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BUILDING A SAFE, JUST
AND TOLERANT SOCIETY

2001/2002 INSPECTION

British Transport Police



A REPORT BY HER MAJESTY'S
INSPECTORATE OF CONSTABULARY

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2001/2002 INSPECTION

Executive Summary

1. The Inspection of the British Transport Police was conducted between 11-13, 25-26 June and 11 July, 2001 by Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary for the South, with the support of two Assistant Inspectors of Constabulary with particular responsibility for race and diversity. This is a focused examination (see paragraphs 2.3 – 2.5) covering aspects of operational and support activities, including relationships with the travelling public and other agencies.
2. During the 1998 Inspection, overall performance across the spectrum of policing activities reflected a professional organisation that was in the vanguard of the non-Home Office forces and, in some areas, bore favourable comparison with Home Office counterparts. In 2001, it is apparent that little progress has been made on many fronts, for example a number of recommendations have only recently been actioned and others still await completion. Despite the hard work of frontline and support staff there are few outstanding areas of good operational performance with most key results showing a fall away from the levels of three years ago. It is, however, equally clear that the Force is continuing to face significant challenges and whilst the relationships with other parts of the industry have clearly improved during this interval the level of available funding has not grown significantly in real terms.
3. Jurisdiction issues first identified in 1995 remain every bit as pressing six years later. Her Majesty's Inspector was disappointed that the opportunity to put the British Transport Police (BTP) on a similar footing to Home Office police forces was missed before the general election in May 2001 and hopes an early opportunity will be sought to redress this.
4. The Police Committee has recently appointed a new Chief Constable who has put in place a process to replace the previous medium term strategy. This document and various supporting strategies, such as crime and intelligence, finance and estates management are in urgent need of replacement in order for the Force to adequately face current and future challenges.
5. Relationships with train operating companies (TOCs) and the public have progressed markedly since the last Inspection and the innovation of business specific information reports to the TOCs have gone some way to satisfying the appetite for performance information. However some TOCs retain a view that the funding of the BTP is a tax upon them and this perspective can and does occasionally engender an abrasive tone that loses sight of the overall goal of public safety across all aspects of the network. For this reason only it is worth exploring alternatives for distributing the available funding. Victim Support Scheme (VSS) have experienced a significant (90%) fall in referrals following Force guidelines to adhere to Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) policy and request the victim's express consent before referral. This practice is being reviewed by the Information Commissioner and new guidelines will be issued. However, there is a need for attention to be paid to victims to ensure that their needs are addressed.
6. Over the past three years the BTP has effectively managed the investigation of three major rail crashes which has inevitably had a significant impact on the number of senior investigating officers (SIOs) available to investigate major crimes. The Force has re-introduced area based detective chief inspectors in an attempt to address this gap. Crime performance over time has seen an increase in violent crime and robbery and a reduction in vehicle crime. The percentage of all crimes detected has seen a corresponding fall. The introduction of the national intelligence model (NIM) and a

computerised intelligence system will go some way to aid the detection of crime. The use of the command and control system (RAIL) as the surrogate crime investigation record, due to the inadequacies of the crime system (PINS) should be reviewed. This review should include the way crimes are recorded and shown as detected, to ensure consistency and introduce a robust audit system. The awareness and use of forensic science within the BTP by operational police officers lags behind Home Office police forces and the Force should examine ways of how forensic science can aid investigation and look to others for good practice.

7. The level of sickness absence of police officers within the BTP is without parallel in any Home Office police force. With 16.8 days lost per officer each year, the Force has the worst performance of any police force in the country. Support staff sickness, whilst at the provincial average of 12.7 days, has been increasing too. Attempts by management across the Force to lower the level of sickness have been an abject failure. Even though subject to a Best Value review, a thorough examination into the recording and management of sickness absence is required immediately. The auditing of the 'new grievance procedure' had yet to be completed despite being subject to a recommendation three years ago; this is an unacceptable delay and should be rectified immediately.

8. Best Value remains a voluntary commitment by the BTP, the organisation being exempt from the legislation. The Police Committee has agreed to take on a similar role to that of police authorities with adopting the duty of Best Value. The use of PRINCE II methodology is a sound approach for undertaking the reviews but is resource intensive and there is need for unfilled vacancies in the organisation and development unit to be filled if they are to be effective.

9. The BTP has come late to raising staff awareness of race and diversity issues. The community and race relations strategy is not well understood across the Force and lacks co-ordination. The accompanying workbook was not marketed well to staff and attracted negative publicity in the national press. There is a need to improve staff understanding of race and diversity issues and consult all staff associations. Confidence of all staff needs to be restored to create a receptive climate before additional training is undertaken. Action plans to deliver the aims in the strategy need to be effective and regularly monitored and evaluated. Exit interviews need to be carried out and analysed to obtain a true picture of why some staff no longer wish to be part of the BTP. The public profile of the BTP needs to be raised. To achieve this the following need to be considered; a re-examination of how it interfaces with its customers; a review of signage and access to police stations; raise public awareness of the role and responsibilities of the BTP; and raise the level of public accountability. Representation of female and ethnic minority officers is low within the criminal investigation department (CID) and at headquarters and could be raised if staff in these departments are to be seen as role models.

10. A technology strategy as part of the communications strategy was approved in 1992. A formal review was recommended in 1995 and carried out in 1997. Regrettably and understandably millennium issues made pursuing recommendations of the review sporadic. The strategy and review are no longer regarded as living documents and there is need for a new technology strategy that will support the delivery of the new strategic aims of the Force. Project management within the Force needs to be developed using a single methodology along the lines of PRINCE II and a strategic development group, consisting of senior managers from all business areas within the BTP introduced to prioritise and resource projects resulting from the new strategies. The management structure of the technology department, even though recently reviewed, should be re-examined to provide best fit for the new focus. The communications strategy is equally as old and consideration should be given to examining the business case for options for the future for communications and call-handling including maximising the provision of electronic services to the public.

11. Complaints and discipline issues are well managed by a traditional central complaints and discipline department. Most Home Office police forces have moved towards a department overseeing professional standards which the BTP should consider as a future development. The Force attracts a lower number of complaints than the provincial average. The percentage number of substantiated complaints has remained steady over the past two years but the average time taken to complete an investigation has gradually increased and is above the provincial average.

12. Despite his concerns raised in this report Her Majesty's Inspector finds the Force to be both professional and capable of meeting future challenges. Operational capability remains high but shortfalls in performance must be addressed. There is urgent need to refocus effort around acquiring, analysing and then using crime intelligence to greater effect. Morale remains essentially sound, albeit concerns over jurisdictional issues continue to cause disquiet amongst many members of staff. Nonetheless, examples of team spirit and individual commitment were evident everywhere in the delivery of the policing service. Much is rightly expected of the new Chief Constable who took up post during the pre-inspection phase. Her Majesty's Inspector considers, in his professional view, that British Transport Police continues to be an effective and efficient police force when judged alongside the criteria applied to Home Office police forces.

II Introduction

2.1 From 1 April 2000 Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) introduced a new approach to and model of inspection. Risk assessment was undertaken of all forces across England and Wales as part of a comprehensive process. It included the examination of individual police forces against a broad range of performance indicators. They were then ranked against each other in each category of indicators. The purpose of this exercise is to identify which forces are in the upper quartile of performance and to encourage the remainder to improve their performance to reach that level of achievement. The process aims to target inspection to those forces where support may be most needed. It also enables Her Majesty's Inspectors to decide on one of three levels of inspection. The first is a paper based assessment which will result in a one day visit to the force to feed back their performance results. The second is a focused yet formal inspection covering particular activities. The third is a comprehensive and formal inspection across a wide range of activities and services. Every force will receive a formal inspection at least once every three years. From 1 April 2001 HMIC will inspect every basic command unit (BCU) in every force over a period of five years. Certain forces have already assisted HMIC by allowing pilot BCU inspections to take place. Whilst these arrangements are not strictly applicable to British Transport Police the underlying principle and philosophy have informed the approach to this Inspection.

2.2 The Inspection of British Transport Police was a focused examination carried out at the invitation of the Police Committee. Presently there is no requirement for the Force to be inspected on a regular basis lying as it does outside the Home Office aegis. It was undertaken by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Constabulary, Mr Peter Winship, CBE, QPM, MA (Oxon), the regional inspector who has day-to-day responsibility for the Force. He was supported by Mr Maqsood Ahmed and Mr Mike Franklin, both of whom are Assistant Inspectors of Constabulary, who have no police background but have specific responsibility for race and diversity issues. The approach adopted in this Inspection was akin to a 'focused' inspection of a Home Office police force, which involves a detailed assessment every three years of operational performance, and organisational issues.

2.3 Her Majesty's Inspector was requested to comment specifically on:

- absence management;
- best value;
- crime management and detections;
- information technology;
- race and diversity;
- relationships with train operating companies (TOCs).

Details of previous recommendations and the Force's response are summarised at Appendix 'A'.

2.4 Formal inspection visits were made to police headquarters in London and the area headquarters of London South (Ebury Bridge) and North West (Manchester). Further pre-inspection visits were made to London North (Kings Cross) and London Underground (Broadway and Baker Street). A number of detailed interviews were held with staff and representatives of the staff associations, the

railway industry, and other agencies that have dealings with the Force. Members of the Inspection team had previously visited the Force during the preparatory phase of the Inspection, gathering and analysing data on visits to a number of headquarters departments and various police stations. In this pre-inspection phase, contact was made with the Central Rail Users Consultative Committee, the Crown Prosecution Service, Forensic Science Service, London Regional Passengers Committee, the Police Complaints Authority and Victim Support.

2.5 The British Transport Police are the national police force for the railways throughout England, Scotland and Wales. It should be noted that the Scottish area was not subject to this Inspection having been inspected by Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Constabulary for Scotland in 2000. The Force is also responsible for policing the London Underground, Eurostar, the Channel Tunnel Rail Link, the Docklands Light Railway, the Croydon Tramlink and the Midland Metro. Their main activities are the maintenance of the Queen's Peace, law and order, and protecting the public and staff on these railways.

