

**Cumbria Police Authority
Audit and Performance Committee**

4 December 2006

Agenda Item No 7

CRIME RECORDING / DETECTIONS

A Report by the Chief Constable

SUMMARY

The purpose of this paper is to advise the Police Authority of impending Audit Commission and HMIC reviews and to give an update regarding current action plans.

Ongoing internal audits are also highlight to health-check our performance against recognised areas for improvement (AFIs).

RECOMMENDATION

That Members note the contents of this report.

DETAIL

Please see attached papers:

- HMIC Action Plan Update
- Audit Commission Action Plan Update
- *Constabulary Policy regarding Vulnerable Persons*

**Michael Baxter QPM
Chief Constable**

DETAIL

- Update on H.M.I.C Detections Audit Action Plan

There were nine banded areas for improvement identified as a result of the June '06 audit. The action plan is ongoing. The owners of each improvement area are addressing the areas of concern and the plans being put in place are in line to meet HMIC targets.

- Update on Audit Commission Action Plan

There were eight areas for improvement regarding the Crime Recording/NCRS function. The actions are ongoing and address the main areas of concern regarding the current crime desk intensive log audits (not seen as sustainable) and improving performance in NCRS by police officers and police staff. Each area has been addressed at strategic level and is being progressed.

- 2007 Audit Diary

The Constabulary has been given the following dates for 2007's external audits:

a) HMIC detections audit team will come in July 2007

The Force Crime Registrar (FCR) is aware that the assessment methodology has changed. Formerly the audit team worked on percentage 'pass/fail' criteria. Now if *one* of the categories fails, then the *whole* detection fails. The FCR does not know what the individual categories are but through internal audit and dip sampling, will ensure that high standards are maintained. The action plans above provide the mechanism for improvement.

b) Audit Commission has given a preliminary date of January 2007

The implementation of Effective Contact Management (ECM) will address issues raised in the 2006 review. The FCR and Force Incident Registrar (FIR) will continue to use dip-sampling and internal audit to check and improve compliance with NCRS and NSIR. The team will also be visiting for a NSIR 'health check' in December 2006 ahead of the January audit. This reconnaissance will provide direction. A draft NSIR policy is currently being written and the training implications being addressed.

c) Crime Input Bureau and current crime recording performance

A total of 10,495 crimes were recorded from 1 July to 30 September 2006. 91.4% were inside the 48-hour rule (target being 80%) and 94.4% were inside the 72-hour rule. The FCR liaises with the Crime Input Bureau (CIB) daily regarding performance issues. It is also envisaged that the implementation of ECM will impact on the timeliness of crime input, as crime desks are to input at the time of the report.

d) Other audit findings

- The FCR completed a 'Rape and lesser offence rule' audit for the Home Office. This involved reviewing a sub set of data on all Cumbria's detected rapes from 2004 to 2006. The results were forwarded to the Home Office within deadline.

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- An audit looking at certain sexual offences that have been detected by way of administrative detection, led by Lancashire police, is ongoing, with the findings due in November. Essentially, the audit is looking at whether defendants are told that crimes detected against them could be revealed by enhanced police checks. The results will be available late 2006/early 2007.

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HMIC Action Plan – Update November 2006

Page no.	Recommendation	Priority 1 = Low 2 = Med 3 = High	Responsibility	Agreed	Comments	Date
<i>Improving the sustainability of crime recording processes</i>						
14 18 25	<p><i>R1 Undertake a thorough risk analysis and, where necessary, redesign current crime recording processes with a view to achieving better overall value for money. This analysis should incorporate:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>monitoring of the number, type and source of errors identified by area crime desks; and</i> <i>results from the West area crime-recording pilot.</i> 	3	<p>ACC (Operations)</p> <p>Detective Superintendent (Intelligence)</p> <p>C/I Comms</p> <p>BCU Ops Manager</p> <p>Force Crime Registrar</p>	Agreed	<p>This recommendation is to be incorporated into the ‘Effective Contact Management’ (ECM) review, instigated by the Chief Officer group. The aim is to identify how the Constabulary can effectively and efficiently manage and respond to telephone calls for service. The scope will be as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyse existing data to establish the nature of the demand produced by telephone calls for service. Identify grading and deployment criteria that the Constabulary can practically adopt, which comply with statutory codes and guidelines, 	July 2006

