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**Forces are generally good at using their resources to meet the demand they face and planning for the future.**

## Efficiency

Forces are generally good at using their resources to meet the demand they face and planning for the future. They understand their demand and use best practice to manage those demands. In doing this, most forces are allocating their resources in the most efficient way. But some forces are experiencing serious problems. These forces don't fully understand the demand they are currently facing so they are having difficulty managing it.

Many forces have a good understanding of how demand might be different in future. But few have sustainable plans in place to meet their predictions. Our analysis of FMSs showed that forces need to be able to analyse these predictions so that they can anticipate any future difficulties in meeting demand.

### **Investment is needed in preventing crime and reducing the need for policing services in the future**

The demand for policing services is increasing, but there are opportunities to reduce this demand. Putting effort into preventing crime and building community relationships can lead to falling demand for policing services.

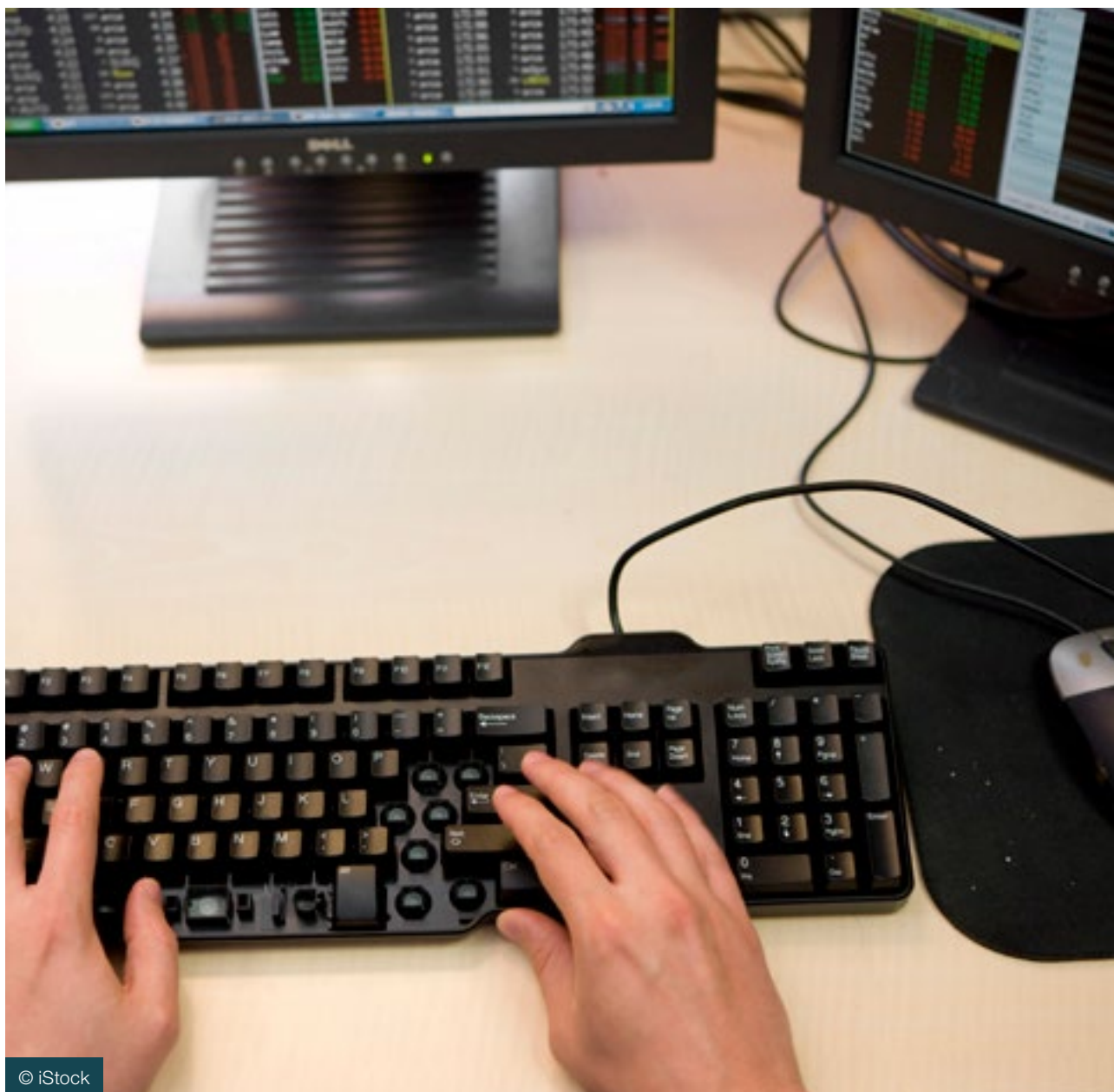


### Most forces have plans in place to make further savings.

Some forces continue to do this well, despite pressures to divert resources from prevention work. Other forces need to improve their focus on this area.

### We still have concerns about the development and use of information and communications technology

There are examples of forces making significant investment in computer systems that aren't providing the benefits they should. Worse, in a few cases, these poor systems – or difficulties in implementing new ones – have reduced forces' effectiveness.



There has been some progress in forces working together to share systems. But too many systems are still procured separately, don't work together properly, and have varying benefits not only for the forces themselves but also for the communities they are serving. There needs to be more openness about how forces are spending their investments in information and communications technology (ICT) and the benefits they are achieving.

### **All forces need to understand what skills their workforces have, and what skills they need in future**

Most forces understand the operational policing skills they hold within their workforces. But we did find examples of out-of-date workforce plans, and skills audits that were too simplistic. And most forces don't gather enough information on the wider skills their workforces have.

Forces will be more effective and efficient if they can make use of all the skills they currently have, and plan to replace them in future. Forces will then be in a better position to determine their needs. This will help them appoint the right people to the right places to provide the best service to the public.

### **Forces will still need to make savings, even with an increase in police officers**

Most forces have plans in place to make further savings. But, in some cases, it isn't clear that their plans are fully achievable. High costs of long-running operations, and the breakdown of established collaborations, are already negatively affecting some of these plans.

Forces now need to plan to meet additional employer pension costs. In 2019/20, a central government grant covered these costs. Forces assume the Government will repeat this in future years, but it isn't yet certain.

## Legitimacy

We have graded most forces as good for legitimacy.

This means that most are treating the public they serve with fairness and respect. They are also treating their workforces fairly, while making sure that they behave ethically and lawfully.

Where forces have focused their attention, they have made improvements. Most forces are doing more to engage with the communities they serve, and to recruit a more diverse workforce. They are building ethical cultures and taking more action to improve wellbeing.

However, legitimacy is the pillar with the least movement in grades since our 2017 inspections. It takes effort to maintain performance against a backdrop of reduced resources and rising crime. But this also suggests that there is less determination to improve and less innovation in this area.

There have been limited improvements in the retention and promotion of black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) officers. Some forces have serious difficulties maintaining the vetting of their workforces. And all forces still need to act to make sure they are using their stop and search powers consistently, fairly and reasonably.

### **Forces are slowly becoming more representative of the communities they serve**

To build trust, forces need to reflect the communities they are serving. Most forces are having some success in recruiting more officers and staff from a range of ethnic backgrounds. But there is still more to do before they truly reflect the communities they are policing. And forces need to consider how to attract recruits from other groups with protected characteristics, which are currently under-represented.

A force needs a broad range of methods if it is to retain and develop a workforce that reflects the diversity of the community. Many forces are working to improve their promotion processes to make sure they are fair and effective. But more work needs to be done so that specialist roles and higher ranks reflect not only the whole workforce but also the communities the force serves.

**Most forces are doing more to engage with the communities they serve, and to recruit a more diverse workforce.**

### **Forces need to do more to address the disproportionate use of police powers**

No force has fully met our 2017 legitimacy recommendation to address the disproportionate use of stop and search involving BAME people. It is important that forces understand the causes of this disproportionality and explain it to the public.

Independent scrutiny of the use of police powers is the best way to make sure people are being treated fairly. It makes it possible for people to see how and why the police are using these powers, and to assess what effect their use may be having. Many forces are monitoring a wide range of data about stop and search, inviting independent scrutiny and reviewing body-worn video footage as part of these arrangements. All forces should be doing this.



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## All forces need to make sure their vetting units are fit for purpose.

### Some forces don't dedicate enough resources to tackling corruption

Many forces have shown the necessary leadership to promote a more ethical and lawful workforce. Other forces need to be more proactive in looking for signs of corruption and having the resources available to tackle it.

Making sure all officers and staff are vetted to the correct standard is the first line of defence against corruption. Yet it is a serious problem for some forces. Forces also need to consider how their vetting processes may disproportionately affect people from BAME backgrounds. All forces need to make sure their vetting units are fit for purpose to meet the demands of increasing recruitment without neglecting the vetting of their existing workforce.

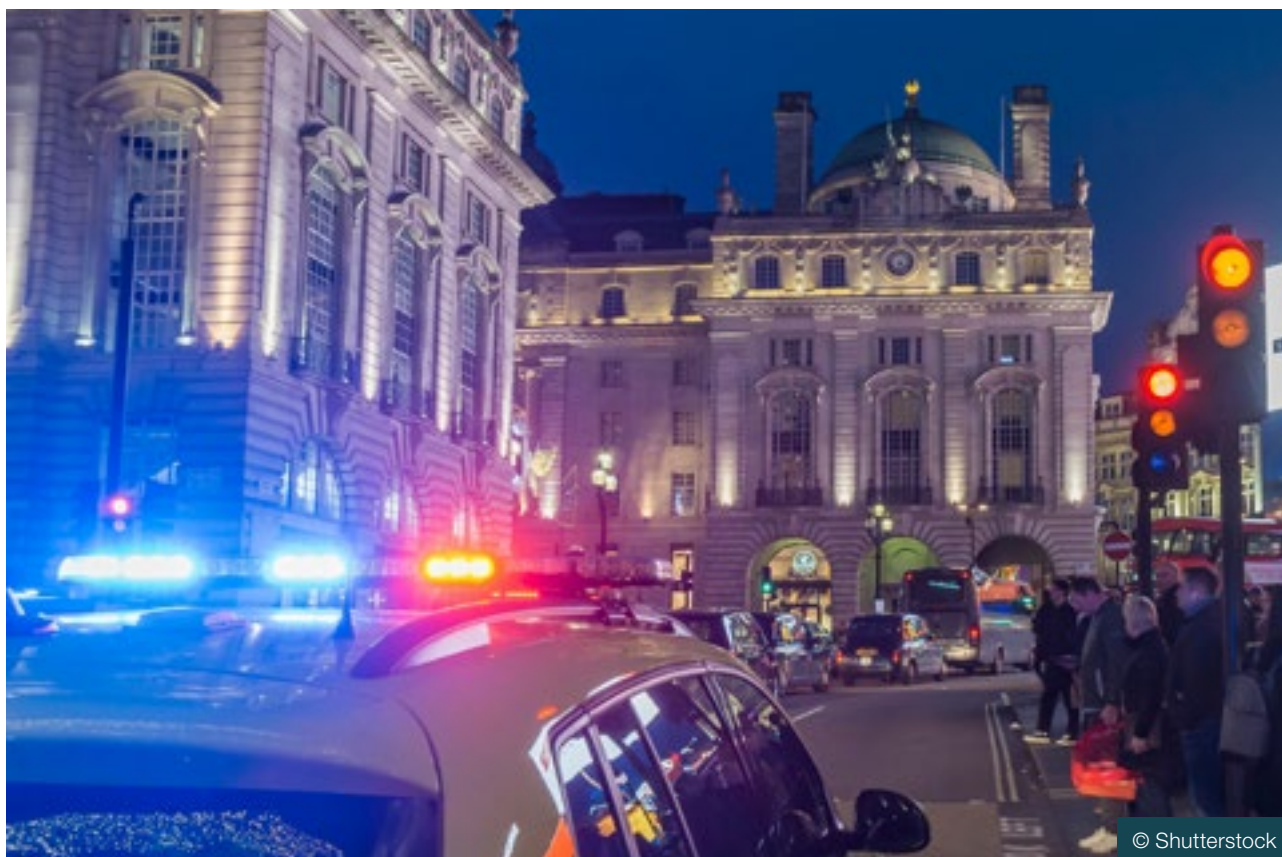
### Supervisors need more time to provide support for officers and staff

Officers and staff need to be well supervised. This helps their development, gives them direction and supports their wellbeing. But some forces are struggling to give members of their workforces the supervision they need to provide their best service to the public.