2.6 The Force deals with all crimes, with the exception of murder, from manslaughter to fare evasion and drunkenness and a host of other incidents including all rail accidents, fatalities and suicides. Whilst British Transport Police does not police a residential population it is charged with the safety of some 5 million passengers daily and over 100,000 railway staff. Over 113,000 criminal offences (2000/01 figures) are reported on an annual basis, and the Force has to deal with over a million other calls for assistance from the public.

2.7 Since the last Inspection, British Transport Police has investigated three serious rail crashes, at Ladbroke Grove (1999), Hatfield (2000) and Selby (2001). These have been lengthy and complex investigations and the Force has become extremely skilled in the investigation of such major disasters and the sensitivities concerned when doing so.

2.8 The Inquiry chaired by Lord Cullen arose out of the rail crash at Ladbroke Grove Junction on 5 October 1999 between trains operated by Thames Trains and First Great Western (FGW), which caused considerable loss of life and injuries. Part 1 of the Inquiry (which has reported) is concerned with the investigation of the causes of the crash and the circumstances in which they occurred. The report of part 1 made 88 specific recommendations, only a few of which apply to the police role and none are specific to the BTP. Part 2 of the Inquiry was concerned with railway safety in general, and covered issues relating to the investigation of accidents. Lord Cullen's report of part 2 of his Inquiry was published too late to be referred to in this report.

2.9 In 1995, Her Majesty's Inspector endorsed the then proposal that the employment and governance responsibilities currently exercised in respect of British Transport Police by the Police Committee on behalf of the British Railways Board (BRB) should be transferred to a free-standing Railways Police Authority (RPA). At that time, he felt that the Force served three distinct communities - the railway industry, the travelling public and the wider population living in the environs of the railways. This led to his conclusion that "... The Force must be seen to consult with and to serve each of those communities" and that the body governing the Force should reflect those communities in the spirit of recent legislation that restructured Home Office police authorities.

2.10 In 1998 Her Majesty's Inspector reinforced his view on the desirability of the creation of a new free standing Police Authority. At the time he was pleased to note that the Government had decided, in order to improve the public status and accountability of the Force, that when a suitable legislative opportunity arose, it would seek to establish an independent national police authority for the Force. This would be on similar lines of principle to the existing police authorities for Home Office forces, but

with representation of the rail industry, i.e. the train operating companies alongside that of the travelling public whose interests, in the view of Her Majesty's Inspector, have not been sufficiently represented in the past. Members would be appointed by the Secretary of State for Transport, Local Government and the Regions. These issues, first identified in 1995, remain every bit as pressing six years later. He was therefore disappointed to learn that this opportunity was missed prior to the general election in May 2001 and hopes an early opportunity will be sought to put matters on a statutory footing.

2.11 Similarly, the complex and limited nature of the jurisdiction powers available to British Transport Police officers "... was seen as the single most important issue raised by officers of all ranks". This problem has not yet been resolved and remains an issue of paramount importance in the minds of officers of all ranks across the Force. The limited nature of existing jurisdictional powers reflects both inconsistencies in current internal agreements that curtail jurisdiction in some parts of the railway network and severely constrains officers who act in support of other forces or who respond to calls for assistance from the public outside the railway environment. Whilst Her Majesty's Inspector was pleased to note at the time of the last Inspection the encouragement for this expressed by the Minister of Transport, who at the time lent his full support to an early resolution, Her Majesty's Inspector is very concerned that this has yet to occur and at present officers do not have the appropriate powers to conduct their duties with the full protection of statute law. This is evidenced very recently with officers from British Transport Police injured whilst assisting their Home Office force colleagues in the recent serious public disorder in Bradford, West Yorkshire.

2.12 The railway environment presents its own particular policing needs. Offences such as endangering and obstructing trains can have serious safety implications. Moreover, the network nature of the railway system means that crime and criminals can easily cross boundaries between local Home Office police forces and crimes can be committed on the move with rapid means of escape. This can make investigation and detection extremely difficult when often a crime is not reported until later and then many miles from where it occurred.

2.13 These unique characteristics contribute to difficulties in arriving at valid and fair comparison of performance of British Transport Police and Home Office police forces. In addition it is outside the 'family' of forces within the matrix of performance indicators utilised by HMIC. Nor does it routinely supply data to HMIC's national database. However, its position is compared to provincial forces, which only excludes the City of London Police and the Metropolitan Police Service. The performance figures supplied in respect of the Force are for England and Wales only to assist the comparison. Furthermore, numbers of certain railway specific offences are included, which have no counterparts in Home Office police forces.

2.14 During this Inspection Her Majesty's Inspector met with national representatives of the Association of British Transport Police Superintendents, the British Transport Police Federation, and the Transport and Salaried Staffs Association (TSSA). The Association of British Transport Police Superintendents raised a number of issues. These being, the delay in resolving jurisdiction and formation of a Police Authority for British Transport Police; local tensions at area commander level with some TOCs, this is commented on in section IV; a perceived lack of ability to transfer to a Home Office police force, and concerns about the recruitment of retired superintendents from Home Office police forces that restrict career development for BTP officers.

2.15 The British Transport Police Federation also raised the delay in resolving jurisdiction and formation of Police Authority for the British Transport Police. They expressed concerns that the BTP

have less flexible travel arrangements than the Metropolitan Police Service. The Association of Train Operating Companies (ATOC) have since agreed to extend free of charge to BTP officers who do not have preserved BRB rail travel passes, free travel to work to the same extent as that negotiated by the Metropolitan Police Service. Officer safety issues were raised with the BTP being unable to equip its officers with CS spray owing to a lacuna in the law precluding them as a non-Home Office police force. Shortly after the Inspection this matter was resolved following discussions by the Chief Constable and the Home Secretary. The Transport and Salaried Staffs Association (TSSA) raised concerns about the lack of consultation it had, as an organisation, during the recent HQ and area review. Concern was expressed over an apparent inconsistent external advertisement of some posts. Her Majesty's Inspector is aware that this inconsistency has been rectified but notes the concern expressed by TSSA.

2.16 This report is an informed assessment of the performance of British Transport Police, based on professional judgement, with specific focus on a number of key activities and issues. It is not, nor does it purport to be, a full account of the Force's activities. That function is fulfilled by the annual report of the Chief Constable to the Police Committee, which contains more detailed accounts of the Force and its performance during 2000/2001.

2.17 Her Majesty's Inspector's general conclusions and those of the Assistant Inspectors, together with their recommendations arising from this Inspection, are found in the Executive Summary and in Appendix 'B' Recommendations. Examples of identified good practice are detailed at Appendix 'C'. Her Majesty's Inspectors are grateful for the support demonstrated by the Chief Constable and his team, as well as the interest shown by members of the Police Committee. Staff at all levels exhibited a welcome openness to the inspection process.

III Strategy, Planning and Finance

3.1 British Transport Police is a leading national police force with specialist responsibilities for the railway system. It is divided into eight territorial divisions, known as areas, across England, Scotland and Wales and is supported by a headquarters based in London. The strength and disposition of the Force is shown in Figure 3.1. To ensure compliance across such a vast area it is by way of necessity a policy driven police force.

Figure 3.1: Strength and Disposition				
	Police Officers	Support Staff - FTE	Total Staff - FTE	Special Constabulary
ACPO and misc	8	1	9	0
Planning and performance	9	19	28	0
Functional support	50	346.67	396.67	0
Organisational support	30	47.56	77.56	0
Operational support	335	97.85	432.85	0
CID	283	25.61	308.61	0
Patrol	1,394	0	1,394	68
Headquarters	110	202	312	0
Scotland	202	31	233	5
North West	270	46	316	14
North East	192	52	244	7
Midlands	179	36	215	1
South West	141	37	178	10
London North	310	46	356	10
London South	300	57	357	8
London Underground	405	58	463	13
Totals	2,109	565 537.69FTE	2,674 2,646.69 FTE	68

3.2 In 1999 the Chief Constable commissioned a review of headquarters to be carried out by the internal accreditation team. Later the terms of reference were expanded to include a review of the eight area headquarters. The aim of the exercise, based on the strategic plan, was to review both area headquarters and force headquarters, with the objective of increasing the efficiency of the Force by maximising resources on operational police work and minimising costs. (The last time a review of the Force was carried out was in 1991/92). The review was completed in 2000 and made 86 recommendations that were put before the chief officer group (COG). Some criticism has been aired by senior managers within the Force about the review outgrowing its terms of reference and that it lost sight of its original focus. Certainly, Her Majesty's Inspector found little if any evidence of the size and structure of headquarters altering in favour of an augmentation of frontline staff. Indeed, in a number of instances resources at the centre seem to have grown – in some cases by up to 10%. Some streamlining of headquarters roles, responsibilities and working practices remains a high priority. Many people spoke of a prevailing atmosphere of bureaucracy and ponderous decision making. Policy creation and implementation also seemed slow with little sense of urgency. This is disappointing in an organisation which, in other ways, enjoys an enviable reputation for dynamic crisis management and a fast-time ability to assess risk of terrorist attack which is second to none.

3.3 Of the 86 recommendations 65 were agreed, 16 were not agreed, and five were deferred. The first three recommendations, which were not agreed, detailed the merger of the three London areas, London North, London South and London Underground into a single unit. This would be headed by an assistant chief constable, which would be an additional post, but would have freed a considerable amount of management and administrative infrastructure allowing for resources to be deployed to front line duties.

3.4 Of the 65 agreed recommendations 60 have been completed and the remainder are still being implemented. Some of the completed recommendations include:

- head of support services on area – police post is removed from the structure and support staff are elevated to cover this role;
- a crime support post is established on each area – a detective chief inspector has been appointed on each area;
- increase in establishment of complaints and discipline department;
- a civilianisation programme for scenes of crime officers – programme in progress and will be completed by April 2002.

3.5 Many recommendations were, as mentioned above, outside the terms of reference, and an opportunity has perhaps been missed to truly rationalise the work force and minimise cost, for example:

- that the Force data protection officer should be included in the technology department;
- that the fleet manager's role becomes research, formulation and recommendation of force policy;
- that the staffing level in the policy and project management unit is evaluated after the terms of reference have been in place for 12 months.