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			Incident registrar		<p>conform to best practice where possible and take into account the processes and procedures used by Lancashire Constabulary.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide options to resolve incidents without the deployment of a patrol, using an appropriate Helpdesk model. <p>The current audit framework will be adjusted to both monitor and capture non-compliant data, allowing for effective action and support to be targeted towards areas of weakness. (See R4)</p> <p>The results of the West Cumbria Helpdesk pilot will be incorporated into the review process. The findings were as follows:</p>	

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					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 11% of incidents were graded as immediate response (IR). 89% were attended by way of negotiation with the caller or patrol availability. • As a result, in terms of response excluding IR, an inconsistent service is provided to callers. • The Constabulary has limited capability to resolve incidents without the deployment of a patrol. • The impact of locally developed attendance criteria is inconsistent and often ineffective. • The Effective Contact Management programme is due for implementation no later than April 2007. 	

Page no.	Recommendation	Priority 1 = Low 2 = Med 3 = High	Responsibility	Agreed	Comments	Date
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Area Crime Desks will record and investigate specified crimes and deal with specified grade logs. <p>Pilot commencing shortly to evaluate the call for service in this role.</p>	Nov 2006

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22 28	<i>R2 Substantially reduce checking of incident logs by area crime/help desks and develop a risk-based, learning-focused, approach to NCRS audit, ensuring that resources are targeted at areas where the likelihood of errors is greatest.</i>	3	<p>ACC (Operations)</p> <p>Detective Superintendent (Intelligence)</p> <p>BCU Ops Manager</p> <p>Force Crime Registrar</p> <p>Incident registrar</p>	Agreed	<p>Again this recommendation will be addressed through the ECM review.</p> <p>Work has already commenced to target resources against those areas of weakness identified within the internal audit framework. With some success BCU's have targeted resources towards Violence offences, including Racial, Domestic and Disorder crimes.</p> <p>E.C.M. consultation still ongoing envisaged that 'go live' date will be January 2007.</p> <p>Development of area Crime Desks as part of the ECM review should negate the need for intensive audit of incident logs. Training in National Standard of Incident Recording and introduction of Evaluator in Communication Centre will target resources efficiently</p>	<p>July 2006</p> <p>Oct 2006</p> <p>Nov 2006</p>

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22 28	<i>R3 Consider options to increase resilience in the Force Crime Registrar role, to ensure that rising standards are maintained.</i>	2	ACC (Operations) Detective Superintendent (Intelligence)	Agreed	<p>The Crime System Administrator has attended the FCR course with a view to providing support to the Registrar. This has proved successful in terms of the limited resources already available. By addressing the requirement to employ an NSIR registrar, the Constabulary will move somewhat towards providing the resilience required of the crime management function.</p> <p>It is hoped that with the reduction in the crime/help desk audit function, that, subject to resources, the Crime Management unit will take responsibility for this requirement.</p> <p>The Crime System Administrator is currently 'acting' Force Incident Registrar (FIR) and this post is being advertised as a full time permanent post at the end of September 2006. The FIR. will deputise for the FCR.</p>	<p>July 2006</p> <p>Oct 2006</p>

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Page no.	Recommendation	Priority 1 = Low 2 = Med 3 = High	Responsibility	Agreed	Comments	Date
					<p>The FIR. and the Systems Administrator will provide resilience to the FCR role.</p> <p>FIR and Systems administrator now appointed to role.</p>	<p>Nov 2006</p>
<i>Improving the quality and timeliness of crime recording</i>						
<p>15 20</p>	<p><i>R4 Build measures of crime recording accuracy into PDRs for all operational officers and deliver additional training or support where performance falls below target.</i></p>	<p>3</p>	<p>Force Crime Registrar Head of Training</p>	<p>Agreed</p>	<p>An adjustment in the audit framework will allow non-compliance to be identified, thereby allowing training to be focussed against areas of need. This will be monitored through the PDR process.</p> <p>The need for crime recording accuracy to be built into PDR objective for all operational officers and line supervisors agreed at Strategic Crime Board.</p>	<p>Oct 2006 Nov 2006</p>
<p>20</p>	<p><i>R5 Consider options to strengthen NCRS knowledge among communications staff</i></p>		<p>Force Crime Registrar</p>		<p>The NCRS training package is in the process of being adapted to cater for communication staff requirements.</p>	