Forces are increasingly good at supporting officers and staff after traumatic incidents. But supervisors need to have regular discussions with their staff, on a one-to-one basis, to review workloads and explore their wellbeing needs. Without this time, supervisors may struggle to spot early signs that someone is having difficulties.

Wellbeing training for supervisors is becoming more widespread. But supervisors need time to provide support and make sure officers and staff are coping with the pressures they are facing.





## Abuse of position for a sexual purpose

The National Police Chiefs' Council defines abuse of position for a sexual purpose as:

“Any behaviour by a police officer or police staff member, whether on or off duty, that takes advantage of their position as a member of the police service to misuse their position, authority or powers in order to pursue a sexual or improper emotional relationship with any member of the public.”

Police officers and staff who abuse their positions for a sexual purpose are committing serious corruption. All forces need to fully understand this type of offending, take all opportunities to identify warning signs, and stop it from happening.



We have previously inspected forces on their response to this matter and in 2016 we made some national recommendations. Through our 2019 PEEL inspections, we assessed the extent to which forces have met these recommendations.

## Our findings

Many forces have listened and acted on this matter, or are making changes. But others have been far too slow. Many forces aren't complying fully with their vetting requirements. And some don't have enough resources in their counter-corruption units to proactively seek out this type of corruption.

We reported our findings in four areas:

- Prevention
- Understanding the threat
- Uncovering corruption
- Taking action.



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## Prevention

Forces are taking the right steps to set standards of behaviour. Generally, officers and staff understand what this type of corruption is, and the professional boundaries the public expect of them when they interact with the police.

Vetting is the first line of defence against this kind of corruption. Some forces are very good at vetting their workforces. But others are so poor that we have identified it as a cause of concern.

## Understanding the threat

This form of corruption can be hard to detect, so forces need all the information they can gather to fight it. More than half were either not collecting or not classifying their information correctly. And more than half either didn't have a current corruption threat assessment or had one we judged to be unsatisfactory. As the national threat assessment is built from force assessments, this means the national picture isn't good enough.

## Uncovering corruption

To uncover corruption, forces need information from a wide range of places. All forces have a confidential reporting system, and in all but two the workforce was aware of and trusted this system.

Some forces have built good relationships with organisations that support vulnerable people. They have received intelligence and caught officers and staff abusing their position as a result. But almost a third of forces still haven't built the right links.

Forces have significant databases of information about people, and these should be kept safe and only used for a policing purpose. Many of those who abuse their position use police systems to find vulnerable people or information about them. But two-thirds of forces can't fully monitor their systems.

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**Many forces aren't complying fully with their vetting requirements.**

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**We judged two-thirds of forces as not having enough capacity to proactively obtain intelligence.**

### Taking action

It is important to have enough people working in counter-corruption units, and for them to have the right blend of skills to do this difficult work. We judged two-thirds of forces as not having enough capacity to proactively obtain intelligence. In too many respects, they were just reacting to information they were given. This isn't good enough.

We conducted a review of all 43 England and Wales police force websites. Almost all forces had some information about corruption. But in too many cases it was hard to find, very recent, and required knowledge of police terminology to carry out an appropriate search. Publicising cases sends a strong message, to the public and to the workforce, about unacceptable behaviour. It can also encourage people to report it.

### Our recommendations

All officers and staff should have the suitable vetting status for their roles. We recommended that forces that haven't yet done so should vet all their personnel to the appropriate standard for the roles they hold. There should be a standardised list of information provided when someone transfers from one force to another.

All forces need the tools and commitment to uncover corruption. We recommended that all forces record information using established categories and produce a comprehensive annual assessment of risk. Forces that haven't yet done so should establish regular links with organisations that support vulnerable people. And the police should work with the Home Office and software suppliers to provide a solution so that all forces can proactively monitor use of their ICT systems.

Forces need to have enough resources dedicated to acting against corruption. Those that haven't yet done so should make sure they have enough people with the right skills to look proactively for intelligence, and to complete their investigations successfully.

### Next steps

We will inspect this area again in our next programme of PEEL inspections.



## Force management statements

As part of our inspection process, we require forces to send us information they use in their planning processes in the form of a force management statement (FMS).

FMSs are self-assessments that chief constables (and their London equivalents) prepare and send to us each year. It is their statement and explanation of:

- the demand (crime and non-crime, latent and patent) that their force expects to face in the next four years;
- how their force will develop and improve its workforce and other assets to cope with that demand;
- how their force will improve its efficiency to make sure the gap between future demand and future capability is as small as it can reasonably be made to be; and
- the money the force expects to have to do all this.

Of the 43 Home Office forces, 42 sent us an FMS in 2019. We also received an FMS from the British Transport Police.

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## **We have used information from the FMSs in our risk-based approach to integrated PEEL assessment fieldwork.**

We have used information from the FMSs in our risk-based approach to IPA fieldwork. As a result, for some forces, the breadth and intensity of inspection were reduced. We expect this reduction to be more pronounced as our IPA questions change to match the structure of FMSs. This will mean that, as forces become more accustomed to producing FMSs, we can make better use of the information and link it with our inspection work.

### **Why FMSs are important**

To police communities effectively and efficiently, forces need to manage their assets proactively and competently.

An FMS can help a force make better decisions about changing to meet future demand. But this is only if a force comprehensively assesses the demands it expects to face in the future, and the condition of its workforce and assets. This knowledge can help make sure funds, resources and effort are properly allocated, and that the force can deal effectively and efficiently with those demands that pose the highest risk.

### **Observations from the 2019 FMSs**

We used FMSs to establish common themes and make observations about the pressures on policing in England and Wales.

#### **Maintaining the workforce**

The second generation of FMSs highlighted the effects of long-term austerity on police forces. Some forces described strain in supporting functions such as training, human resources and analysis. If this isn't remedied, it may have worrying implications for the national increase in police officers and forces' capacity to recruit new people.

Forces told us about how much time their specialised workforces, such as forensic investigators and firearms officers, spend on accreditation. They also described how an ageing population affects policing demand, as well as the capability and capacity of the police workforce. For example, some forces told us that their officers and staff increasingly had care duties for family members that the force needed to plan for.





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## Forces were generally able to show evidence of their current demand.

Many forces also said they were increasingly using screening processes to prioritise incidents for officers to attend or investigate. Many continue to report reduced prevention and problem-solving work in neighbourhood teams. Instead, other functions such as safeguarding, investigations or offender management come first.

### Current and future demand

Forces were generally able to show evidence of their current demand, such as the number of incidents they attend or the number of crimes they deal with. But we would have liked to have seen more analysis of the types of demand that tend to remain hidden.

Forces should have a good relationship with organisations such as community safety partnerships, safeguarding boards and those involved in multi-agency public protection arrangements, as well as local businesses and the voluntary sector. These organisations will often be aware of crime, anti-social behaviour or other problems not reported to the police. Forces need this information to assess fully the true level of risk.

### Workforce and other assets

In their FMSs, forces generally described the capacity and capability of their workforces well, including where they need training. They told us about the wellbeing of their staff and what they are doing to improve it. Most forces told us about performance in each unit. We would have liked to have seen more analysis and assessment of these topics. Too often, FMSs give numerical or descriptive data without enough of an analysis of how forces will meet current or future demand.

Clearly, people are the most important asset to any police force. But workforces need the right premises, vehicles and equipment for their work. Some forces didn't tell us about, or make any assessment of, the assets their workforce needs, or how their needs may change. Forces need to assess the condition, capacity, capability, serviceability, performance and security of supply of other assets, as well as their workforces.

### Changing to meet expected demand

When forces don't analyse the status of their workforces and other assets, it isn't surprising that they struggle to explain how they need to change to meet expected demand. Generally, forces described to us the actions they were taking. But the decision making behind these actions wasn't always clear.

For example, one force told us about an increase in capacity when there was no expected increase in demand and the unit already had capacity to meet the expected demand. Some forces didn't explain how their actions could affect their response or help them meet future demand. There was little assessment of the costs or disadvantages of change, either in financial terms or the effect on staff, victims or the wider public.

### Demand forces don't expect to meet

Very few forces were able to identify the demand they expect to be unable to meet in the future. Some forces claimed in their FMSs that they would be able to meet future demand, but the supporting information was weak. Some highlighted the difficulties they faced and the actions they were taking without identifying future unmet demand.

**There was little assessment of the costs or disadvantages of change.**



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## Generally police forces don't have a comprehensive understanding of the demand they face.

Forces should analyse the demand they respond to and use the FMS to tell us about their analysis. They should say what resources they have and how they plan to change. Without this, the FMSs don't yet show that forces can effectively assess their future demand.

The FMS process has shown that generally police forces don't have a comprehensive understanding of the demand they face, or of their own assets. This means they don't always know how they need to change to meet future demand or how to make sure their workforces are operating at their best. This can lead to higher costs or reduced performance, because forces can't effectively plan how they need to change.

### Developing FMSs

The FMS steering group co-ordinates the development of FMSs. It brings together representatives from HMICFRS, the National Police Chiefs' Council, local policing bodies, the Home Office, the Police Federation of England and Wales and the Police Superintendents' Association of England and Wales. We continue to work with the steering group to develop the FMS process.

Steering group members are actively involved in shaping the 2020 version of the FMS. In 2020, the group will help the police service, local policing bodies, the Home Office and HMICFRS to make best use of the information in FMSs. It will:

- record evidence of how FMSs are changing to improve both planning and our inspection programme;
- provide support to forces to improve their FMSs; and
- continue to work with leaders in different organisations to see how FMSs should evolve to meet the future needs of policing.

# Our child protection inspections

## National child protection

We started the national child protection inspection programme in April 2014. By the end of March 2020, we had published reports on 30 police forces. We had also gone back to 25 of those forces to assess their progress against our recommendations.

### Helping forces to improve

In last year's *State of Policing* report, we said we felt we could do more to help forces improve. We described how we had changed the way we carry out child protection inspections. Since we made these changes, each force has received support from us.

We also continue to develop our relationships with national police leaders, the Government and other child protection and safeguarding bodies. We now routinely tell these organisations what we have learned from our inspections. This means that our findings inform best practice and national policy.



We have been pleased with the response to – and enthusiasm for – this more collaborative way of working. We will continue to work closely with other interested parties to promote improvements in the experiences of children in need of help and protection.

### How we carry out our national child protection inspections

In these inspections, we put the experiences of children at the centre of our analysis. We use that analysis to support learning and development. We assess decision making, leadership, training and forces' awareness of their safeguarding responsibilities.





Our reports give forces a detailed blueprint for recommended effective practice. We describe the strengths they should build on and where they can improve. We are pleased that, in every follow-up inspection, we have found clear (and in some cases significant) improvements.