3.6 Her Majesty's Inspector is of the opinion that the Force may well wish to consider how effective this review has been in achieving its terms of reference. For example, the area head of support services,

three posts of which were held by superintendents, has not seen any savings, as posts have been created elsewhere to accommodate those who lost their roles. With continual pressure from train operating companies and other stakeholders to increase visibility of policing, consideration should be given to how this can best be achieved whilst maintaining command resilience.

3.7 Like most organisations British Transport Police has an aspirational goal. This is “**to keep the peace on our railways and make them safe and secure**”. To help achieve that goal there was a three year strategic plan covering the period 1998-2001 that set the policing strategy for the BTP in terms of aims, commitment and philosophy. Seven priorities underpinned the strategic plan and were the drivers for the annual policing plan. Strategies were developed to help achieve these aims, for example, a crime strategy was written to support priority 1, 2 and 3. The plan was a document for a fixed term and neither it nor the supporting strategies were subject to reviews. At the time of the Inspection the new Chief Constable was in the process of consultation with the Police Committee, railway industry, railway passenger committees and other stakeholders to scope out a new medium term strategy that will be put before the Police Committee in October 2001 before publication. In the meantime the 1998/2001 strategy will remain current. The 2002/03 Best Value performance plan will be the driving vehicle for the new strategy.

3.8 The focus for local planning is derived from the Force annual policing plan. This plan was formerly the driving force for the strategic plan. At the time of Inspection, the Force had recently completed a policing plan covering the period 2000/2001 and commenced a new policing plan for 2001/2002. Comment will be made later in this report on the success of the former plan. The current annual policing plan sets three objectives, which can be attributable to some of the seven strategic priorities set in the 3-year strategic plan. The 2001/02 plan is a marked improvement over its predecessors and is a document that is clear and easy to read and understand. The plan also addresses the Best Value initiatives being undertaken, more of which will be commented on in section VII. Acknowledging the work underway to draft a new medium term strategy,

RECOMMENDATION 1

Her Majesty’s Inspector recommends that the Force develop a medium term strategy with its stakeholders to cover a 3-5 year period and that the new strategy and its supporting strategies are subject to periodic review.

3.9 The objectives for 2001/2002 are:

- **Improving personal safety**
 - reduce violence against the person by at least 2% against 2000/01 figures and achieve an increase of at least 1% against 2000/01 detection rate;
 - reduce robberies by at least 4% against 2000/01 figures and achieve an increase of at least 1% against 2000/01 detection rate;
 - reduce sexual offences by at least 1% against 2000/01 figures and achieve an increase of at least 1% against 2000/01 detection rate.
- **Reducing railway disruption**
 - reduce disruption offences by at least 1% from 2000/01 figures and detect at least 1% more such offences than 2000/01.

- **Tackling property crime**

- reduce theft of personal property by at least 6% from 2000/01 figures and detect at least 1% more offences;
- reduce vehicle crime by at least 2% from 2000/01 figures and detect at least 1% more offences.

3.10 Her Majesty's Inspector understands the logic behind the aims set, and applauds the reduction targets but encourages the Force and the Committee to set both numerical targets and baselines which can be more readily understood by both staff and stakeholders. More will be said on crime reduction and detection in Section V.

3.11 Each area is required to produce a policing plan in support of the Force plan. Area commanders are encouraged to tailor their plans according to local need. Her Majesty's Inspector applauds this approach, which for a national force covering diverse communities across three countries, is most appropriate. Progress against targets set in the annual plan are subject to monthly review at the Force Management Team meeting chaired by the deputy chief constable. At this meeting area commanders are held to account for the performance against the targets set in the plan. To support this meeting monthly performance figures are produced by the performance management unit (PMU). The nature of this meeting whilst rigorous is also supportive and aims to provide solutions to difficulties that area commanders are facing in their quest to attain the targets set.

3.12 At area level a similar meeting is held where area commanders hold the sector commanders and officers in charge of police stations to account for their performance against the area plan. To support this meeting monthly performance figures are produced by the performance management unit (PMU) except in the case of the London Underground area, which produces its own performance data. Separate targets do not exist for each sector or station.

3.13 As mentioned above the focus for local planning is derived from the Force annual policing plan. The 2000/01 policing plan had 11 priorities, supporting objectives and 18 targets. Performance against this plan was reviewed monthly and the out turn of this plan indicated a mixed success. For example:

- to maintain the level of recorded robbery at 1999/00 level – target 2456 offences. However only London North and London South areas failed to reach their targets, which had a significant impact on the Force total. Result – 2700 offences - a 9% increase. A detection target of 22.6% was set, London North, London South and Scotland all attained their targets but overall only 21.5% were detected;
- to maintain the level of recorded sexual offences at 1999/00 – target 1113 offences. Result – 1040 offences – target met - a decrease of 6.6%. A detection target was set at 34.8% and was not met with only 27.3% being detected. Only Scotland reached their target;
- to maintain the level of recorded serious assaults at 1999/00 – target 1594 offences. Result – 1374 offences – a decrease of 13.8%. A detection target was set at 43.8% and was not met with only 40.5% being detected. Only Midland, the South West and London Underground met their targets;
- to reduce the level of concern felt by passengers about personal safety. This is recorded from the Strategic Rail Authority (SRA) National Passenger Surveys. These surveys indicate a fall in overall reduction in concern for safety from 22.7% to 20.2%.

3.14 It is not the intention of this Inspection to comment on every target set. This is more appropriately addressed in the Chief Constable's annual report. The above merely serves as an illustration of performance against the plan. However, where it is judged appropriate, more detailed comment upon the current and past performance will be included in chapter 5.

Finance

3.15 The Police Committee appointed a new finance director in September 2000 who sits as a member of FMT with chief officer status. The funding of British Transport Police is by an entirely different set of arrangements to those prevailing in Home Office police forces. During the privatisation of the railways in the early 1990's, the Government determined that the existing railway network should be required to use British Transport Police for law and order purposes, that users should accept levels of policing laid down by the Police Committee, and that users should pay the costs of the Force (what has become known as 'the user pays principle'). The users, in this context, are the railway businesses and principally Railtrack and the train operating companies (TOCs). There are special arrangements with London Underground Limited. The Police Committee determines the level of policing services to be provided by the Force and the resources to be made available for it.

3.16 Unlike Home Office police forces, British Transport Police receives no funding direct from the Government by way of grant, despite the fact that it is estimated that some 80% of its work involves the policing of public space and law and order policing. The railway businesses meet all the costs. They do of course receive subsidy from the Government (albeit on a declining scale) which is, in part, intended to offset the policing costs they have to pay. Under a formula worked out before the privatisation of the railway, the bulk of the costs of policing the railway are currently split between Railtrack and the TOCs, with other railway businesses paying only for the services specifically required or attributable to them. The formula also stipulates how the allocation of costs between passenger train businesses is made. It was a fundamental principle of the charging regime that £x of charges did not entitle a company to £x worth of police services in terms of officers' time. The formula continues to be regarded as unsatisfactory by many of the railway businesses, particularly its effect in allocating costs between users.

3.17 The funding for the BTP for policing the overground railway comes exclusively from charges levied on railway operating businesses. The costs of the core day to day policing are met, in the main by charges payable by Railtrack and the passenger railway operators. Additionally, railway operators pay charges for additional or special services agreed with the BTP. There are a number of police services users who are not obliged to use the BTP (as all licensed rail operators are obliged) but who have voluntarily negotiated agreements to be policed by the BTP. The Force also provides policing services for London Underground Limited (LUL). There is a police services agreement with LUL under which they pay the full cost of policing, a share of Force overheads, employ and provide the civilian support staff for the British Transport Police LUL area and fund all capital investment required by the Force for London Underground (LU). Formally, the Police Committee is responsible for determining the resources required for policing LU, and in practice the annual budget is negotiated directly with LUL.

3.18 The budget for 2001/02 has produced a stand still position from 2000/01. Comment was made in the 1998 Inspection report upon an almost stand still budget in 1995/96, whilst budgets in 1996/97 and 1997/98 were less than inflation, although the 1998/99 budget deferred further cuts. To enable the Force to meet its budget it is taking advantage of a 'pensions holiday' between September 2000 and March 2003. This means that whilst employees continue to pay into the fund, the employer, British

Transport Police, will not. This will produce a saving of £4.8m per annum and will be spread over a ten-year period. The benefits of the pension surplus were shared in terms of improved benefits to employees past and present and the employer in terms of the contributions holiday.

3.19 The current budgetary arrangements inhibit any form of medium to long term financial planning. Therefore,

RECOMMENDATION 2

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that the Force explores the potential to develop a medium to long term financial strategy, covering a 3-5 year period, which should include links with the new Force medium term strategy.

3.20 During the Inspection a number of accounting anomalies were brought to the attention of Her Majesty's Inspector. These include financial ledgers not reflecting results reported to the BRB and Police Committee, balance sheets not supported by reconciled accounts, the finance system not providing meaningful reporting, a lack of reporting standards for areas to report on, a lack of treasury control and capital expenditure not properly justified or controlled and reported. These issues have been brought to the attention of the Chief Constable and the Police Committee. Her Majesty's Inspector will await the rectification of these anomalies by the Force in conjunction with its external auditor.

3.21 Whilst Her Majesty's Inspector was not requested to comment on future funding arrangements, background information is necessary to gain an understanding of the consequential difficulties for British Transport Police arising from the existing financial arrangements. Although the Police Committee determine the level of service and the resources required it has had to balance the pressure for expenditure restraint from within the railway industry. There is little doubt that the TOCs, in general, take the view that they have a right to drive down the costs of their suppliers, including the police. This necessarily does have an effect on operational effectiveness and Her Majesty's Inspector has concerns that this might become an unhealthy pressure on a public police force policing what is largely public space within a key national asset. This view is compounded when considering recent events where the Force has been investigating its paymasters following a series of rail crashes. Further comments on funding issues are made in Section IV.

