

CUMBRIA POLICE AUTHORITY

28 June 2005

Agenda Item No. 18

AUDIT AND INSPECTION ACTIVITY

Report by the Chief Constable

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report shows the extent of audit and inspection activity in the past year and highlights its bureaucratic and resource-intensive nature.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That the extent and impact of audit and inspection activity be noted.

3. DETAILS

- 3.1 Cumbria Constabulary is subject to an ongoing and varied programme of audit and inspection, conducted by both external organisations and internal audit functions. These include:
- 3.2 External Auditors/Inspectorates:
- Audit & Assurance Unit (of the Home Office)
 - Audit Commission
 - Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC)
 - National Centre for Policing Excellence (NCPE)
- 3.3 Internal Auditors/Inspectorates:
- Best Value
 - Management Audit (County Council)
- 3.4 Managing external audits and inspections effectively is a big challenge for the Constabulary, as it is presented with an uncoordinated programme and a bureaucratic process that it has little control over, or input into.
- 3.5 The external inspection programme has grown rapidly over the past two years and is placing ever-increasing demands on the Constabulary. There is a significant amount of work required for each inspection, with key resource diverted for preparation, coordination, investigation and follow-up.

- 3.6 More specifically, it is not uncommon for inspections:
- To have less than three-months notice.
 - To require significant in force preparation, e.g. 2 days for logistics, 2 days scoping etc.
 - To require data or documentation in advance, e.g. more than 140 documents collated and sent to HMIC for Baseline Assessment.
 - To require between 2-10 days on site.
 - To require office accommodation for the period of inspection.
 - To involve senior staff for 6-8 hours a day.
 - To consist of several focus groups of 6-8 front-line staff.
- 3.7 By way of illustration, Appendix A shows the proposed HMIC timetable for a two-day revisit to BCU West Cumbria in early June. It clearly demonstrates a significant impact on resource, with 7 focus groups over the two-day period, a requirement for the Command Team to be available during this time, accommodation for inspectors, meeting rooms, and a list of more than 15 documents to be provided. It's worth noting that the Constabulary received this detail only three weeks before the proposed visit.
- 3.8 The high number of inspections compounds these issues, and to demonstrate this, Appendix B lists the audits and inspections that have been conducted over the past year. The total is approximately 40, and some of the less significant audits, such as self-assessments, have not been listed.
- 3.9 There is a great deal of variety within the inspection programme, which can lead to overlap and repetition. Some inspections are done by geographical area, for example BCU inspections, while others consider a particular theme and need to examine several areas of the constabulary, for example Sickness Absence. This can result in the same section of the Constabulary being visited by different inspectorates, for different reasons within any given year, which is understandably frustrating for those involved.
- 3.10 Looking forward, the Home Office is currently reviewing the structure of its inspectorates and although this will give greater coordination, it is not expected to reduce the number of inspections. In fact, due to the Police Reform agenda, it is expected that the number of inspections will increase.
- 3.11 Although this report highlights a number of issues, Cumbria Constabulary is being proactive in trying to improve the situation through dialogue with inspectorates and challenging current accepted practice. This will have limited impact over the short-medium term (2005/06), but longer term (2006/07) it is hoped that the constabulary will be involved with a more efficient and coordinated programme, with less bureaucracy and fewer demands on resource.
- 3.12 In summary, the Constabulary welcomes any opportunity to review current practices and enhance performance, and is working to improve what is currently a bureaucratic and resource-intensive inspection programme.

Michael Baxter
Chief Constable

Appendix A – Inspection Schedule for HMIC Revisit – West Cumbria BCU

This example of an inspection schedule highlights the significant resource and logistical impact of audits and inspections on Cumbria Constabulary.

HMIC Revisit – West Cumbria BCU**Schedule**

A rough draft schedule is shown below detailing the focus groups required. With the exception of the Command Team briefings, the order of the focus groups are flexible, to meet the demands of the BCU.