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**We have found many examples of good, innovative work to protect vulnerable children.**

## **Our findings**

In February 2020, we published our second child protection thematic report<sup>1</sup>. It summarises the findings of more than 80 child protection inspections that we have carried out since our 2015 thematic report on our early inspection findings. Some inspections we carried out alone and some with other agencies. The report considers how the police service, its safeguarding partners and the Government need to adapt and respond to the challenges they face.

### **The role of leaders and leadership**

Nationally, the police's senior leaders and staff are clearly committed to protecting children better. Our return visits to forces showed that every force was achieving better results for children at risk of harm. But, too often, the priority placed on protecting those who are vulnerable isn't translating into better decisions being made when children need help and protection.

Children who are deemed vulnerable might be those who, for example, live with physical or mental illness; go hungry; are homeless or excluded from school; are at risk of neglect; or live with parents with health problems.

We have found many examples of good, innovative work to protect vulnerable children, and police leaders are getting better at recognising the benefits of tackling the root causes of vulnerability. But the police cannot – and should not – do this alone. New approaches are needed to make sure that vulnerable children are better protected. We want children to be safeguarded as early as possible, so they aren't subjected to abuse. Society shouldn't wait until they have already suffered.



The police still don't routinely recognise or evaluate risks to children well enough.



Our report recommended that the Government should develop a national early intervention and prevention strategy. This would make sure agencies work together to give early support to vulnerable children. Research shows that there are clear benefits to intervening early because trauma can have a cumulative effect on children over time.

### **Recognising risk and vulnerability**

Greater police focus on safeguarding and protecting vulnerable people means that officers understand vulnerability more and have a better sense of responsibility. But, despite this, the police still don't routinely recognise or evaluate risks to children well enough. Forces usually deal with cases of child abuse and neglect promptly and efficiently. But more complex cases (for example, those with multiple victims or perpetrators, or those that take place over a long period) are often badly handled and investigations can suffer delays.



Sometimes, officers and staff haven't had extra training before they carry out complex investigations. They don't always have the skills and experience they need to investigate effectively, or to make appropriate plans to protect a child. Officers do show better understanding of the increased risk of exploitation when children go missing, but this isn't always evident in their decision making.

When a child goes missing, decisions still tend to focus on what has just happened, and on finding the child and returning them to their home. Officers don't always seek to understand the wider circumstances or risks children face, which often contribute to them going missing.

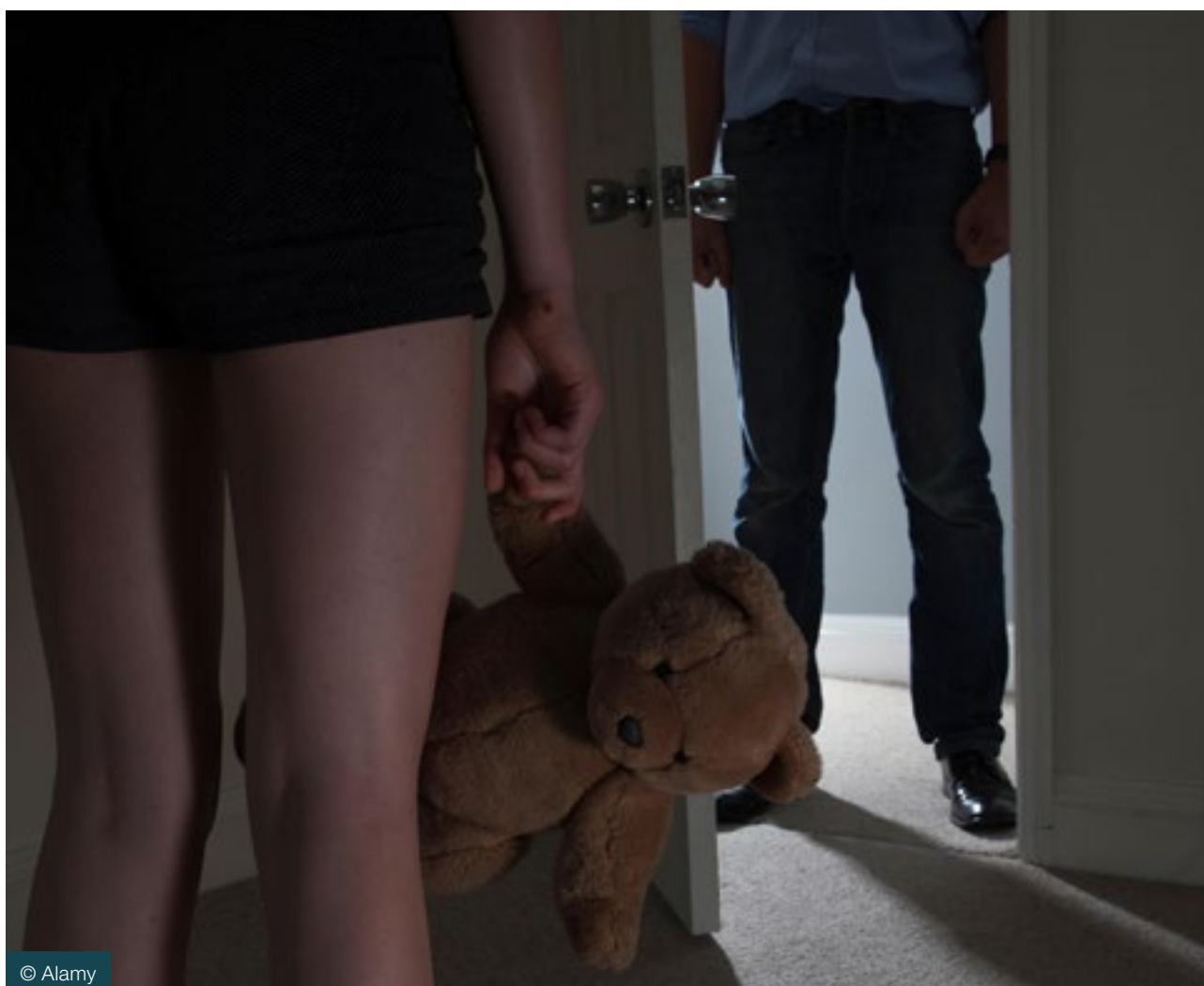
Too often, the focus is on the incident, missing the bigger picture. Incidents are dealt with in isolation. Cumulative and escalating risk isn't identified as soon as it could be. This can cause delays in developing an appropriate protective plan.

### Responding to risk and vulnerability

The police work hard with their colleagues in social care, health and other agencies, such as youth offending teams and probation services, to protect victims. But too little is done to prevent risk becoming acute or to repair the damage it causes. The new statutory local safeguarding framework will allow the police to develop more effective ways of exchanging information about risk, and to make joint decisions in developing protective plans.

### Criminal exploitation

We found that police forces are now better at recognising children at risk of criminal exploitation. They understand that organised criminals move children across the country and coerce them into committing crime. These offences are often referred to as 'county lines'.



But the police aren't yet using all the tools available to them to protect children who are forced to commit crime. In too many areas, children are still likely to be prosecuted despite clear evidence of coercion. As a result, too many children are being criminalised when they shouldn't be.

**The way the police deal with people who pose a risk to children is inconsistent.**

Often, when deciding on the right response, too little consideration is given to the reasons why children commit crime. Recognising the root causes of criminality (whether it be exploitation or another vulnerability) would allow for more suitable responses to crime.

### **The response to those who pose a risk to children**

The way the police deal with people who pose a risk to children is inconsistent. Examining seized electronic devices often causes delays. Some forces have equipment that can quickly identify which devices may have indecent images on them. But not all forces use this. As a result, images and other evidence of abuse can only be found by costly and time-consuming digital forensic examinations. Often, the police take no action to safeguard children until devices have been examined. We found that this can lead to delays in children getting the support and protection they need.

The sheer number of complex cases means that some are investigated by officers who don't have the right training, skills or experience. The outcomes of these cases are almost always worse than they would have been otherwise. Prosecutions are often discontinued because officers can't obtain the right evidence, so devices that may contain indecent images of children are returned to potential perpetrators. All this is entirely avoidable.

### **Detaining children in police custody**

Police forces now know they shouldn't hold children in police stations unless this is necessary to investigate serious crime. They ask for accommodation from local authorities more often to accommodate children who have been charged with an offence and denied bail. Local authorities should accommodate children in these circumstances. The 2017 Home Office Concordat on children in custody<sup>2</sup> reinforced this, but it hasn't led to more accommodation being made available.

**Our approach since the programme started has been described as considered, engaging and comprehensive.**

We found some evidence of forces using alternatives such as bail more effectively. But, in most cases where suitable accommodation isn't available, children are still detained until they go to court. This is often for a long time.

The national concordat needs to be reviewed and replaced with arrangements that reduce, and ultimately end, the unnecessary detention of children.

### **Improving how we inspect the protection of children**

We are proud of our support for the police in improving their service to children in need of help and protection. But we also wanted to find out how we might further improve the work we do through our child protection inspections. We commissioned NatCen Social Research to independently evaluate our national child protection inspections and to make recommendations for how we might improve.



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NatCen conducted a wide-ranging and detailed analysis of the programme since it began in 2014. They reviewed our data and spoke to police leaders and practitioners from across England and Wales. We were pleased to hear that our approach since the programme started has been described as considered, engaging and comprehensive.

NatCen also found evidence of positive changes to how forces approach child protection. These changes have been in force leadership, management and governance, and the child's experience of a force. Since senior leaders have become more engaged with the programme, there has been greater investment in resources designed to safeguard children.

However, NatCen also found that we could communicate the aims and benefits of the programme more effectively. Communicating best practice more consistently would also encourage forces to learn from one another. We will use the results of this evaluation and its recommendations to develop and improve our inspections.





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We continue to find examples of good joint working, but agencies can do more.

## Joint targeted child protection inspections

In 2016, we started a programme of joint child protection inspections. We carry them out with Ofsted, the Care Quality Commission and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation (HMI Probation). The programme is continuing.

In these inspections, we consider how well police, education, health and social services work together to help children in need of protection.

By the end of March 2020, we had carried out joint in-depth inspections in 35 local authority areas. These focused on child sexual exploitation; children living with domestic or sexual abuse within the family; children at risk of neglect or criminal exploitation; and those living with mental health problems.

We continue to find examples of good joint working, but agencies can do more. All children and young people, in all areas, should get consistently good support. We still find examples of poor practice by some professionals and agencies. Some children who are at risk or vulnerable don't get the response they need as quickly as they should.

## Children who are at risk of sexual abuse in the family environment

In February 2020, we published a report covering six inspections of the multi-agency response to children who are at risk of sexual abuse in the family environment.

We found that child sexual abuse in the family environment needs to be a greater priority for government departments and local areas. Important lessons learned from dealing with child sexual exploitation aren't being applied enough to abuse in families. Professionals don't always know enough about perpetrators, how to identify them or how to stop them from abusing children. Better training and support for frontline workers are vital. Too often, responses leave children repeatedly victimised and not supported well enough. Perpetrators go unidentified, and therefore remain a risk to children.

We saw some good examples of children being supported effectively through good-quality police investigations led by experienced and well-trained police officers. In too many cases, though, we saw delays and not enough focus on the child.

## Joint inspection of child protection arrangements in Wales

In Wales, child protection and safeguarding responsibilities are devolved to the Welsh government. The All Wales Child Protection Procedures set out what is expected of all organisations involved in child protection in Wales, including the police. This means that the joint inspections of child protection we conduct with Ofsted, the Care Quality Commission and HMI Probation don't take place in Wales.