Estates Management

3.22 British Transport Police does not own any property and, unlike Home Office police forces, it is obliged to rent or lease all its accommodation. The estates portfolio is managed by a professional who reports to the director of finance. Whilst the overall standard of accommodation is sound, this situation can lead to difficulties, for instance, competition with railway businesses in acquiring office space in a railway station and having to pay market rents. This does present difficulties in securing the necessary investment to sustain the level of accommodation, which is compounded by a lack of estates strategy. This situation needs rectifying and Her Majesty's Inspector urges the Force to look to the Audit Commission publication '*Action Stations*' when compiling and reviewing its estates plan.

IV Relationships with the Railway Industry, Passengers and the Public

4.1 With effect from the 1 April 1999, meetings known as the Police Customer Liaison Group (PCLG) held on a quarterly basis between the BTP and Train Operating Companies (TOCs) were replaced by the Account Management Scheme. The scheme was intended to address the need to maintain strategic liaison between the Force and Passenger Train Companies (TOCs and Open Access Users), Railtrack, freight companies and other stakeholders.

4.2 The new arrangement was introduced, following privatisation of the railways for a number of reasons. It was recognised that the BTP, TOCs and Railtrack operational and business boundaries were complex and did not match. The Police Customer Liaison Groups, which had been introduced in 1995, had not been as successful as had been intended, with businesses preferring ‘one to one’ formal liaison arrangements with the Force. The Force structural boundaries, associated with the PCLG arrangements caused confusion among rail businesses and police managers. Effective relationships and partnerships with the rail businesses were seen as essential to the BTP policing strategy. Finally, Clause 5 of Police Service Agreements required formal liaison arrangements.

4.3 The intention of account management was to achieve ‘a single point of contact at strategic level between the Force and rail businesses, to provide a simple and more effective method of business liaison, to improve communication and to improve partnership and relationships’. The intention also was that these arrangements ‘would not interfere with the Force structure and existing command chains or create unmanageable burdens on individual police managers or divert the Force operational focus as ‘the national police force for the railways’’. Throughout the UK, the account manager at area level is normally the area commander who is responsible for consulting with relevant TOCs and other rail businesses in his area. Strategic overview is maintained by the assistant chief constable (territorial operations) (ACC TO) and local relationships are maintained on a daily basis by officers in charge at police stations (OICs).

4.4 All TOCs and the Force operate under the terms of a police service agreement (PSA). Most PSA’s are statutory documents but some involving smaller rail companies are non statutory but nevertheless drawn up along similar lines. Whilst a relatively simple arrangement in areas which service few operators, the relationships become far more complex in areas such as London North where the area commander who has direct responsibility as account manager for ten operating companies has regular dealings with a further eight operating companies. Whilst the account managers for these companies are different area commanders, a significant proportion of their business activity takes place in his area. Having identified gaps in service to these companies he has taken a positive stance and meets them regularly either in his role as London North area commander or in partnership with other relevant area commanders.

4.5 At account management meetings, matters such as line side deaths, delays associated with such deaths, police operations, joint initiatives and community safety are discussed with other relevant issues. The area commander produces comprehensive management information on crime figures and trends. This information reviews the main groups of crimes, such as violence, sexual offences, theft and line of route offences. It is noted that crimes of violence were of particular concern to TOCs, particularly serious assaults and assaults against railway staff. Examinations of the minutes of these meetings confirm that this is an effective forum for addressing strategic issues at executive level and securing action.

4.6 During the Inspection it became evident some operators would also like more detail from area commanders than they currently receive. The type of information requested included detail on staffing levels, vacancy levels within the Force and activity reports not currently included in regular updates. Good practice was however, identified in the North West area where the commander, having identified a need to give regular and timely information on policing issues to the TOCs has taken to circulating a four page business specific activity report which attracted praise from many operators. Her Majesty's Inspector urges the Force to consider spreading this good practice across the Force.

4.7 Whilst this is seen in a positive light some operators still urge greater disclosure. Her Majesty's Inspector was pleased to note the willingness of the Chief Constable to release whatever information was sought by these companies in the interests of transparency. The need for greater quantities of information stems, it seems, from the fact, as mentioned during the Inspection from a number of sources, that the operators tend to see the Force as a cost or tax to their business over which they have no control. They quite naturally, desire to see how their money is being spent and to ensure they are receiving value for money.

4.8 This has prompted some to speculate on how the funding of the Force might be differently organised. One solution finding favour with some managers spoken to within the Force, would be to top slice policing costs from the Government subsidy given to Railtrack and TOCs and make these funds available to the Force through the DTLR. This initiative might remove the pressure to 'horse trade' evident at some meetings with account managers. However it may well be that operators wish to maintain close budgetary links with the Force as a driver for accountability. In the lead up to the privatisation of British Rail the then Department of Transport published a document on *'The Future Status of the British Transport Police'*. In this document the concept of the 'user pays principle' was established as a 'non-negotiable' position. The current breakdown of the budget is roughly as follows:

- Railtrack £34 million;
- Passenger Railway Companies £59 million;
- London Underground Limited £29 million.

4.9 Other users of the BTP contribute in a similar way to the cost of their operations. In the case of Croydon Tramlink and Midland Metro separate PSAs exist, again on the 'user pays' model. As each train operator was put up for franchise, all the costs (including policing) were exposed. Bidders were also aware that as a condition of receiving an 'operators licence' they had to pay for policing and that for 'law and order' issues this policing had to be provided by British Transport Police, a fundamental reason being that Government did not wish to see the fragmentation of 'railway policing'.

4.10 In July 2000, the Government launched its 10-year transport strategy, 'Transport 2010 – the 10 year plan'. This proposes ambitious expansion in numbers of passengers (50%) and freight (80%) carried by rail. It is envisaged that substantial public as well as private investment will support the programme.

4.11 If these targets are achieved, the Force will face a considerable challenge in meeting the demands for policing. A safe and secure journey will be a significant factor in encouraging patronage and here British Transport Police can make a substantial contribution in partnership with others.

4.12 Crime does not end at the boundary of a railway station and from the passenger's perspective the 'door to door destination' experience influences their preferred mode of travel. It follows therefore that the need for partnership must extend into crime and disorder arrangements to achieve the targets set by Government. This is a two way process. The environment in which the transport system operates will impact upon the perceptions and reality of crime on the system and the system can attract elements whose activities then impact upon local communities.

4.13 There is an opportunity through the Government's 10-year strategy to raise the profile of a co-ordinated approach to personal safety (and therefore community safety). Some form of incentive and support through the subsidy mechanism could be a means of encouraging this 'joined up' approach. Ultimately it is for the DTLR to decide how the funding of British Transport Police is determined, but Her Majesty's Inspector is of the view that an introduction of some form of 'arms length' funding arrangement might be explored to advantage. An element of 'paymaster meritability' can at times sour a clearly improving relationship between the Force, government and the industry it serves. An element of direct government funding would emphasise the 'public money' dimension and reinforce the public safety and service ethos.

4.14 In discussions with account managers and many TOCs during the Inspection relationships were described as good in general terms between the Force and rail businesses but there is always the potential for conflict. This potential will be substantially mitigated by effective and regular communication. A number of positive partnership initiatives were brought to the attention of Her Majesty's Inspector during the Inspection process. Criticism was however also made from one larger operator that the good practice evident in areas such as the North West Area, may not be evident elsewhere. Some area commanders were apparently not as accessible and it was occasionally difficult to achieve a corporate response from different areas. An example given, albeit one that has been resolved by the Force, was a recent football match between a London football club with a poor reputation for crowd behaviour travelling to a club in Wales. Problems had been experienced getting either area to lead on the issue. The operating company asked why there was not greater control exercised from headquarters over such issues. Some TOCs also wished to see performance data in terms of attendance times for incidents called in to the Force. However, it was pointed out that the Force is not an emergency service such as metropolitan and provincial police forces and given the logistical issues involved with policing the entire rail network with an establishment of 2109 police officers.

4.15 There is senior police representation at meetings of the Trespass and Vandalism Sub Group, which consists of representatives of the TOCs, Railtrack, and HM Railways Inspectorate. A partnership approach exists to address localised instances of trespass and vandalism at specific geographic locations within England and Wales, utilising crime prevention and joint working in addition to an appropriate operational police response. On examination of the minutes of the meetings of this group, Her Majesty's Inspector noted that many of the matters considered demonstrated a strong commitment to partnership working, such as generating publicity in advance of school holidays and joint action to address damage to fencing.

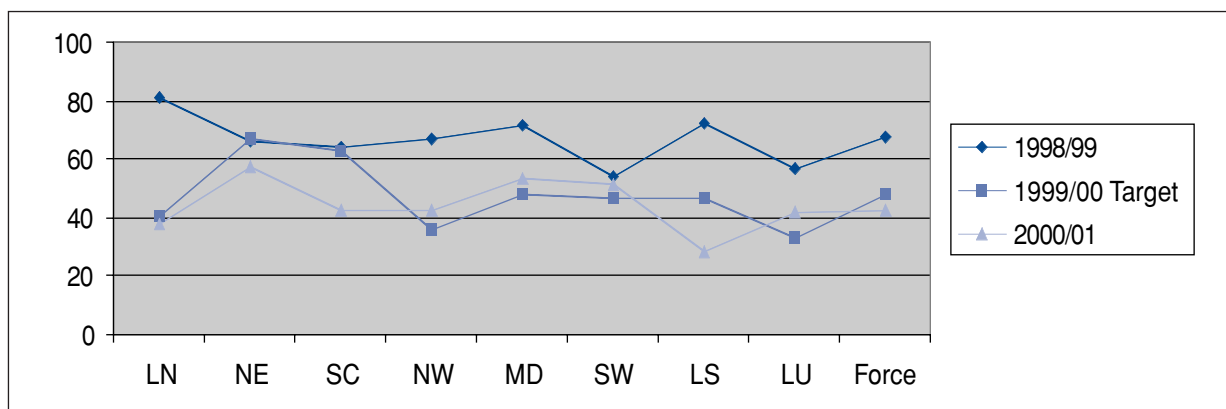
4.16 At police station level, local liaison is carried out by the officer in charge, through formal and informal meetings. At the larger police stations, the officers in charge liaise formally through structured meetings with both Railtrack and TOC management. In some cases, these meetings have been attended by representatives from the operators of retail outlets within railway stations. Those representatives spoken to during the Inspection from the retail outlets commented favourably on the relationship between themselves and the Force. At smaller police stations, liaison is conducted largely on an

informal basis, with both Railtrack and the various TOCs. This liaison consists of meetings with production managers, station managers and attendance at train crew briefings.