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	<i>in order to reduce errors arising from incorrect classification or insufficient detail on logs.</i>	2	C/I Comms Incident Registrar	Agreed	The appointment of the NSIR registrar will provide some focus to this training, as against the partially successful blanket approach previously employed. Training of new communications staff in NCRS and NSIR has been developed and implemented by FIR. Effective Contact Management training will also address the above.	July 2006 Nov 2006
22	<i>R6 Closely monitor performance within the Crime Input Bureau to ensure that new staffing arrangements are capable of meeting demand and allow full implementation of telephone reporting.</i>	3	D/Supt (Intelligence) Force Crime Registrar CIB Manager	Agreed	Performance within the CIB is monitored daily by the FCR. Following the introduction of new staffing arrangements, the unit has made significant improvement in meeting demand and this will be further enhanced within the coming year. The introduction of improved telecommunications aligned to the 'Winscribe' reporting software will allow staff within the bureau to provide a sustained level of service, meeting	July 2006

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					<p>the requirement for full implementation of telephone reporting in the process.</p> <p>The new staffing arrangements in the Crime Input Bureau have improved timeliness. E.G. results from August 2006: 95.3% crimes inside the 72 hour rule and 92.6% inside 48 hours. Winscribe software is being progressed within the Effective Contact Management framework.</p>	<p>Nov 2006</p>
<i>Improving quality of service to the public</i>						
29	<i>R7 Incorporate a specific question on NCRS compliance into user satisfaction surveys, to test whether any attempt was made to dissuade citizens from reporting an incident as</i>	1	<p>Force Crime Registrar</p> <p>Information Management</p>	Agreed	<p>Discussions have taken place on this issue with a view to incorporating this question into satisfaction surveys.</p> <p>The following question has been included in the satisfaction survey:</p>	<p>July 2006</p>

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	<i>a crime (see Home Office guidance on user satisfaction surveys 2005/06)</i>		Officer.		<p>"Did the police readily accept that what you told them should be reported as a crime ?" The answer options are: Yes No Don't Know/ Can't remember Not Applicable</p> <p>The data is scanned on a quarterly basis. Based on the last quarters data, 10.4% of people checked the 'no' option. Strategic Crime Board to review how this information is used and consideration given to adding a qualifier for the above question.</p>	<p>Nov 2006</p> <p>Nov 2006</p>
<i>Recommendations for the Police Authority</i>						
31	<i>R8 The Authority should continue to monitor the Force's progress towards a sustainable approach to NCRS compliance.</i>	3	ACC (Operations) Clerk & Chief Executive Police Authority	Yes	The Police Authority will continue to monitor crime recording through the Lead Members membership of the Strategic Crime Board and regular reports submitted by the Constabulary to the Audit and Performance Committee.	Ongoing

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31	<i>R9 The Authority should ensure that data quality issues are addressed by emerging risk management arrangements.</i>	3	ACC (Operations) Clerk & Chief Executive Police Authority	Agreed	Risk assessment will be addressed as part of the amalgamation process. It will be considered as part of the risk management process to be agreed between Cumbria and Lancashire. Process of risk assessment will have to be reconsidered due to cessation of amalgamation process	Dec 2006

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Audit Commission Action Plan – Update November 2006