Throughout 2019, we worked with the Care Inspectorate Wales, Healthcare Inspectorate Wales, Eystn (the education and training inspectorate for Wales) and HMI Probation. Together, we developed a joint inspection programme to test the effectiveness of partnership working to protect children. A pilot inspection took place in December 2019 and a formal evaluation is under way. Early feedback from the inspectorates suggests that there will be a full programme of further inspections over the next 12 months.

## Youth Offending Services

We carry out joint inspections of Youth Offending Services (YOSs) with HMI Probation and other inspectorates, including the Care Quality Commission. YOSs are multi-agency teams, co-ordinated by local authorities, that aim to reduce offending by young people. Police forces have a statutory responsibility to support YOSs, and to share information with them.

YOSs deal with some of the most vulnerable young people in society. Effective partnership working can help keep these young people safe and stop them committing further offences. We inspected six force areas to assess how well the police were carrying out their responsibilities within this partnership approach.

### Our findings

We found that the police remain committed to the YOS partnership approach. We also found that the police play an active and valuable part in the process of deciding whether a young person should receive an out-of-court disposal.

However, the police need to be aware of all young people being managed by YOSs to make sure information sharing is as effective as possible.



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# Our specialist inspections

## County lines drug offending

Children and vulnerable adults involved in county lines offending can be victims as well as offenders.

‘County lines’ is a term used to describe crimes involving gangs and organised criminal networks moving illegal drugs around the UK. Typically, this will involve moving drugs out from large cities and urban areas to sell in rural communities.

Gangs and networks involved in county lines are likely to target and exploit children and vulnerable adults to move and store drugs and money involved in these deals. Often gangs use coercion, intimidation and violence (including sexual violence) to force these vulnerable people to carry out criminal acts.

As a result of the increase in these types of crime, we inspected police forces’ understanding of, and approach to, county lines. We focused on whether the vulnerability and exploitation of individuals are understood and prioritised by the police.

To tackle county lines effectively, each police force must work well across force borders. Forces must work with each other, with the British Transport Police and with the National Crime Agency (NCA) as a single system – locally, regionally and nationally – to both understand and respond to the threat.

The police need to work with other agencies to safeguard vulnerable people, to increase awareness of county lines within other organisations, and to help build resilient communities. Police leaders also need to make sure their staff make good use of the legislative tools available to disrupt and deter this criminality, and to protect people vulnerable to exploitation.

When doing all this, the police must strike a careful balance between safeguarding victims, disrupting criminal operations and prosecuting offenders. This is about recognising that the children and vulnerable adults involved in county lines offending can be victims as well as offenders.

## Our findings

### Police intelligence, prioritisation and response

We found that the intelligence picture is improving. Forces and the NCA have made efforts to develop the national intelligence picture of county lines offending. But there are shortcomings in the intelligence processes.

The way forces identify how some people involved in county lines are vulnerable to exploitation is improving, but inconsistent.

The 43-force structure in England and Wales acts as a barrier to personnel being deployed efficiently, co-ordinating efforts, and to forces exchanging intelligence over police borders. The NCA is making good use of its powers to direct national policing activity for county lines purposes. But there is a need for a more coherent and integrated system of allocating work nationally.

### Joint working with other public services

Joint working is effective but doesn't always happen. Funding for, and availability of, support services vary hugely from area to area.



Also, there are often problems when forces arrest vulnerable people outside their local areas. The force covering the area where the offence has been committed will generally be responsible for the investigation. But, for other public services, the responsible organisation is usually the one covering the area where the offender lives. This means that, when they are released from police custody, children and other vulnerable people often don't have ready access to the support services they may need.

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### Children excluded from school face heightened risks of exploitation.

We heard how children excluded from school face heightened risks of exploitation, and how those at school can be at risk too. There were similar concerns about children who go missing from home, albeit with some good examples of joint working to minimise the risks.

In some ways, joint work to protect vulnerable people involved in county lines is improving. But barriers to exchanging information undermine effective joint working and need to be addressed. There also needs to be a common, statutory definition of child criminal exploitation.

### Powers and legislation

We found little police support for the use of telecommunications restriction orders. This is mainly because drug dealers can get hold of replacement phones and numbers quickly and anonymously.

Forces should pursue modern slavery offences whenever possible in county lines cases, because these better reflect how vulnerable people are being exploited. We found examples of successful prosecutions of county lines leaders for these offences.

There is a statutory defence for victims of slavery and exploitation who commit offences on behalf of their abusers, such as county lines drug dealing. But there are signs that this defence may increase the risk of exploitation: some offenders coach their recruits to say they have been trafficked if they are arrested. Also, police and prosecutors reported practical difficulties disproving the defence, even when it is false.



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## We found evidence of good practice relating to bail conditions.

We found evidence of good practice relating to bail conditions. By making effective use of their powers to impose bail conditions on vulnerable suspects when released from police custody, some forces were safeguarding people vulnerable to exploitation by criminals.

## Our recommendations

We made some recommendations aimed at improving the consistency and co-ordination of police forces and the NCA. These include guidance on submitting intelligence and conducting risk assessments, as well as developing a more coherent and integrated system for allocating work nationally.

To improve joint working, we recommended a review of the quality and extent of information exchange by public bodies for law enforcement purposes. The definition of child criminal exploitation should be placed on a statutory footing. There should also be formal arrangements for notifying police forces when local authorities move children at high risk of criminal exploitation to their areas.

There should be a dedicated central team to co-ordinate the use of telecommunications restriction orders relating to drug dealing. There should also be a review of the criminal abuse of mobile telecommunications services, including whether anonymous access to devices and services should continue, and a detailed review of cases involving the statutory defence for victims of slavery and exploitation.

## Crimes against older people

The age structure of UK society is shifting as people live longer. In 2017, almost 12 million people were aged 65 years and older – 2.2 million more people than 10 years earlier.

Old age shouldn't necessarily be associated with vulnerability. But older people experience higher rates of ill health than younger people. It is this, rather than age itself, that can make older people vulnerable. Older people may also feel the effects of crime differently from other age groups.

In 2017, the then Home Secretary commissioned an inspection to establish the nature and extent of problems affecting older people in the criminal justice system.

**Older people may also feel the effects of crime differently from other age groups.**



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## There is no national police focus on older victims of crime.

The inspection concentrated on crimes of abuse and exploitation, including financial exploitation.

We conducted this thematic inspection with Her Majesty's Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate. The police and the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) must work effectively together to deal with crimes against older people, so it is beneficial to consider all the factors that might affect the criminal justice response to such crimes.

### Our findings

#### No national focus on older people

There is no national police focus on older victims of crime, many of whom are vulnerable.

The police don't generally treat crimes against older people (those over 60) as a specific category of offending. By contrast, the CPS has a policy on crimes against this age group that have certain other features. But beyond the need to flag such cases, we found little evidence that prosecutors consider and apply the policy.

We don't believe that these different national approaches allow the police and the CPS to work effectively together. As a starting point, there needs to be a simple, joint definition of what constitutes a crime against an older person. It is critical that the police have consistent and effective arrangements to make sure people are kept safe.

#### Safeguarding older people

In their work, the police must be effective at identifying anyone they come across who needs safeguarding, and they must tell other organisations about what they have found. We identified significant shortfalls relating to these processes for older people.

We found that the police are usually good in their initial dealings with older victims. Their response is appropriate, and most victims are seen promptly and in person. We also found that initial police decisions about whether a victim

is vulnerable were mainly accurate. But crime allocation policies often weren't sophisticated enough and subsequent investigations not good enough.

### Supporting older victims

We found little evidence in our inspection that the police have a consistent approach to assessing victims' needs. There is no standard way for victim needs assessments to take place, so forces have developed these piecemeal or not at all. Some victims aren't referred to victim support services when they should be.

We found that errors and omissions in assessing a victim's needs could have implications throughout the criminal justice system. For example, some vulnerable victims may not be given help to provide their account to the police or give their evidence in court. If a victim needs assessment doesn't take place at the start of the police process, police don't always know what they need to do to help the victim. This could include video interviews, interpreters, intermediaries and (later in the process) an assessment of whether special measures are needed in court.

Even when victims' needs were identified, we found that the police and the CPS were often poor at dealing with complex needs. Special measures weren't always considered to help victims give evidence – for example, from behind a screen in court or by video link.

Our report identified causes of concern and areas for improvement. We made 13 recommendations to several agencies, organisations and government departments.

## Cyber-dependent crime

There are few aspects of everyday life that haven't been affected by the development of digital technology. In many ways, we rely on technology to function, both as individuals and as a wider society. This provides an opportunity for criminals who seek to attack our devices.

Cyber-dependent crime is crime that can only be committed using ICT, where devices are both the tools for committing the crime and the targets of the crime. It is greatly under-reported and, as a result, the true scale of it is unknown. This is a significant problem for law enforcement agencies.

This inspection followed on from our 2019 report *Fraud: Time to Choose*<sup>3</sup>. Between April and June 2019, we inspected ten police forces in England and Wales, all nine regional organised crime units, the NCA, Action Fraud and the National Fraud Intelligence Bureau.



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## Our findings

In general, we found a positive picture, with a good national approach to tackling cyber-dependent crime. But we also found that, as local cyber-dependent crime units have developed, they have become a potential source of inefficiencies. These include:

- variation in how nationally agreed structures and processes are applied;
- little understanding of demand among forces, leading to duplication of effort or, in some cases, a lack of capability in some roles, such as analysis; and
- the potential for regional and local cyber-dependent crime resources to be diverted to deal with other types of crime.

We separated our inspection into six areas:

- the strategic approach to fraud;
- how policing is structured to respond to cyber-dependent crime;
- how the public is protected from cyber-dependent crime;
- how cyber-dependent crime is investigated;
- how victims of cyber-dependent crime are treated; and
- the training given to officers and staff.

### The strategic approach to fraud

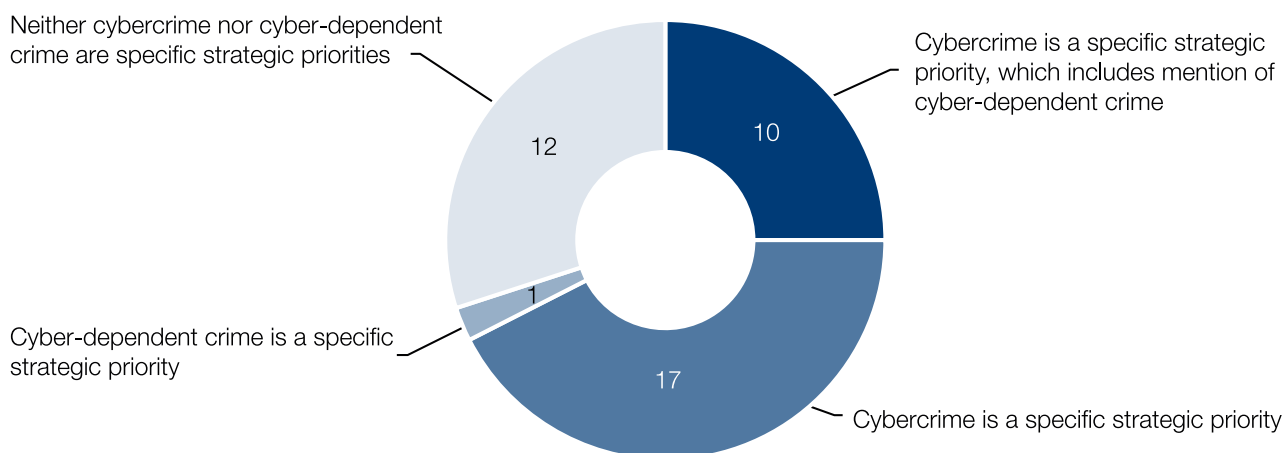
We found that the law enforcement response to cyber-dependent crime is good but could be better. For example, the national strategy for tackling cyber-dependent crime is well established but the extent to which police forces have adopted it varies. Often, police forces don't fully understand the threat from cyber-dependent crime and rarely see it as a priority. As a result, there is too much variation in local responses to a national threat.