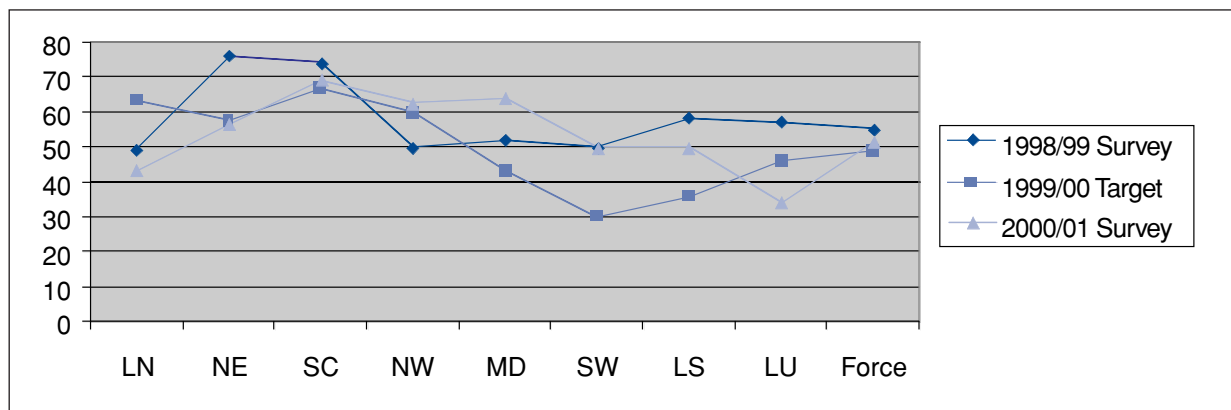
4.17 Given that much of this liaison is conducted on an almost daily basis, such informal arrangements are perhaps understandable and the lack of a formalised structure does not appear to impact adversely on the effectiveness of working relationships. However, in the North West area the commander has adopted a system whereby brief notes, detailing briefly the duration of the meeting and the matters discussed are forwarded to him by relevant staff. This is seen as good practice and provides him with timely information that should address emerging problems at strategic level. Her Majesty’s Inspector commends this approach as good practice for adoption across the Force.

4.18 Visits to North West, London South and London North identified a particularly active but perhaps unsung relationship between crime reduction officers and TOCs. The crime reduction officers in the North West area were in regular contact with the TOCs. The officers, who fall under the control of the crime management centre (CMC), were involved in a number of problem solving initiatives and being trained architectural liaison officers, were actively involved in the development of new Railtrack premises including the promotion of secure car parks and secure railway stations. The officers were also engaged in public education initiatives aimed at reducing trespass and vandalism. The TOCs seem keen to embrace such initiatives especially where the business case is well made out. The Scottish report highlighted the ‘**Help Us Help You**’ form as an effective form of feedback from the railway industry. Her Majesty’s Inspector concurs with this view and agrees that it is good practice that should be shared across the Force.

4.19 The 2000/01 policing plan had two strategic objectives relating to increasing satisfaction of rail staff and to increasing satisfaction of business managers with partnership arrangements. Her Majesty’s Inspector noted that the performance management unit, based at headquarters, regularly surveys the business managers of companies with PSAs. The results of these surveys are then made available to each company and to the business account managers. It is noted that from the first survey there is a marked decline in overall satisfaction from 67.4% in 1998/99 to 42.7% in 2000/01. The graph below indicates the year on year decline with position statements for each area. These surveys disclose a clear and disquieting trend which should be addressed and, ideally, reversed.



4.20 The second survey examined the level of satisfaction of business managers with partnership arrangements. The results of this survey are shown in the graph below.



Railway Passengers

4.21 In the main, Her Majesty's Inspector found consultation arrangements with the railway industry to be effective in ensuring that each key stakeholder is consulted and informed about policing whenever appropriate. There was a high level of satisfaction in terms of the policing service provided and a genuine spirit of co-operation especially where TOCs could see the business case for policing initiatives. However, there were points where consultation could be improved or where confusion regarding local liaison existed. Her Majesty's Inspector repeats the commentary above that effective communication and properly minuted meetings are the best way to mitigate the results of such confusion, which is in some ways inevitable in such a complex and business driven working environment.

4.22 The consultation with the travelling public presents the BTP with a particular but vital challenge as they represent the largest single group of customers. The BTP consults with rail passengers in England and Wales in a number of ways in order to gauge levels of satisfaction, customer expectations and to address any areas of concern. The consultees include victims of crime. More will be said on consultation with ethnic minority groups in Section VIII.

4.23 At present, the Force uses the information obtained from large scale surveys of rail passengers, carried out by the Shadow Strategic Rail Authority. These were previously carried out by BTP staff. The information gathered during these passenger surveys is then analysed and a customer consultation report produced for each area commander. These reports detail the concerns and suggestions of rail passengers. The performance management unit is also responsible for conducting a postal survey of the victims of crime within the Force. The purpose of this survey is to measure customer satisfaction in line with the annual policing plan. The plan objective was to increase the satisfaction levels of crime victims. The target was not met as the year end figure of 80.6% was 5.2% lower than the previous year.

4.24 The 2000/01 annual policing plan had further objectives relating to passenger and staff safety. The first was to reduce the level of concern felt by passengers. During the second half of 1999 22.7% expressed concern about their safety, by the end of 2000 this figure had fallen to 20.2% and the objective had been met. The second objective was to reduce the fear of crime amongst staff. In 1998/99 53.0% of staff felt safe, by 1999/00 this figure had fallen to 51.1% and further still to 49.5% at the year end, again the objective had not been met.

4.25 During the Inspection process, HMIC consulted with the Rail Passenger Committee for England and Wales and the London Transport User Committee, the representative bodies looking after the interests of rail and underground passengers. HMIC found that the committees were kept well informed

on matters that affect passengers such as crime statistics and trends, as well as information regarding policing initiatives. Both committees expressed concern about the level of begging and drunkenness, the vulnerability of persons on late night trains, the lack of officers, difficulty in finding how to contact the BTP and locate BTP police stations and the time taken to respond to calls for assistance. Further comment is made in Section VIII.

Victim Support

4.26 The Force is signed up to the Victims' Charter and as such, ensures that victim support leaflets are included in the initial letters sent to the victims of crime. Referral to Victim Support is facilitated by means of the electronic crime reports generated on the PINS crime recording system. At the time of reporting, victims are asked if they wish to be referred to Victim Support and this information is noted on PINS. Each night the details of those wishing to be referred to Victim Support are electronically switched to the Force headquarters where they are downloaded and transferred electronically to Victim Support. Section V details the shortfall of the PINS system and the impact on the length of the time between the crime being reported and victim details being transferred to Victim Support.

4.27 Whilst the Scottish report regards this electronic transfer as good practice Her Majesty's Inspector was concerned to learn from VSS that there had been a significant (90%) fall in referrals following Force guidelines to adhere to ACPO policy and request the victims express consent before referral. The Information Commissioner is reviewing this practice and new guidelines will be issued. However, there is a need for attention to be paid to victims to ensure that their needs are addressed as there is a suspicion that officers are sheltering behind the bureaucracy of the 'current' practices and in the process ultimately denying victims the support to which they are entitled. If this continues VSS will falter and ultimately be withdrawn for its government funding is directly related to the number of referrals.

RECOMMENDATION 3

Her Majesty's Inspector strongly recommends the Force review victim referral procedures as a matter of urgency.

Special Constables

4.28 The use of special constables is seen as the closest interface the police service has with the public. In 1998, British Transport Police embarked on a recruitment drive to recruit some 426 special constables over a 4-year period, to enhance the service the Force provides to its customers. This is an ambitious target that has produced only 68 special constables by the time of this Inspection. From the outset it was clear to Her Majesty's Inspector that not all sections of the Force were behind the policy to introduce a special constabulary and his last report criticised restrictions that some had sought to impose. Three years on not enough has been done to accelerate this important initiative. If the Force does not re-energize its efforts in this direction it will find itself gradually disadvantaged at a time when the Home Office Police 'reform' programme focuses increasingly on their expansion both in numbers and role.

4.29 Her Majesty's Inspector noted that special constables were deployed on general patrol duties and are made to feel part of station teams. They are also involved with the policing of major events. The Inspection team found that the special constables on the London South and North West areas were well

trained and highly motivated. However close monitoring of training needs to be undertaken as several interviewed had not received refresher training for track safety and the use of baton and cuffs. Her Majesty's Inspector noted that a number of the successful applicants have since joined as full time constables. Whilst this outcome should be viewed positively,

RECOMMENDATION 4

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends the Force to review urgently its approach to the recruitment of special constables in order to benefit from additional government funding that may well soon be available.

V Crime Management and Detection

Crime Strategy

5.1 The Force goal is “*to keep the peace on our railways and make them safe and secure*”. Comment was made earlier in Section II about the lack of a current corporate strategy document. The previous plan covering the period 1998-2001 set the policing strategy in terms of aims, commitment and philosophy. Seven priorities underpinned the strategic plan and these were the drivers for the annual policing plan.

5.2 The detective chief superintendent has overall responsibility for crime strategy, crime policy, direction and command of crime related matters, and provides guidance, support, expertise in the investigation of major crime and terrorism and is the director of intelligence. He is accountable to the assistant chief constable (territorial operations). Area commanders have local accountability for crime and are answerable to the deputy chief constable for their performance.

5.3 The current crime strategy was written to support priority 1, 2 and 3 of the Force strategy document. This document has never been subject to review and does not have any measures or milestones attached to it.

RECOMMENDATION 5

Her Majesty’s Inspector recommends that in formulating the new medium term strategy, that the current crime strategy is replaced, which then supports the new long term strategy and adequately reflects the needs of the Force and its customers.

5.4 The annual policing plan for 2001/02 has a number of crime related objectives which are subject to monthly review by the Force Management Team (FMT), and more frequent assessment locally on each area:

- improving personal safety;
- reducing railway disruption;
- tackling property crime.