Where possible, we would like to attend a Weekly / Fortnightly tasking meeting, although it is accepted that this may not be possible within the set timetable of the visit. General guidance regarding timings and breaks is shown below:

Issue	Further information
Start time	Day one – 1030 / 1100 to accommodate travelling Day two – 0900 (flexible)
Finish	Day one – flexible, up to 1930 due to late start and potential need to accommodate later meetings Day two – flexible up to 1700 / 1800
Lunch Break	30 mins between 1230 & 1330
Breaks	Approx. 15 mins gap between meetings / focus groups

Monday 6 th June 2005	Time	Meeting	Order
	30 mins	District Commander	As shown
	1 hour	District Command Team	As shown
	30-45 min	Lunch	Flexible
	1 hour	Focus Group - District Intelligence Unit	Flexible
	1 hour	Focus Group – District Dis	Flexible
	1 hour	Focus Group – District DSs & DCs	Flexible
	1 hour	Special Constables	Flexible
	As required	Duty Group Briefing	Flexible

Tuesday 7 th June 2005	Time	Meeting	Order
	As required	Daily Tasking	Flexible
	1 hour	Focus Group – Patrol Inspectors	Flexible
	1 hour	Focus Group – Response PCs & PS	Flexible
	45 min	Lunch	
	1 hour	Focus Group – Community & PCSOs	Flexible
	1 hour	Focus Group – Police Staff	Flexible
1 hour	Meet District Commander and District Command Team (Feedback)	As shown	

- Logistic needs** As part of the re-inspection process, the team have the following logistic needs:
- Access codes or card to relevant Police Stations
 - Parking Spaces for 2 Vehicles on relevant dates at the locations to be visited (e.g. BCU/HQ premises)
 - Working office with Telephone Point – (Accommodate 3- 4 Persons)
 - Access to a Conference or similar sized room for focus groups etc.
 - Access to Tea Coffee making facilities & for focus group participants
 - Log-On Password/Authority to enable access to Force/BCU Intranet System
 - Clear location (Prefer Mapped) & directions (and/or guidance from BCU liaison Officer) to all stations within BCU
-

- Documents & information** We will require 2 x Hard Copy Versions Plus CD ROM of the following documents:
1. Pen Picture of BCU which identifies significant changes affecting the BCU since the original inspection particularly with regard to: Budget, Structure, or SMT Membership
 2. Action Plan (in respect of the original Inspection recommendations / suggestions)
 3. Update on the Action Plan (i.e. Actions Completed – with relevant dates etc.)
 4. Supporting Documents evidencing delivery of the Action Plan.
 5. Sample Personal Performance Indicator Data (What is collected & how is it used?)
 6. Force Strategy
 7. Force Annual Plan
 8. BCU Annual Plan
 9. BCU Strategic Intel Assessment
 10. BCU Control Strategy
 11. Local CDRP Strategy (& any Update)
 12. LSP Priorities
 13. BCU Training Plan
 14. Any Significant BCU Strategies / Protocols or Guidance Documents
viz:
 - Crime Strategy;
 - Initial Investigation Standards;
 - Service Standards;
 - Diversity Guidance.

Appendix B – Cumbria Constabulary Audits And Inspections (06/04 to 07/05)

The table below lists the audits and inspections completed, or in progress, during the past year at Cumbria Constabulary. In listing more than 40, it highlights the large number of audits and inspections that the Constabulary is subject to.

HMIC

Finance & Resources
Training Thematic
IT/IM Thematic
Modernising Forces Thematic
Baseline Assessment Refresh
BCU South Inspection
BCU West Inspection
BCU North Inspection
BCU South Revisit
BCU West Revisit
BCU North Revisit
Quarterly Efficiency Inspections
Detections
Domestic Violence

Audit Commission

Crime Data Recording
Class A Drugs
Activity Based Costing
NCRS Follow-up
Cumbria Drugs Audit
CPS / YOT

Audit & Assurance

Sickness Absence
User Satisfaction

NCPE

Firearms Healthcheck
Domestic Violence Healthcheck
Child Abuse Healthcheck
NIM Healthcheck
Missing Persons Healthcheck
PIP Healthcheck
Child Abuse Healthcheck

Management Audit

Creditor, Debtors, Income
VAT
Corporate Support
NSPIS HR (Security)
NSPIS HR (Places)
SIC Review
Budget Management / Accounting
Pensions

Best Value

Stores / Procurement
Anti-bureaucracy
Empowered BCU
Operational Support
Information Technology
Communications Centre
User Satisfaction