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**We found that the law enforcement response to cyber-dependent crime is good but could be better.**



**Figure 1**  
**Number of forces that specifically feature cyber-dependent (or cybercrime more generally) in their strategic priorities**



Note: Some forces provided joint submissions to reflect their collaborative approach to cyber-dependent crime. These submissions were counted as a single submission. As a result, the total number of forces is shown as 40.  
Source: HMICFRS inspection data

### How policing is structured to respond to cyber-dependent crime

We found that having 43 forces operating independently didn't provide an effective response to cyber-dependent crime. Although central government funding had encouraged police forces to develop their ability to respond to cyber-dependent crime, we found that the levels of capability and capacity were often based on the available budget rather than an understanding of the demand.

Ultimately, not enough forces had a clear plan to maintain these resources beyond the short term. Also, not all forces have allowed their specialist cyber-dependent resources to be managed regionally, which would provide a more consistent response nationally.



### How the public is protected from cyber-dependent crime

National organisations do good work in identifying emerging threats. Regionally, there is a well-established network to make sure that initiatives promoting protection against cyber-dependent threats are implemented. Forces are also increasingly proactive in communicating to the public about how to protect themselves from cyber-dependent crime. But these messages aren't being consistently co-ordinated and more needs to be done to avoid both duplicating and leaving out information.

### How cyber-dependent crime is investigated

We found that the response to cyber-dependent crime was improving. For example, a national allocation process and regional co-ordinators for investigations provide some consistency in when, how, and to what level cyber-dependent crime is investigated by regional and local teams.

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## Victims who report cyber-dependent crime are generally satisfied with the service they receive.

National performance indicators have also provided some way of measuring performance. However, each of these developments has limitations, and there is still too much variation in the approach to cases.

### How victims of cyber-dependent crime are treated

Victims who report cyber-dependent crime are generally satisfied with the service they receive, but there is still confusion among the public about who to report it to. Whether victims are given good advice on protecting themselves from further cyber-dependent attacks varies depending on who they contact. They are often given confusing and misleading advice about how (or whether) their cases will be investigated and, if they are, how they are progressing.

### The training given to officers and staff

The approach to learning for staff varies. A national training plan is in place, which includes recommended training providers. However, there is wide variation in the extent to which forces follow this. There is little evidence that forces are carrying out any adequate analysis of the training their staff need, and for some roles the training isn't good enough. The level of training or resources forces provide to help non-investigative staff recognise cyber-dependent crime is inconsistent.

## Our recommendations

Several of the 16 recommendations and five areas for improvement in *Fraud: Time to Choose*<sup>4</sup> applied equally to cyber-dependent crime. As a result, we reproduced them in our cyber-dependent crime report<sup>5</sup>.

We also made one further recommendation: that the Home Office and other interested parties should revise the current police structure for the response to cyber-dependent crime. In doing so, they should consider creating a national police cyber-dependent crime network.

They should also consider how such a network would engage with other law enforcement agencies and how best to co-ordinate responsibilities to make sure it is effective.

## The police service's arrangements for the selection and development of chief officers

In policing, chief officers are those at the highest ranks. They set the police service's direction and have a profound effect on the forces they lead.

This inspection was prompted by concerns raised in the police service about a reduced number of applications for chief officer posts, the wellbeing of postholders and the length of their appointments. The purpose of our inspection was to answer the question: how well does the police service select and develop candidates for chief officer roles?



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## Our findings

We found that the police service is not doing this as well as it should. This is despite valiant efforts by the College of Policing to help the police professionalise the selection arrangements and adopt a stronger culture of continuing professional development.

### Getting to the assessment centre

Those who aspire to become chief officers must first pass the Senior Police National Assessment Centre. To get a place at the centre, they need their chief constable's endorsement. We found a lack of consistency, fairness and transparency in the endorsement process. Potential candidates' relationships with chief constables can matter more than their abilities.

Some candidates get effective coaching, paid for by their forces, to help them succeed at the assessment centre; others don't get this, or it isn't paid for. This makes the playing field unequal and unfair. These and other things put people off applying for promotion.



## The Senior Police National Assessment Centre

We found conflicting evidence about the value of the assessment centre. Some chief officers were confident that it is a sound basis for selection and development; others considered it unhelpful and unnecessary. There was criticism that not all tests are relevant to all police forces. The tests can put candidates from other policing organisations – for example, the NCA – at a disadvantage.

The evidence points to a need for a national assessment to make sure there is a high standard of skills and experience in all those eligible for chief officer roles, but the assessment centre needs a fresh look. There is a professional reference group that advises the College of Policing on the assessment centre, but its members are exclusively from policing. We consider that the College of Policing should extend the group's membership to include people with a wider range of backgrounds.

## The Strategic Command Course

After passing the assessment centre, development for aspiring chief officers includes completing the College of Policing's Strategic Command Course. There were mixed opinions of the course's value, relating to what is taught and how. But there was a consistently positive view that the course gave students the chance to build lifelong, supportive professional networks.

We have some concerns about the course's content. But these can't be fully addressed until the police (as opposed to the College of Policing) take the concept of continuous professional development more seriously.

We concluded that a newly constituted professional reference group should lead a process of reflection and change. This should be supported by a professional, independent and possibly international evaluation of the Strategic Command Course. The evaluation should lead to a course that meets the needs of policing. And the course should be a feature of a wider framework of continuous professional development.

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**Potential candidates' relationships with chief constables can matter more than their abilities.**



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**We found that selection processes are inconsistent, with a lack of impartial guidance for those seeking promotion.**

### **Selection processes for chief officer appointments**

This area wasn't within the scope of this inspection. However, we gathered information that we consider important and so report it here in the public interest.

We found that selection processes are inconsistent, with a lack of impartial guidance for those seeking promotion. The inconsistency, together with concern that appointments have already been decided in favour of local candidates, is putting potential applicants off.

There is a clear case for greater consistency and professionalism in the processes used to select chief officers. The College of Policing offers valuable support and guidance that we found only a few forces had taken up. We urge more to do so.

### **Mobility and relocation**

There has never been a greater need for the police service to function as part of a single law enforcement system, yet an increasing number of officers have only ever served in one force. The police service needs chief officers with a breadth of skills, experience and vision to lead effective local, regional and national policing arrangements.

The barriers to mobility also include finance and the cost of moving home; having a partner with a career; and caring responsibilities.

Before changes to police regulations in 2012, officers couldn't be promoted to chief constable without having served in another force or policing organisation for at least two years. We explored options for reinstating such a regulation, but one that takes account of the needs of those with caring responsibilities. We concluded that such a regulation should be made.

## Wellbeing and tenure

One of the concerns that prompted this inspection was a decrease in the average period of tenure for chief constables. Our evidence indicated that very short tenures create unsettling turnover within forces.

According to a wellbeing survey conducted by the Chief Police Officers' Staff Association, 10 percent of chief officers registered high anxiety scores, with bullying and peer pressure cited as factors. We found an absence of appropriate support for them in their own forces.

At the time of the inspection, the Chief Police Officers' Staff Association was developing a peer support framework and the College of Policing was also doing some work in this area. We welcome these initiatives but recognise that more should be done to meet the apparent demand for welfare support.





### Diversity in the workforce

The percentage of BAME officers across the police service is low. At chief officer level, the percentage is even lower.

Non-warranted officers and staff improve overall representation rates. However, targeted initiatives to increase diversity aren't having enough of a positive effect. They also attract resentment, with some interviewees maintaining that they feel at a disadvantage when it comes to promotion.



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The percentage of BAME officers across the police service is low. At chief officer level, the percentage is even lower.

## Our recommendations

We made nine recommendations, covering three main areas:

- promoting greater consistency, openness and fairness in selection;
- establishing a framework of continuous professional development; and
- encouraging mobility among chief officers.

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We found that, in general, forces were meeting their Prevent duties.

## The police's contribution to the Government's Prevent programme

The purpose of this inspection was to assess how effective the police are in contributing to Prevent, one of the strands of the Government's counter-terrorism strategy. Local policing bodies and chief constables are required to consider the need to identify and divert those involved in, or vulnerable to, radicalisation.

The main areas of this inspection were:

- what capability is in place in police forces to support Prevent;
- whether there is consistency in how police forces operate in this area; and
- whether there is effective information sharing.

We found that, in general, forces were meeting their Prevent duties. There are many positive aspects of the Prevent work police forces do, including working effectively with other organisations. Our inspection showed that there are effective processes in place to protect people from being radicalised. But there is room for improvement in some aspects of training, ICT, communication and safeguarding.

### Capability

We established that most forces have staff dedicated to this role and they have received appropriate training. Some forces have designed training packages for frontline staff, but there is no training tailored to the role of each force's strategic lead on Prevent.



Most forces had a good and improving capability to support the multi-agency approach to Prevent. Many of the people we interviewed during our inspection were confident in the police's ability to manage the risk from radicalisation.

We found that, in general, the ICT systems were satisfactory. However, some important roles didn't have direct access to the Prevent ICT system.

**Most forces had a good and improving capability to support the multi-agency approach to Prevent.**

## Consistency

Forces are well supported by the National Counter Terrorism Policing Headquarters' (NCTPHQ's) policy. NCTPHQ provides advice and guidance to forces and co-ordinates their activities, making their approach to Prevent more consistent.



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The Government's Channel programme is designed to make sure that a range of organisations, including the police, work together to deter and prevent people from becoming radicalised. In Channel programme meetings we observed, there were strong links between forces and the organisations they were working with.

However, police forces don't always recognise potential for radicalisation as a vulnerability issue, and we found inconsistencies in the links between safeguarding teams and Prevent officers.

### Communication and disseminating learning

There was a wide range of approaches to Prevent communication strategies. These were specific to the individual circumstances of each region and each case. They were generally effective.

However, we found an unstructured approach to disseminating lessons learned from Prevent. We found some good examples of learning from incidents, and the experience of others, being passed on through formal processes or at peer-to-peer events. But, in general and in too many respects, forces aren't sufficiently identifying and disseminating lessons learned or incorporating them into action plans.

### Our recommendations

We have made eight recommendations for improving the police approach to meeting their Prevent duty. These are mainly for the National Police Chiefs' Council lead for Prevent but also include the Office for Security and Counter-Terrorism and the College of Policing. They include recommendations on training, governance and performance measures. We also recommend that vulnerability to radicalisation should be included as one of the disciplines of public protection within the National Policing Curriculum.

These recommendations should have been implemented by June 2020. We will work with NCTPHQ to assess progress.

## TACT custody suites

In early 2019, we and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons (HMI Prisons) conducted the first inspection of Terrorism Act (TACT) custody facilities. The inspection assessed outcomes for detainees at the five TACT custody suites in England. It also examined how well the national framework, provided and overseen by the National Counter Terrorism Policing Network, supported TACT detention.

We found good treatment and high levels of care for detainees held under TACT. The inspection also highlighted some good healthcare practices that improved the medical care arrangements for these detainees. But governance arrangements for TACT detention were often limited, including poor performance monitoring of custody services. In a report published in August 2019<sup>6</sup>, we made recommendations to both counter-terrorism policing and the forces hosting TACT suites to address these concerns and several other areas that needed improvement.