Crime Investigation

5.5 Following restructuring, on 1 September 2000, crime support became a free standing area function, incorporating the crime management, intelligence and crime prevention functions. The recently appointed detective chief inspector posts head the newly created function across the Force providing a clearer focus to crime investigation and management. Her Majesty’s Inspector acknowledges the efforts being made by the Force to improve its detective ability.

5.6 All crimes are subject to the minimum standards of investigation set down in Force policy. Crimes are allocated by crime management centres (CMCs) to either uniform or detective officers according to the seriousness of the offence. The Force acknowledges that previous structural arrangements have led to loss

of investigative skills. Two detective superintendents provide senior investigation support with geographic responsibility, one for the three London areas and the other for the remaining five territorial areas, whilst area detective chief inspectors are being skilled as senior investigating officers (SIOs). The Force is also taking the innovative step of recruiting retired detective inspectors from Home Office police forces on short term contracts to augment its detective ability whilst it develops its own staff in-house.

5.7 The selection of detective officers is determined by a three stage process:

- selection
- induction
- assessment

The aim of the selection process is simply to select, induct and assess potential CID officers thereby providing a qualitative investigative capability, which meets the Force mission statement and objectives. Prospective applicants need to be successful at each phase before progressing to the next which, following assessment, will result in a CID posting.

5.8 Some area commanders have expressed concerns about the process which has in the past excluded candidates viewed, by them, as excellent detectives, but who have failed the selection process. Her Majesty's Inspector is aware of the lack of detectives in the Force and urges the Force to review the selection process to ensure that it meets the needs of both area and the organisation as a whole.

5.9 Unlike Scotland, the seven areas in England and Wales have sole responsibility for the investigation of any suspicious death on railway property or a major rail crash. The Force has become extremely skilled in the investigation of major disasters and the sensitivities concerned when doing so. That said, it is clear that the limited resources within area, in terms of uniform and detective officers, may require additional resources to be supplied from other areas of the Force as occurred in relation to the Ladbroke Grove, Hatfield and Selby rail crashes. In England and Wales, most forces now have a major crime policy that details the minimum logistical response to major crime and appropriate levels of mutual aid from within the Force. This concept of a formalised response is equally applicable to any major incident and, as such, may be worthy of consideration.

5.10 The Inquiry chaired by Lord Cullen arose out of the rail crash at Ladbroke Grove Junction on 5 October 1999 between trains operated by Thames Trains and First Great Western (FGW), resulting in considerable loss of life and injuries. Part 1 of the Inquiry (which has reported) is concerned with the investigation of the causes of the crash and the circumstances in which they occurred. The report of part 1 made 88 specific recommendations with recommendation 89 as a six-month review of compliance of the 88. The first four recommendations have an impact on the police service not just British Transport Police. The Force has prepared an internal review of the impact of the recommendations and other comments. Part 2 of the Inquiry which includes, amongst other things, rail accident investigation is due to be published at the same time as this Inspection report and therefore Her Majesty's Inspector is unable to make further comment.

Crime Performance

5.11 True comparison of performance is difficult as British Transport Police is not currently part of a 'family' of forces within the matrix of performance indicators utilised by HMIC. The performance

figures supplied in respect of the Force are for England and Wales only to assist the comparison. Furthermore, numbers of certain railway specific offences are included, which have no counterparts in Home Office forces.

Figure 5.1: Service Delivery					
BVPI	1998/99	1999/00	2000/01	% change 99/00 to 00/01	Provincial Forces Average 2000/01
125a Total recorded crime per 1,000 population	26.4	28.7	26.6	-7.3	92.1
125b Total recorded crime: % detected	21.9	20.3	19.8	-0.5	26.8
126a Domestic burglary per 1,000 households	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	17.9
126b Domestic burglary: % detected	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	15.1
127a Violent crime per 1,000 population	3.1	3.3	3.3	0.0	11.7
127b Violent crime: % detected	46.6	46.7	47.3	0.6	67.3
127c Robbery per 1,000 population	0.9	0.9	1.1	0.2	N/A
127d Robbery: % detected	23.3	21.6	20.9	-3.2	N/A
128a Vehicle crime per 1,000 population	3.7	3.2	2.9	-9.4	N/A
128b Vehicle crime: % detected	9.4	8.5	6.2	-27.1	N/A
130 Public disorder incidents/1000 population	8.7	8.6	8.1	-5.6	54.7
131a % full files to CPS in time and satis/sufficient	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	73.3
131b % expedited/remand files CPS satis/sufficient	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	98.5
131c % full youth files to CPS in time and satis/sufficient	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	73.1
132 Number of RTCs involving death or injury/1,000 population	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

5.12 Performance over time indicates a flat picture in total recorded crime whilst detection rates have been in gradual decline. When viewed against the provincial average of 26.8% the overall detection rate of 19.8% does not stand comparison. The British Transport Police is hampered by the network nature of the railway system which means that crime and criminals can easily cross boundaries between local Home Office police forces and crimes are committed on the move with rapid means of escape. Crimes on the rail network have a high proportion where the offender and victim are strangers. This can and does make investigation and detection extremely difficult when often a crime is reported both some time and distance after it has occurred. It is nevertheless disappointing to see that detected crimes are on the decrease.

Figure 5.2: Robbery

	1998/99	1999/00	2000/01	% change 99/00 to 00/01	Provincial Forces Average 2000/01
No. of recorded robberies	2,136	2,372	2,668	11.6	N/A
127c Robberies per 1000 population	0.9	0.9	1.1	0.2	N/A
No. of robberies detected	498	513	554	8.0	N/A
No. of robberies detected per 100 officers	26.0	27.1	29.1	7.4	N/A
127d Detection rate	23.3	21.6	20.9	-0.7	N/A

5.13 The 2000/01 policing plan had two strategic objectives in respect of robbery, the first was to achieve no more than the 1999/00 level of recorded robberies. The total recorded was 2,668, and was an increase of 11.6%. Only London North and London South failed to achieve their reduction targets. The second target was to equal or exceed the 1999/00 detection rate. Whilst overall more robberies were detected the target was not met and indicated a decrease of 0.7%. In London South where 49.5% of the total number of robberies in the Force occur, local initiatives, such as Operation Frazer, have secured a 21.3% detection rate locally. Her Majesty's Inspector notes the 2001/02 targets to reduce robbery offences by 4% and increase the rate of detected crimes by 1% and will wait with anticipation the success of the various robbery initiatives.

Figure 5.3: Violent Crime

	1998/99	1999/00	2000/01	% change 99/00 to 00/01	Provincial Forces Average 2000/01
No. of recorded violent crimes	7,742	8,336	8,299	-0.4	N/A
127a Violent crimes per 1000 population	3.1	3.3	3.3	0.0	11.7
No. of violent crimes detected	3,611	3,895	3,925	0.8	N/A
No. of violent crimes detected per 100 officers	188.9	205.9	205.8	-0.05	N/A
127b Detection rate	46.6	46.7	47.3	1.3	67.3

5.14 The 2000/01 policing plan had two strategic objectives in respect of serious assault. The first target was to record no more than the 1999/00 figure of 1,594, the total recorded was 1,374, which was a decrease of 13.8%. The Force has been successful over the past year in driving down the number of overall recorded crimes of violence, which in 2000/01 stood at 8,299 having been reduced by 0.4% from 8,336 in 1999/00. The Force should be congratulated on this achievement against a back-drop of increasing violence across the country. The second target was to achieve a detection rate of 43.8% for serious assaults, by the year end the actual percentage detected was 40.5%. Overall the detection rate for violent crime has risen but it is 20 percentage points below the provincial average. Her Majesty's

Inspector notes the good work being undertaken in the conflict management training provided for railway staff, particularly those in potentially confrontational roles, such as revenue protection. This is an area of potential good practice. However more effort needs to be directed towards the detection of these serious assaults. Her Majesty's Inspector notes the 2001/02 targets to reduce violence against the person offences by 2% and increase the rate of detected crimes by 1%.

5.15 The 2000/01 policing plan had two strategic objectives in respect of sexual offences. The first was to record no more than the 1999/00 level of crimes, this numerical target was 1,113 offences and by the year end 1,040 offences had been recorded. The second was to achieve a detection rate of 34.8%, by the year end only 27.3% had been detected. Her Majesty's Inspector notes the 2001/02 targets to reduce sexual offences by 1% and increase the rate of detected crimes by 1%. The Force has been less successful in reducing the number of other assaults, the policing plan target for 2000/01 was to achieve the same or record less than the figure for 1999/00, that target being 3,605 offences, the total recorded reached 3,933 and indicated a 9.1% increase.

Figure 5.4: Vehicle Crime					
	1998/99	1999/00	2000/01	% change 99/00 to 00/01	Provincial Forces Average 2000/01
128a Total recorded vehicle crime per 1000 population	3.7	3.2	2.9	-9.4	N/A
Total recorded thefts of vehicles	1,249	1,054	881	-16.4	N/A
Total recorded thefts from vehicles	6,311	5,637	5,324	-5.6	N/A
Detection rate:					
• All	9.4	8.5	6.2	-2.3	N/A
• Thefts of	10.2	6.8	5.8	-1.0	N/A
• Thefts from	7.1	7.3	3.9	-3.4	N/A

5.16 The number of vehicle crimes has been in gradual decline from 3.7 crimes per 1000 population in 1998/99 to 2.9 crimes per 1000 population in 2000/01. This is a welcome decrease when many forces are experiencing an increase. It is believed that the 'Secure Station Scheme' has been a contributory factor here, and schemes such as this would benefit from in depth evaluation to establish their effectiveness. This success has to be tempered with the decrease in overall detected crimes from 9.4% in 1998/99 to 6.2% in 2000/01. This has to be viewed with disappointment, but reflects the problems that the Force faces on a daily basis as discussed in paragraph 5.11 above.