No	Area for Improvement	Risks	Actions/Proposals
1	The force should ensure that future audit activity is supported across all BCUs, and that staff engaged in file retrieval for the audit are fully aware of their responsibilities and the implications for the force if incorrect files are provided to auditors.	Inability to meet audit demands can have an adverse affect on the force's performance.	Policy regarding file storage has been introduced. Force Crime Registrar to monitor implementation via Crime Manager meetings.
2	Supervisors should play an active role in both directing the investigation and guiding officers through file construction. Supervisory input should be documented and in an auditable format.	Poor quality investigations, exposure to legal challenges at later date, missed opportunities to achieve detections or incorrect detections/crime classifications. Over reliance on Crime Management Unit supervisors.	File front sheet for use by supervision to be attached to summons/advice and administrative files will provide template for file construction and address items 3 to 9 below. Supervisors to
3	Summonses: - review and enforce the requirement for all crime summons files to be checked and authorised before a detection can be claimed in accordance with the HOCRs.	Increase court attrition rates. Detections claimed in breach of HOCRs,	CJU to inform area crime desks when decision to summons is made
4	Summonses: - the force's crime recording system should record the correct disposal method, the force is encouraged therefore to review processes for recording summons disposals accurately		Covered by above entry
5	Cautions: - the force should review policy on caution (reprimand and final warning) as a means of disposal and ensure that it is fit for purpose, complying with HO Circular 30/2005 and the Crime and Disorder Act 1998	This detection method leads directly to an offence brought to justice and inaccurate reporting has serious implications for both victims and alleged offenders.	Policy to be reviewed prior to audit by Force Crime Registrar
6	Cautions: - ensure that the CPS evidential test is met in order to prove this disposal method. The evidential test is identical to that for charge. To aid the process the force may wish to consider the use of a case summary form (MG5) or alternative supporting documentary evidence/standardised checklist to ensure investigative standards are maintained.	This detection method leads directly to an offence brought to justice and inaccurate reporting has serious implications for both victims and alleged offenders.	Introduction of file front sheet will ensure this process is evidenced in the file

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7	Cautions: - a mandatory requirement of HOCRs is that a victim must be informed as to the detection; the record of such notification should be enforced before cases are filed. In addition the views of the victim as to the method of disposal should be documented.		Addressed by introduction of file front sheet for supervisors
8	Cautions: - the force should reiterate the requirement of a clear admission to the offence during interview, before a caution can be considered.		As above
9	Cautions: - finally the force should review and enforce the requirement by authorising officers to record the rationale behind the decision to caution in an auditable format. The record should reflect the offender's past history and aggravating factors.		As above
10	TICs: - the force should ensure that the CPS evidential test is met in order to prove this disposal method.	Evidence insufficient to support the detection claimed under HOCR's.	Area DCI's to ensure criteria met. Detective Sup't intelligence to continue to review cases where offender is in prison
11	TICs: - the force should reiterate the requirement to obtain an admission to the offence to be TICd during interview. In addition the interview should provided sufficient detail to link the offender to the offence i.e. dates, times, location and property details		As above
12	TICs: - finally the force should ensure that all prosecution files correctly contain signed MG18s by the offender. Failure to comply could result in a legal challenge at court.	Evidence insufficient to support the detection claimed under HOCR's.	As above
13	PNDs: - with the potential for increased use of PNDs as a means of disposal, the force should review and enforce policy and ensured standardisation across all BCUs. Policy should emphasis the CPS evidential test, the need for a PACE complaint interview, the requirement to confirm identification and finally that PNDs are issued for offences only within the scheme.	Inability to meet a challenge at court if the PND is contested.	Force Crime Registrar to provide definitive instruction to area. PNDs to be quality checked via area Crime Desks.

Audit Commission Action Plan – Update November 2006

No	Area for Improvement	Risks	Actions/Proposals
14	PNDs: - management processes should also be reviewed ensuring continuity between all departments who manage PNDs, crime management through CTO and criminal justice departments.		Force Crime Registrar to conduct review and make recommendations to Strategic Crime Board
15	Cannabis Warning: - the force should reiterate the requirement for a PACE compliant interview to be completed and attached to all files.	Evidence not suitable for any potential legal hearing and breaches guidelines	Covered by file front sheet and guidance through area crime desks
16	Cannabis Warning: - ensure officers are aware they must consider and document the offender's previous conviction history and aggravating circumstances when issuing formal warnings and obtain a signed acceptance of a formal warning. This must also be documented and in auditable format.		Covered by file front sheet and guidance through area crime desks
17	Cannabis Warning: - the appropriateness of this disposal method and criteria should be emphasised in force to avoid inappropriate use	Disposal method inappropriate, failure to accurately reflect offender's offending behaviour. Breaches guidelines	Covered by file front sheet and guidance through area crime desks