**We found good treatment and high levels of care for detainees held under TACT.**



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We were impressed by the NCA's efforts to train officers.

## The National Crime Agency warrants inspection

In 2015, the NCA launched an internal inquiry into its use of warrants and production orders<sup>7</sup> after the collapse of three major trials. It conducted a review of all warrants and orders obtained from the courts in live pre-conviction criminal cases. The review, overseen by an independent panel, started in the summer of 2015 and took six months.

The NCA published a report on the review, which recommended several improvements to training, supervision and management, as well as procedures for warrant applications. The report also recommended that HMICFRS and Her Majesty's Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate should carry out a joint inspection to assess whether the NCA had made these improvements.

A main focus of our joint inspection was to establish whether the NCA had improved how it dealt with applications to search premises and obtain production orders.

### Our findings

Our inspection found that the NCA had been working hard to tackle the areas of concern highlighted in the 2015 review. Our inspection of search authorities, search warrants and production orders found some problems, but overall the standard was good. We were also impressed by the NCA's efforts to train officers and give them guidance to make sure that the organisation's approach is consistent.

We concluded that the NCA had achieved the improvements that were recommended in the 2015 review. We made six recommendations in our inspection report. These are focused on reviewing and improving procedures, and updating guidance.

## The National Crime Agency's Anti-Kidnap and Extortion Unit

We carried out an inspection of the NCA's Anti-Kidnap and Extortion Unit (AKEU). The AKEU is a small unit of 14 officers, who provide a centre of expertise for the law enforcement response to kidnap, extortion, blackmail and other crimes. These are known in law enforcement circles as 'crimes in action'.





## Our findings

Most forces make good use of the AKEU's advice and help in accessing the NCA's specialist capabilities. The AKEU also provides a deconfliction service to make sure that, in instances involving multiple victims, investigations are properly co-ordinated. We found the service to work well.

The nature of the AKEU's work means that the expertise of its officers is particularly important. At the time of the inspection, there was plenty of expertise within the unit, but no succession plan.



The AKEU spends a great deal of time providing training to police forces in how to investigate kidnappings. We found that this training was fit for purpose. However, it wasn't clear that senior leaders in the NCA understood exactly how much time the team was spending on training. We recommended that the NCA should pay closer attention to this aspect of the AKEU's work.

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**There was plenty of expertise within the unit, but no succession plan.**

The AKEU plays another important role when dealing with extortion incidents involving product contamination. We found that it provides a very good service to police forces and has established good lines of communication with Public Health England, scientific advisers and retailers.

In non-terrorism cases, the AKEU usually takes a co-ordination role, briefing and deploying the relevant NCA international liaison officer and other relevant law enforcement personnel local to the incident. Police forces assured us that the AKEU performs this role well.

## **Our recommendations**

We made three recommendations, including:

- implementing a succession and career plan for the AKEU;
- a review of the AKEU's training provision; and
- a review of the role and scope of the AKEU, to make sure it can fulfil its operational responsibilities.



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The handling of evidence-led domestic abuse prosecutions requires improvement.

## Domestic abuse evidence-led prosecutions

We helped Her Majesty's Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate carry out an inspection into domestic abuse evidence-led prosecutions. These are domestic abuse cases where the victim withdraws support for the prosecution, but there is still evidence which could lead to a successful case against the offender. Police and prosecutors should make sure that, at the outset of a complaint of domestic abuse, they consider how they could prosecute the case if the victim refuses or later withdraws their support.

The inspection focused on whether police officers and CPS lawyers understand what needs to be done to build viable evidence-led prosecutions. We also assessed whether staff dealing with domestic abuse cases within the police and the CPS appreciate the importance of evidence-led prosecutions, and have a good enough understanding of the relevant guidance and policy.

### Our findings

At all levels in the police and the CPS, we found both a clear recognition that domestic abuse is an important area of work and a desire to achieve the best possible outcomes for victims. Operational police officers and CPS prosecutors have a good understanding of evidence-led prosecutions and are aware that cases can proceed even when victims don't support them.

However, the handling of evidence-led domestic abuse prosecutions requires improvement. The police and the CPS need to do more to make sure they focus on these prosecutions and consider them a priority.

We also found that, in too many respects, neither the police nor the CPS have adequate systems in place to distinguish cases where an evidence-led approach may be more effective. Although training for cases involving domestic abuse was in place across both services, there were limited training packages or material available with a specific focus on evidence-led domestic abuse prosecutions. These cases should be given the same weight and training as those offered to staff dealing with general domestic abuse.

In most of the cases we analysed, police officers dealing with domestic abuse had completed a risk assessment of the level of risk to the victim and family. But often the quality of these assessments needed to improve. Despite these shortcomings, in many cases where victims don't support a prosecution, frontline police officers refer victims of domestic abuse to agencies offering support.

## Our recommendations

Our joint report recommended that evidence-led domestic abuse cases receive the same scrutiny and focus as cases where the victim does support prosecution.



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**Overall, our findings in this 2019 inspection are disappointing.**

## Integrated offender management

We worked with HMI Probation on a joint thematic inspection of integrated offender management (IOM).

IOM was originally established in 2009, with the aim of bringing multiple organisations together to respond to the threat of crime and reoffending faced by local communities. The most persistent and problematic offenders were to be identified and managed by different agencies, such as police and probation, working together. These agencies would provide services to offenders, such as support with alcohol or substance abuse or mental ill-health, and help with housing and employment.

We last inspected IOM in 2014, when we found the programme had the potential to achieve its aim. Since then, there have been some major changes. In June 2014, as part of the Government's Transforming Rehabilitation programme, 35 probation trusts were replaced by a new public sector National Probation Service and 21 Community Rehabilitation Companies. Subsequently, the Ministry of Justice and Home Office relaunched their approach to IOM in 2015 and updated its main principles.

This inspection examined how IOM has been operating since the implementation of the Transforming Rehabilitation programme and in a climate of reduced police numbers. Our joint inspection team visited seven different IOM schemes in England and Wales.

### Our findings

Overall, our findings in this 2019 inspection are disappointing. There has been little development of IOM since 2015. In many areas, IOM has lost its way and has a much lower profile than before.

#### **Schemes are less focused than before and service provision is patchy**

In many schemes, the scope has broadened to cover those who have a high risk of harming the public, as well as prolific offender cases. This has made the focus of these schemes

less clear. In too many cases, staff aren't being given the necessary training to deal with the different challenges presented by this type of offender.

The provision of services to offenders in IOM schemes is also patchy. In only a third of the IOM cases we reviewed did plans set out exactly what was required of service users as a result of their being included in the IOM scheme. Less than half were getting the drug or alcohol misuse services they needed.

In many cases, police, probation and support services had previously been located on the same site. This appears to have become a thing of the past, with only one of the seven sites we visited having this arrangement. This could be making joint working less effective. In some areas, the roles of police and probation have blurred, and the police are more actively engaged in rehabilitation work than the probation service. The separation of probation under Transforming Rehabilitation, reductions in police numbers and funding cuts to most services have hindered IOM work.

### **Some encouraging signs**

This is not to say that our findings during this inspection were all negative. There are still some encouraging signs of the potential for IOM to provide good-quality services to those who most need it. We found some effective practice continuing at some of the sites we visited.

This inspection resulted in several recommendations to a range of government departments and other organisations. These recommendations focused on refreshing the IOM strategy; better recording, measuring and analysing of IOM work; and improving training and guidance. We also recommended that the IOM leaders in the National Police Chiefs' Council and National Probation Service establish a joint national group to guide and oversee improvements to IOM.

# Our specialist rolling inspections

## Joint custody inspections

We inspect police custody suites jointly with HMI Prisons. We do this as a member of the UK's National Preventive Mechanism (NPM). NPM members monitor and inspect places of detention, in line with the UK's obligations under the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (OPCAT).

Our inspections take place on a rolling programme so that all police custody suites are visited regularly.

Between April 2019 and the end of March 2020, we published seven reports after unannounced inspections of police custody suites across England and Wales. These included the custody suites used to detain people arrested on suspicion of terrorism offences.

### Follow-up visits to forces

One year after we have inspected them, we carry out follow-up visits to forces. We use these visits to assess the progress each force has made in response to our findings. Between April 2019 and the end of March 2020, we carried out eight of these visits.

As last year, most forces had begun to improve their custody services and were monitoring their progress. But when forces were dependent on other organisations, such as courts, medical and children's services, progress was slow in achieving better outcomes for detainees. This was despite the best efforts of many forces to work proactively with others.

## Our findings

As in previous years, we found that custody officers treat detainees respectfully and meet their health needs. They usually identify risks and manage them well.

### Children and young people in custody

Diverting vulnerable people and children away from custody is still an important strategic aim for forces.

Children aren't usually kept in custody for longer than needed while offences are being investigated. Overall, the numbers of children charged and refused bail are low. But children charged and denied bail are rarely moved to accommodation arranged by the local authority as they should be. This year, we also started to see some improvements in care for detainees, with custody officers paying better attention to their welfare. For example, some forces have started using foam footballs in cells to keep detainees, especially children, occupied.

**Children aren't usually kept in custody for longer than needed while offences are being investigated.**





### Meeting changing PACE requirements

Our inspections also assessed how well forces are implementing the changes to the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (PACE) codes of practice in 2019. These included the support available to women and the need to offer all detainees the chance to speak to a custody officer in private. Not all forces were consistently implementing these changes but generally we saw an improving picture. However, some other aspects of custody showed little improvement.

Most forces weren't good enough at collating and monitoring important custody performance data. There were gaps in important information. Data wasn't always accurate or reliable. This included data showing that any force used against detainees in custody was appropriate and proportionate. Without this information, forces can't have good oversight of their custody services. This means that outcomes for detainees aren't always regularly assessed and improved on.



## Reviewing detention

Many of the forces we inspected still didn't consistently meet the requirements of the PACE codes of practice for arrest and detention. This often related to reviewing a person's detention. For example, too many forces didn't always tell detainees that their detention had been further authorised while they were asleep.

**Mental health assessments weren't always done quickly enough.**

## Support for vulnerable detainees

Vulnerable detainees didn't always get the support they should have had from an appropriate adult, or had to wait too long for it. All children had this support, which is a statutory requirement, but again not always early enough.

The liaison and diversion services we saw working in custody were providing some good support for vulnerable detainees. Custody staff welcomed this. But mental health assessments weren't always done quickly enough. Detainees often had to wait too long if they needed to be moved to a mental health bed in a health-based place of safety.

We have also started to see forces detaining people under section 136 of the Mental Health Act 1983 while in custody. In too many cases, these detainees hadn't been fully assessed while in custody but their detention time under PACE had nearly run out. Officers were using mental health powers to detain them so they could be transferred to health-based places of safety. This is an area we will continue to focus on in our inspections.

We have now completed our rolling programme into all 43 territorial police forces in England and Wales.

## Crime data integrity

In 2014, we published the results of our thematic inspection into the crime data integrity (CDI) of police forces: *Crime Recording: Making the Victim Count*<sup>8</sup>. This found that, at a national level, the police failed to record 19 percent of the crimes reported to them. We found the problem to be worst for victims of violence against the person and sexual offences, where the under-recording rates were 33 percent and 26 percent respectively.

Accurate crime recording helps forces prioritise investigations using suitably skilled staff. It also helps them manage their resources, plan effectively for the future, and give victims and the community the service they deserve.

This data affects every area of policing, from call handling to investigations, and from crime prevention to how forces work with other organisations. It also helps forces monitor whether they are treating people fairly, as set out in the Public Sector Equality Duty<sup>9</sup>. As such, it is very important that the data is accurate.