Figure 5.5: Line of route							
	1995/96	1996/97	1997/98	1998/99	1999/00	2000/01	% change 99/00 to 00/01
Serious line of route	2,910	2,668	2,751	2,737	2,431	2,199	-9.5
% detected	13.3	14.4	16.6	17.3	15.7	15.4	-0.3
Minor line of route	18,460	15,134	14,544	17,720	19,733	20,197	2.4
% detected	38.0	37.7	36.5	27.7	23.3	18.0	-5.3

5.17 Line of route offences is a category unique to British Transport Police. Essentially they are offences of vandalism, obstruction or trespass on or adjacent to railway lines or property and are offences created by railway specific legislation. The serious offences relate to instances which can cause danger or obstruction to the railway whilst minor offences relate to trespass. Line of route offences can have serious consequences not only to rail safety but also to the national economy with the potential for significant delay in rail services and the knock on effect from that. Performance over time indicates for serious offences that there has been a significant and welcome reduction of 24.4% since 1995/96 and an increase in detection of 2.1% over the same time period. Line of route offences did not feature in the 2000/01 policing plan, but the 2001/02 plan has a specific objective to reduce railway disruption offences with targets to reduce serious offences by at least 1% and achieve an increase in the number detected by at least 1%. Her Majesty's Inspector is pleased to record that throughout the Inspection the level of interest and energy associated with 'line of route' offences was markedly higher than that encountered three years ago.

Figure 5.6: Theft of passengers property/property in transit

	1995/96	1996/97	1997/98	1998/99	1999/00	2000/01	% change 99/00 to 00/01
Total number of offences recorded	20,273	17,610	14,824	19,018	26,075	23,670	-9.2
% detected	3.5	4.4	5.4	4.6	3.7	3.7	0.0

5.18 Theft of property continues to blight the experience of the travelling public. There was a welcome decline in thefts and an increase in detections in 1997/98 which was reported on favourably in the last Inspection report. The position has taken a turn for the worse in recent years although the total number recorded fell by 9.2% in 2000/01. As with Home Office police forces the high expansion in the use of mobile phones has contributed to the number of offences recorded. In addition there has been an increase in the number of pickpockets from Eastern European countries plaguing the railway and underground networks. Her Majesty's Inspector notes that there is a policing plan objective for 2001/02 to reduce the theft of personal property by at least 6% and increase the number of detections by 1%. Effective targeting of offenders needs to be undertaken to reduce the level of recorded crime whilst at the same time increasing detections.

Intelligence

5.19 In the past the Force has laid claim to being 'Intelligence Led'. In recent times recognition has been given to that not being the case. There is no common database for the storage and dissemination of intelligence across the Force. Each area has its own intelligence unit responsible to the crime manager but with varying systems of storage and dissemination. The three London areas take full advantage of the Metropolitan Police CRIMINT system, but this is not available to the five other areas who use a multitude of spreadsheets and card index systems which are not open to interrogation from outside. The National Crime Intelligence System (NCIS) intelligence model is now being rolled out across the Force, but already there is a confusion of terms across the areas, with some area management team meetings becoming the strategic level tasking and co-ordinating mechanism, whilst other areas have a separate meeting structure for senior managers but calling the meeting by the same name. The frequency of these meetings varies from two to four weeks.

5.20 The Force management team (FMT) meets monthly to review performance and hold area commanders to account but does not perform the role of a force-wide tasking and co-ordinating

meeting. As such there is no mechanism in place for the bidding of centrally held resources, such as the surveillance team. This is achieved by personal contact with the detective chief inspector at headquarters. Whilst no complaint has been made about the lack of availability of this unit, Her Majesty's Inspector is of the opinion that consideration should be given for a central tasking and co-ordinating process to handle the bids for central resources.

5.21 The pre-inspection team had the opportunity to attend a tasking and co-ordinating meeting at London North and found the meeting to follow closely the NCIS model. It was well-structured and targeted prolific offenders and other targets relating to objectives within the policing plan. Officers were able to bid for resources and were held to account for performance against previous targeted operations. Her Majesty's Inspector views this meeting as a model for other areas to emulate.

5.22 The Force has recently purchased an integrated intelligence database that will be rolled out across the country in October. The intention is to start at two pilot sites to test the robustness of the system. HMI welcomes this project which will enable the sharing of intelligence across the Force and will monitor progress with interest. He urges that account is taken of suggestions in the HMIC thematic report *'Calling Time on Crime'* which describes a model BCU and provides useful pointers for identifying critical success factors including a clear focus on problem solving and intelligence led approaches. Further comment on the intelligence system is detailed in Chapter IX.

Source Management

5.23 The Force has issued clear guidelines on the management and use of covert human intelligence sources (or informants) (CHISs). Whilst there are no source management units on areas there are 65 registered CHISs across the Force. Detective inspectors act as controllers, with trained handlers on each area responsible for a small number of informants. On the North West area there were 7 CHISs awaiting re-registration before they could be tasked. Anecdotal evidence from focus groups suggest that CHISs are not tasked effectively and that where tasking of informants does occur a more co-ordinated approach would be helpful. Her Majesty's Inspector urges the Force to look to other forces, such as Kent County Constabulary for good practice in the tasking and management of CHISs.

Briefing

5.24 The method of briefing staff varies across the Force. Larger stations have team briefings at the commencement of each shift, whilst staff at smaller stations either self-brief or are briefed by a sergeant. The pre-inspection team attended a number of briefings across the Force and noted differences in quality and approach. Some were obviously targeted towards specific offenders and hot spot locations, others were more general and less structured. There is a pilot system for communication across London South called 'Force Link'. This is a network system of graphics and photographs to brief staff on current targets and appears to be a similar system to that operated by Sussex Police. Anecdotal evidence exists that the system does not work in every station, that the information is not refreshed frequently enough and that it has been open to abuse. The pre-inspection team noted that the text and graphics on this system were sometimes difficult to view and the system was not used as a centre point for shift briefings.

5.25 The pre-inspection team also visited the area intelligence and tasking bureau (AITB) at London Underground. They were impressed with the intelligence and briefing package prepared by the AITB that is accessed through the Force Intranet. The briefing package is capable of being customised to suit local requirements and this should be seen as a model for other areas to emulate.

In addition the Force is encouraged to embrace the recommendations made in the Audit Commission's study *'Tackling Patrol Effectively'* and examine the HMIC publications *'Going Local'* and *'Calling Time on Crime'* to gain areas of good practice to boost the effectiveness of each briefing session.

Crime Recording

5.26 ACPO has recently circulated a draft National Crime Recording Standard. Its aim is to promote greater consistency between police forces in the recording of crime and to take a more victim oriented approach to crime recording. The standard provides general principles on the recording of crime and interpretation of those principles. The standard includes guidance on supporting processes, leadership, the appointment of a Force crime registrar and the use of Force systems including local and national auditing.

5.27 Each area has its own crime management centre (CMC) that handles the recording and monitoring of reported crime. The detective chief inspector (DCI), as crime manager is responsible for the efficiency and effectiveness of the CMC. Each centre operates to the many policies within the Force on the recording and investigation of crime. Crime is recorded on a computerised crime recording system (PINS) that is some years old and does not, at present, assist significantly with the effective investigation of crimes which are recorded. Further comment will be made in Section IX.

5.28 Crimes are reported to CMCs by a variety of means; some reports are hand written and faxed to the CMC by police officers; some are typed on to a pro forma crime report on the RAIL command and control system; others are reported via the area control centres and typed on to the pro forma crime report on RAIL by an operator. The RAIL message is sent to the CMC responsible and it is critically reviewed by detectives in the CMC and is subjected to the minimum investigation standard that is overseen by the supervisor. The details are hand written onto a paper report and passed onto another section within the CMC for input onto PINS. The Home Office booklet *'Developing Crime Reduction Plans: some examples from the reducing burglary initiative'* was critical of incomplete and inaccurate crime records that can hinder efforts to develop effective crime reduction initiatives. Her Majesty's Inspector was concerned to learn that crimes can take up to seven days to be input onto PINS and thus valuable investigation time and timely management is potentially lost.

5.29 Her Majesty's Inspector was informed that the Force planned to upgrade the PINS system, which although innovative at the time of its introduction, now had acknowledged shortcomings compared with systems used elsewhere in England and Wales. In particular, the detail recorded in the modus operandi field is significantly less than that recorded by Home Office forces. Similarly, the system has only a limited analytical function.

Crime Audit

5.30 In July 2000 Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary published a thematic report on police crime recording, the police national computer and Phoenix intelligence system data quality entitled *'On the Record'*. In that report there is an emphasis that all data used by forces to produce management information is accurate since they will be the basis for crucial decisions about how resources will be used. The National Crime Recording Standard will help facilitate this. With regard to recorded crime, accuracy is also essential for the development of criminal intelligence and crime patterns. Effective audit processes are necessary to monitor the ethical soundness of crime recording and investigation. The Force has recently put in place a response to this thematic report. Her Majesty's Inspector will view its progress with interest.

5.31 The 1998 HMIC Inspection of British Transport Police in England and Wales recommended that:

“an audit and review, led by a senior officer, be conducted on crime recording procedures to:

- ensure that a corporate approach to crime recording procedures is adopted;*
- identify best practice aimed at making the system more user friendly;*
- confirm the integrity of the system;*
- invest ownership of crime recording and ancillary procedures in a single department.”*

5.32 During the pre-inspection members of the team visited the PMU and were told that a project team was actively examining this recommendation made three years previously. The project team was due to report in October 2000, but this has been delayed until June 2001 following which, appropriate measures would be put in place to ensure the Force complied with the recommendation in the 1998 Inspection report. Her Majesty’s Inspector is disappointed by the lack of action taken on this recommendation. It is an example of the lack of the ‘degree of urgency’ described earlier in paragraph 3.2 of this report.

5.33 There has been limited sampling of the computerised resource allocation and incident logging (RAIL) command and control system and the PINS crime recording. Given the limited nature of this sampling and difficulties posed in tracking incidents easily through both computer systems, the results of this audit cannot be seen as conclusive. The team found that of the twenty-five RAIL incidents examined, six or 24% had not found their way onto PINS as recorded crimes. Closer examination of these incidents indicated a number of possibilities for this, including victims having fled the scene of the crime without leaving any form of contact detail. However, four of these incidents related to the alleged theft of mobile phones some of which appear to have been listed as lost property. Anecdotal evidence exists that some offences of robbery, where mobile phones have been the property stolen, are being downgraded to theft or not recorded as crimes at all. Her Majesty’s Inspector has concerns that with the increase in theft of these items of property, crime numbers are being depressed, and true crime patterns are being overlooked.