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In April 2016, we started a new programme to inspect all 43 forces in England and Wales on how well they record reported crime. This programme builds on our 2014 thematic inspection, which found that 800,000 reported crimes (19 percent) went unrecorded nationally.

Our inspections cover several areas:

- how accurately the police record reports of crime in general;
- how accurately the police record reports of violent and sexual crimes;
- how accurately the police record reports of rape;
- how well victims of domestic abuse are treated; and
- how well the police record reports of modern slavery crimes.

We examine reports made by the public and by organisations, such as social services, to specialist police departments dealing with vulnerable victims.

We assess these reports to see whether crimes have been appropriately recorded. We also examine cases in which the police have amended crime reports to show that no crime has been committed.

## Our findings

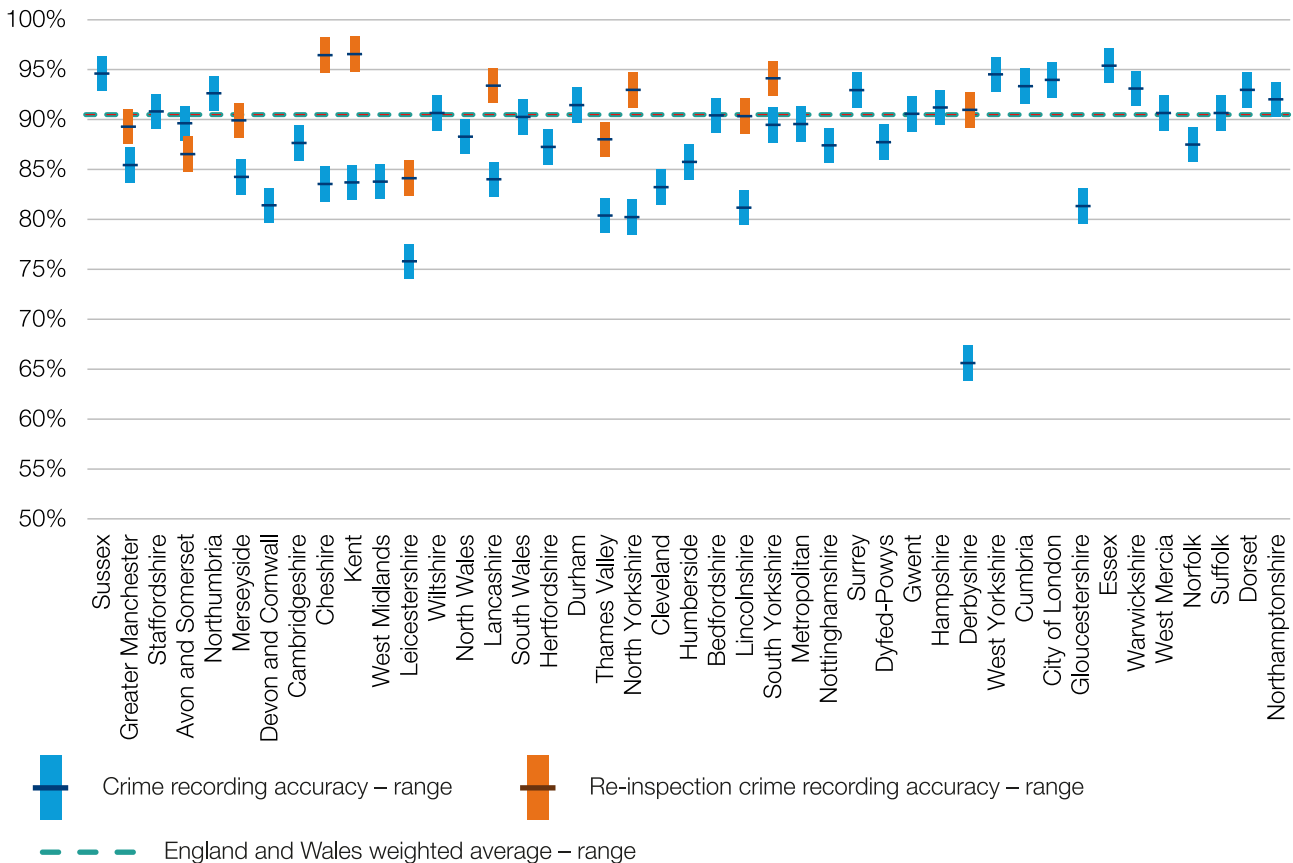
In my 2018 *State of Policing* report<sup>10</sup>, I described the three factors that contribute to a high standard of crime data integrity: strong leadership, effective oversight arrangements, and systems and processes that work well – all of which contribute to a healthy, victim-focused culture. This is still the case.

## The big picture

We have now completed our rolling programme into all 43 territorial police forces in England and Wales, 14 of which we have re-inspected. We reviewed more than 66,900 reports of crime across these 57 inspections.

The combined recording accuracy for all reported crime in England and Wales<sup>11</sup> was 90.3 percent. For violent offences it was 88.3 percent, and for sexual offences it was 94.0 percent.<sup>12</sup>

**Figure 2**  
**Overall crime recording accuracy by force**

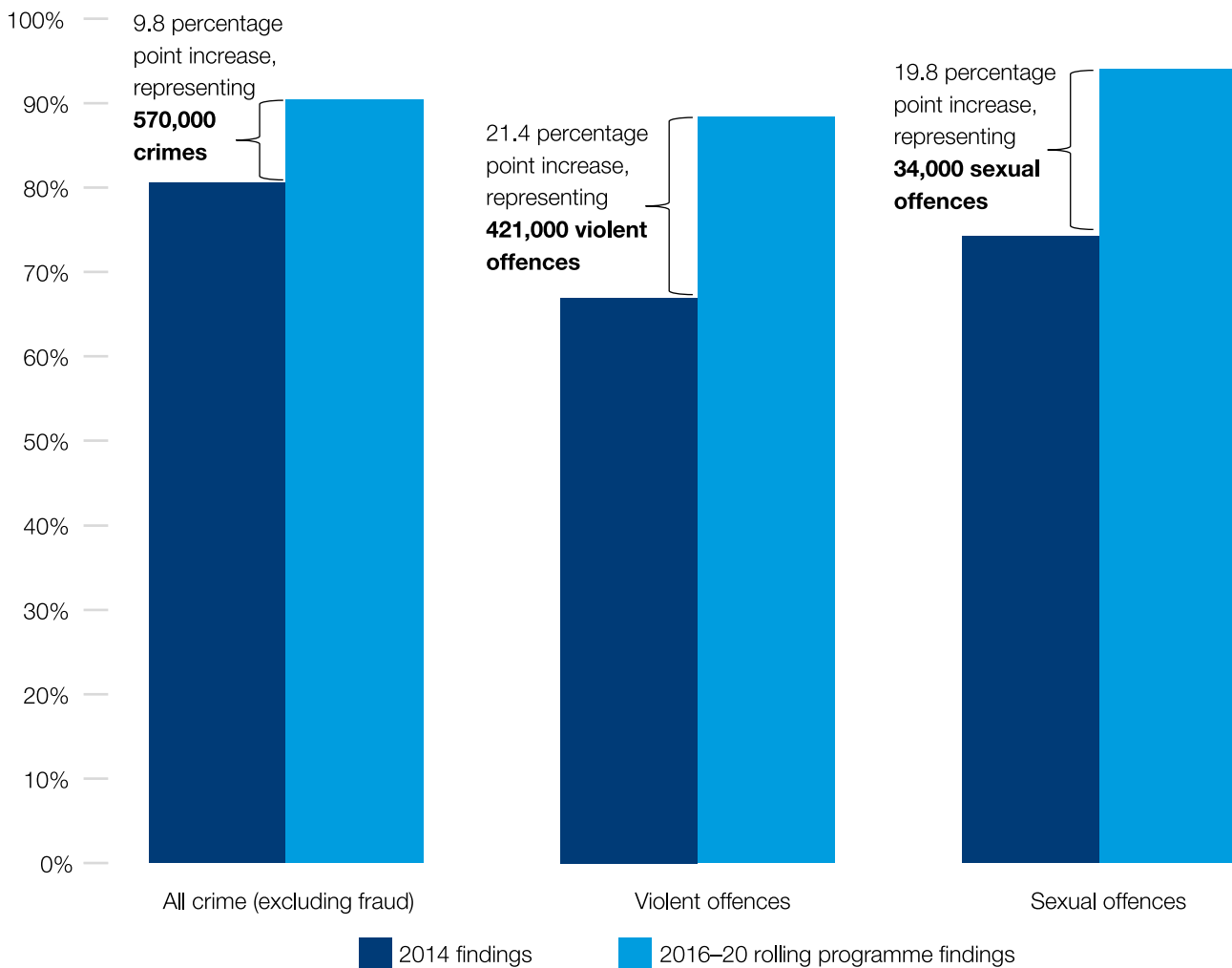


Note: This figure shows the forces in the order in which we carried out the inspections. It shows the overall crime recording accuracy as a range for each force. The middle line is the central estimate within this range.  
 Source: HMICFRS crime data integrity inspections

This is the first time we have been able to compare our findings from the full rolling programme with those from our 2014 thematic inspection. The recording accuracy from our rolling programme is substantially better than that from the 2014 thematic, which shows the value of our inspection work. But there is still room for further improvement.



**Figure 3**  
**Crime recording accuracy by type of crime and crime data integrity (CDI) programme**



Source: HMICFRS crime data integrity inspections

We estimate that, because of better recording standards, and compared with the findings of our 2014 inspection, forces recorded around 570,000 more crimes during 2019, including 421,000 violent offences and 34,000 sexual offences.

This means that many more victims now receive the service they would potentially have been denied if standards hadn't improved. Also, forces have a much clearer understanding of crime and criminality, so they can better manage their response and make sure they are using their resources as efficiently as they can. However, we estimate that around 561,000 crimes reported to the police in 2019 still went unrecorded. This shows that there is still much to do.

## Next steps

This rolling programme of inspections has now finished. However, there is a real need for further improvement and for continuous assessment of CDI. So inspection of CDI has now become part of our integrated PEEL assessment process, within a broader victim service assessment<sup>13</sup>.

We will assess victims' experiences of the service they receive from the point of contact, through the police response, crime recording, crime allocation, investigation and outcome. This will allow for a much broader assessment of the service victims receive when engaging with the police, and through their own eyes. It is intended to give the public confidence in crime recording arrangements, as well as the service they receive at all stages of their involvement with the police.



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# Our inspections of non-Home Office forces

## Sovereign Bases Area Police, Cyprus

We carried out an inspection of Sovereign Bases Area Police in Cyprus. The inspection was classified, so we didn't publish the findings.

## States of Jersey Police

In 2018, the Jersey Police Authority invited us to inspect the States of Jersey Police (SOJP). We examined most aspects of SOJP's operations and its governance arrangements.

### Our findings

Overall, the force serves the Bailiwick of Jersey's population well in terms of attending crime scenes and investigating most crime, including financial crime.

#### Crime scenes

SOJP's criminal investigators get good forensic support. Accredited crime scene investigators (CSIs) attend incidents promptly and are quick to update crime files and return results to investigating officers. In more serious crime investigations, the CSIs discuss forensics strategy with investigators to agree what action to take.

The force has an agreement with the South West Regional Organised Crime Unit, which can provide more CSI resources if needed. The force also has a contract with a commercial provider that examines forensic samples. These examinations are usually done on time, and fingerprint checks take place consistently within the 24-hour deadline.

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## The standard of investigations was high and focused on the victims' needs.

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### Investigation

The public protection unit (PPU) conducts effective investigations. Our review of a small number of PPU case files showed that all lines of enquiry had been followed in each. The standard of investigations was high and focused on the victims' needs. But, as with investigations conducted by uniformed officers and the serious crime unit, the supervision of PPU cases was inconsistent.

We saw investigation plans in most of the electronic case files we reviewed. But some files didn't include plans or objectives. And while some case files showed evidence of regular, though unscheduled, supervisory reviews, in others the direction of the investigation hadn't been reviewed at all.

### Financial investigations

SOJP operates to City of London Police standards. Investigators are well trained and dedicated to their roles. Intelligence used in investigations focuses on complex money laundering crimes. All these features were identified as areas for improvement in the Moneyval report of 2016<sup>14</sup> and have since improved. We assessed similar themes to those identified in that report.

The financial crime unit assesses over 3,500 suspicious activity reports each year, provided by financial institutions; these are the basis of its investigations.

We identified some areas for improvement and, in some cases, we made specific recommendations. These included the following:

- All response officers should have had basic investigation training.
- Investigations should be directed and supervised effectively.
- There should be set standards for victim care based on those in the Ministry of Justice's Code of Practice for Victims of Crime.

## Trinidad and Tobago Police Service

In January 2019, the commissioner of the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service (TTPS) invited us to review its homicide prevention and investigation procedures. This invitation was prompted by the high number of homicides involving firearms in recent years.

Policing in Trinidad and Tobago is very different from that in England and Wales. We commissioned a rapid evidence assessment from the University of South Wales to establish what research there had been about homicides in the country. The findings from this project helped us design our review of TTPS.

In May 2019, we conducted a detailed review of homicide procedures in TTPS. The findings of this review were set out in a letter to the commissioner. This letter won't be published because it contains details of tactics and procedures that it is not in the public interest to disclose.

Policing in Trinidad and Tobago is very different from that in England and Wales.



## The Police Service of Northern Ireland

In 2018, the Department of Justice commissioned us to inspect the efficiency and effectiveness of the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI). The suspension of the elected Assembly in Northern Ireland meant that there was no Minister of Justice; our 2018 commission came from the Department of Justice's permanent secretary.

We applied the inspection methodology we use in England and Wales, focusing on the following questions:

Efficiency – how efficient is the service at keeping people safe and reducing crime? Specifically, how well does it understand the demand it faces? How well does it use its resources? And how well does it plan for the future?

Effectiveness – how effective is the service at reducing crime, tackling anti-social behaviour and keeping people safe? Specifically, how well does the service protect vulnerable people and support victims?



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## Our findings

### Efficiency

We assessed the PSNI as being good in terms of efficiency.

The service has a thorough understanding of the demand it faces now and is likely to face in the future. It knows about the capability and skills of its workforce and has thought about how those may change over time. It also has a well-developed process of priority-based resourcing, which helps it to allocate resources and supports the change management team.

We didn't identify any causes of concern about efficiency, but we did find some areas where the service could improve. For example, it should develop plans to meet its future need for investigative staff. This is particularly relevant given that the service has identified that many of its detectives are close to retirement. We also recommended that the service enables officers to complete DASH<sup>15</sup> assessments on their mobile data devices.

### Effectiveness

We assessed the PSNI as being good in terms of effectiveness.

The service is effective at keeping people safe and reducing crime. Since our last inspection, it has developed a training programme in problem-solving policing and is training sergeants in investigation quality and file standards. We found that investigating officers have access to a good range of support, including forensic crime scene investigation and a cybercrime centre.

The PSNI has good strategies for protecting vulnerable people and supporting victims. The service has a thorough understanding of the nature and scale of vulnerability in Northern Ireland. Officers and staff recognise it as a priority. Call handlers now identify vulnerability at the first point of contact, through effective use of the THRIVE<sup>16</sup> model in the control room.

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**We assessed the PSNI as being good in terms of efficiency.**

## The service continues to develop its understanding of mental health.

The service continues to develop its understanding of mental health. It works well with a wide range of other organisations, including health trusts, social services and voluntary sector bodies, to tackle vulnerability, although partnerships are at different stages of maturity across Northern Ireland.

We identified a few areas where the service could be more effective. These include:

- introducing a single, standard form to refer vulnerable people to support agencies;
- providing preventative health screening for officers in high-risk roles; and
- issuing clear guidance on when officers should use body-worn video devices.

There were clear improvements since our last inspection in 2017. The service had responded well to budgetary constraints and has been able to make savings, while continuing to improve its ability to keep people safe.

It has been difficult for the service to plan for long-term investment during the absence of an elected Assembly and because funding settlements are currently annual. We encourage the restored elected Assembly to recognise the need for a longer-term approach to police funding.



# Other work

## Super-complaints

Super-complaints are complaints about a feature, or combination of features, of policing in England and Wales by one or more than one police force, which is, or appears to be, significantly harming the interests of the public.

The police super-complaints system started on 1 November 2018 and brings together the three policing oversight bodies: HMICFRS, the College of Policing and the Independent Office for Police Conduct. Each body contributes its relevant expertise and experience, and has joint responsibility for taking decisions about super-complaints.

The system isn't designed for individual complaints and doesn't replace existing police complaints systems, nor is it a way to escalate complaints from those systems. It instead focuses on systemic problems of local, regional or national significance that may not be addressed elsewhere.

Super-complaints can be made about:

- any one or more of the 43 police forces in England and Wales;
- the NCA;
- the Ministry of Defence Police;
- the Civil Nuclear Constabulary; and
- the British Transport Police.

Only bodies designated by the Home Secretary can make a super-complaint. In June 2018, 16 bodies, covering a range of issues, were designated.

Super-complaint investigations usually include information gathering from a variety of sources: fieldwork in forces; policy reviews; data analysis; and seeking the views of experts. Each super-complaint is different, and how best to investigate them needs individual consideration. Throughout every investigation, we maintain regular contact with the designated body that submitted the super-complaint.

## Current super-complaint investigations

We received the first-ever police super-complaint on 18 December 2018. It was made jointly by Liberty and Southall Black Sisters. It is about the policies and practices of all police forces in England and Wales in how they treat victims of crime and witnesses with insecure immigration status. In particular, it focuses on the practice of passing people's data to the Home Office for immigration enforcement.

We received the second super-complaint on 19 March 2019. It came from the Centre for Women's Justice and is about police use of protective measures in cases of violence against women and girls. The Centre for Women's Justice is concerned about the police's use of bail conditions; their treatment of breach of non-molestation orders; and their use of domestic violence protection notices and orders, and restraining orders.

We received the third super-complaint on 25 March 2019. It came from Hestia and focuses on how police treat victims and survivors of modern slavery and human trafficking.

We received the fourth super-complaint on 6 March 2020. It was made by the Centre for Women's Justice and sets out concerns about forces' response to alleged domestic abuse perpetrated by police officers or staff.

## Next steps

The system is still relatively new. We are using the experience we have gained so far to inform current and future work, and we are continually evaluating the process.

We expect to receive further super-complaints during 2020 and 2021. We will work with the Independent Office for Police Conduct and College of Policing to decide whether any other super-complaints submitted are eligible and, if so, to allocate responsibility for any future investigations.

There is up-to-date information about super-complaints on GOV.UK.<sup>17</sup>

## The Rape Monitoring Group

The Rape Monitoring Group (RMG) is a multi-agency group in England and Wales. It was established to promote improvements in the response to rape across all the agencies that make up the criminal justice system.

We publish criminal justice system data on rape on the group's behalf. This shows the number of rapes reported, arrests made, prosecutions brought and successful convictions for each force, as well as other relevant data. We want those who are involved in preventing rape and supporting victims to use this data to understand better what improvements they should focus on within their local areas.



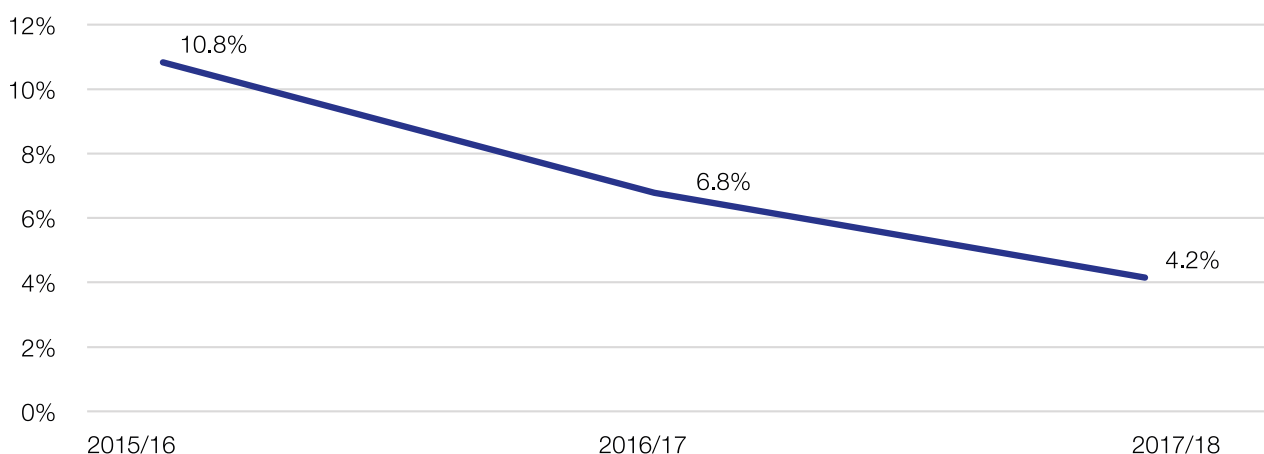
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## Our interactive dashboard

In May 2018, we introduced a new interactive dashboard to show this data. This was updated in August 2019 (see Figure 4). It allows for a better analysis of how rape is dealt with across the criminal justice system.

The publication of the 2017/18 dashboard in August 2019 received a significant amount of media interest. Multiple news outlets reported the headline finding that, despite an increase in the number of reports of rape, the overall charge rate for England and Wales had decreased from 6.8 percent in the previous year to 4.2 percent.

**Figure 4**  
**Percentage of charge/summons outcomes assigned to police recorded rape offences recorded in 2015/16 to 2017/18**



Note: This data is taken from HMICFRS' RMG dashboard, which was last updated in August 2019. However, more up-to-date outcomes data can be found here: [www.gov.uk/government/statistics/police-recorded-crime-open-data-tables](http://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/police-recorded-crime-open-data-tables)  
Source: [www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/our-work/article/rape-monitoring-group-digests/](http://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/our-work/article/rape-monitoring-group-digests/)

In all, over 130 local and national media outlets reported on this story. Many prominent interested parties, including Victims' Commissioner Dame Vera Baird QC, commented on our findings. These comments increased the amount of media interest. Ultimately, more than 130 national and local media outlets covered this story.

In response to this media coverage, the Government released a statement saying that it was "taking action to restore public confidence in the justice system".<sup>18</sup> We are in the process of planning a joint inspection of rape work as a result.



## Special grants

Forces should include reasonable contingencies in their policing and budget plans for unexpected events in their areas. But there may be exceptional events that can threaten a force's financial stability. In these cases, local policing bodies can apply to the Home Office for special grant funding to ease the financial burden.

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

### Special grants work in 2019

In 2019, we produced six reports on applications for funding from six forces. The applications related to 12 police operations. They involved major or critical incidents and serious criminal offences, such as the criminal use of firearms, child sexual exploitation and the re-investigation of deaths at Gosport War Memorial Hospital.