5.34 The absence of a ready linkage between the command and control and crime recording systems inhibits easy supervision and it is therefore essential that appropriate measures are put in place to ensure that no under recording of crime occurs. It was noted that the PINS system manager was conducting an audit of both systems with the aim of ensuring that all incidents were accurately recorded as crimes where appropriate. The accurate recording of crimes is important for a number of reasons including effective deployment of resources, maintaining public confidence and providing data in support of bids for finance. Also, comparing reliable data over periods of time does provide information on effectiveness and efficiency.

5.35 The audit of crime management examined the disposal method of 53 files. In twenty seven files, amounting to 50.9% of cases examined, the Force was unable to clearly indicate that it has adhered to Home Office Counting Rules (HOCR) in the area of disposal of crime. For example, not clearly indicating an offence had not been committed for those recorded as no crime (HOCR C (B)) and not clearly indicating that offenders had been interviewed or informed that the offence had been detected for those recorded as detected no proceedings (HOCR H (1 (2))).

5.36 Her Majesty’s Inspector has concerns over the robustness of the supervision of the recording and disposal of crimes, although there is no suggestion of unethical recording or disposal of crime, nonetheless he repeats his recommendation:

RECOMMENDATION 6

An audit and review, led by a senior officer, continues to be conducted on crime recording procedures to:

- i) ensure that a corporate approach to crime recording procedures is adopted;**
- ii) identify best practice aimed at making the system more user friendly;**
- iii) confirm the integrity of the system.**

He trusts that this will be accorded a higher priority than hitherto.

Criminal Justice

Figure 5.7: Criminal Justice

	95/96	96/97	97/98	98/99	99/00	% change 98/99 to 99/00
% of files insufficient to proceed	0.1	0.7	0.7	0.2	0.8	0.6
% of files satisfactory/sufficient to proceed	99.6	99.4	99.3	99.8	99.2	-0.6
% of files within time limit	83.5	81.0	82.1	82.8	80.1	-2.7

5.37 The 1998 Inspection report recommended that the Force consider the creation of a criminal justice department to provide strategic direction and co-ordination. Since that report was published a small criminal justice unit led by a chief inspector has been created at headquarters. Each area has its own criminal justice unit, with the exception of the three London areas that share one unit based at Paddington.

5.38 The pre-inspection team visited this joint unit where a team were working hard to join together three units whilst handling a high volume of work. Efforts to address quality and timeliness of files is being hampered by the problem of insufficient continuous dialogue with the many CPS branches that each unit has to deal with. This problem is exacerbated with expedited files that are routed through Home Office police forces Criminal Justice Units (CJUs), which resulted in limited performance data being available to the Inspection team. Approximately 75% of all cases handled by the London CJU are London Underground revenue cases which place an immense burden upon the team attempting to process them within the six month time limitation period. Further difficulties arise with offenders being charged by MPS custody officers, and not being bailed to appear at the Horseferry Magistrates Court which is the agreed court with the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS). This is causing difficulty for both the Force and the CPS with files being mis-directed then re-directed. Her Majesty’s Inspector is of the opinion that this situation should be addressed as a matter of urgency. The team noted that whilst the head of unit and the in-house lawyer were striving to make the unit effective and efficient their task is being hampered by a lack of accountability. Neither has been set any objectives and there is no

department plan. The in-house lawyer is unclear as to whom she is accountable and for what. Again this situation is in need of rectification.

Scientific Support

	97/98	98/99	99/00	00/01
No. of crime scenes attended and examined	5,892	N/A	N/A	N/A
No. of crime scenes visited per SOCO	327.3	N/A	N/A	N/A
No. of crime scenes where DNA samples taken	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
No. of identifications	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Percentage of identifications per crime scene examined for fingerprints	5.7%	N/A	N/A	N/A

5.39 Scientific support is headed by a detective sergeant based at Leeke Street, which services the three London areas. He has responsibility for all scenes of crime officers (SOCOs) across England, Scotland and Wales. There are 14 staff based at Leeke Street, seven scenes of crime officers, of whom three are civilian support staff, one fingerprint expert and one fingerprint officer, one forensic science officer, one property officer, one DNA co-ordinator, two laboratory technicians, and one clerical officer. There are a further ten SOCOs based across the areas. In 2000/01 £434,000 was allocated for forensic science, with budget spends being monitored on a monthly basis. The 2001/02 budget was not set at the time of the Inspection.

5.40 Since the last Inspection the Force has moved its account to the Forensic Alliance whilst the Forensic Science Service is still being used for some outstanding DNA crime stains. The scientific support unit has its own set of objectives, devised by its head, to support the annual policing plan. However there is no long-term strategy for scientific support or the use of forensic science. In July 2000 HMIC published a thematic report on the use of scientific and technical support, entitled, '*Under the Microscope*', made a series of recommendations, one of which related to having an up to date, known and understood strategy on the use of forensic science to tackle volume crime.

5.41 Comprehensive guidance is available to investigators for the use of DNA and collection of other forensic exhibits. Policy exists on the collection, storage, transportation and analysis of DNA and a central submissions system is in place. However Her Majesty's Inspector was concerned about the lack of effective monitoring of samples going to the laboratory linking up with successful hits and crimes on the PINS system. An embryonic monitoring system with CMCs being contacted by the DNA co-ordinator has been put in place but it is too early to tell how effective that system is. Owing to a lack of clerical staff the unit has been unable to measure how successful it has been in the detection of crimes through DNA hits and fingerprints. Since sound investment in scientific support is a crucial factor in performance against crime Her Majesty's Inspector urges the Force to rectify this lacuna in order that resources are effectively targeted.

5.42 The use of NAFIS has been sub-contracted to the MPS, a business case has been put to Chief Officer Group (COG) for considering whether to set up its own fingerprint bureau or remain with the

MPS. Operationally officers are experiencing difficulty with LIVESCAN, as it requires an arrest/summons number which currently is generated by the CMCs which do not operate on a 24-hour basis. Her Majesty's Inspector urges the Force to examine ways of solving this problem and implement as soon as possible.

5.43 The head of scientific support provides input to the induction of new recruits and to the trainee detective programme on how to get the best from forensic science. Her Majesty's Inspector applauds this but was concerned about anecdotal evidence from focus groups about the lack of understanding on how forensic science can aid detection and crime scenes not being effectively preserved. To complement this view, during the crime audit, a burglary was examined where soft drinks had been consumed on the premises, SOCO had not been called and there appeared to be no realisation of the potential to obtain DNA from the bottles consumed and thus identification of those responsible. In view of the low detection rate

RECOMMENDATION 7

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that the Force examine ways of how forensic science can better aid investigation taking full account of the good practice set out in the thematic report *'Under the Microscope'*.

VI Absence Management

6.1 In 1997 HMIC published a thematic inspection for the management of sickness absence and medical retirement in the police service entitled '*Lost Time*'. This report should be seen as a touchstone for any police force attempting to reduce sickness absence. Comment was made in the 1998 Inspection report of the BTP about the acute problem over sickness absence. Following the last Inspection the sickness absence policy was reviewed re-emphasising the role of the first line manager in the process and implementing mandatory return to work interviews and a staff contact programme. This debate has continued in the 2000 report by Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Constabulary for Scotland who commented on BTP performance in this area and undertook detailed research and comparative analysis, more of which will be discussed later in this section. Three years on from his last study Her Majesty's Inspector finds the Force continuing to exhibit the worst sickness absence record of any other police force in the country – and by some margin!

6.2 Within the BTP each area attempts to ensure compliance with the key elements and procedures of the sickness absence policy. A number of other steps have been taken by the BTP in a bid to improve sickness absence, such as:

- quarterly case conferences between the Force Occupational Health Advisor, the Medical Officer and the Personnel and Training Manager within each area;
- the setting of a number of objectives within the 2000/2001 Policing Plan which aim to reduce area sickness absence levels to that of the lowest area;
- the provision of physiotherapy to injured officers as a pilot scheme within some areas;
- the provision of private medical diagnosis.

6.3 The management of sickness had been an annual policing plan objective for the past three years. In 2000/01 the objective was for each area to reduce its level of short term sickness to that of the best performing area and maintain or improve its long term sickness performance. The targets set for short term sickness were as follows:

- Police – 4.72 days Support staff – 3.75 days

The resulting figures for 2000/01 for short term sickness is disappointing and indicate that the targets have not been reached:

- Police – 5.03 days Support staff – 4.93 days

6.4 Targets were also set to maintain or reduce the level of long term sickness. The long term sickness targets were bespoke to each area with an overall Force target of 10.04 days per police officer and 5.07 days per member of support staff. The Force results indicate that neither target was met with 11.77 days lost per police officer and 7.92 days lost per support staff member. Long term absences are skewed by decisions of the BTP pension fund management committee for employees to exhaust his or her sick pay entitlement, unless the individual agrees to forgo this, prior to being considered for early retirement on ill health grounds. Her Majesty's Inspector understands the process behind this stance but would encourage the Force to find a way to identify at an early stage those employees who are unlikely to return to work and attempt a compassionate but swift departure from the Force.

6.5 The table at Figure 6.1 indicates performance over time for the management of sickness across the Force. As can be seen there has been a continual increase in days lost through sickness for police staff with the number increasing to 16.8 in 2000/01. Support staff sickness has varied over the same time period with the highest number of days lost in 1997/98. 2000/01 however saw an increase from 11.4 days to 12.7 days, an increase of 11.4%. Comparative analysis with provincial averages indicates that the Force has the worst police sickness record whilst support staff sickness is at the provincial average. Yet working days lost from assault feature as a tiny percentage of total days lost.

Figure 6.1: Absence management

SELECTED INDICATORS	1995/96	1996/97	1997/98	1998/99	1999/00	2000/01	% Change 1999/00 to 2000/01	Provincial Average 2000/01
Police officers Total days lost sick	28,040	28,308	30,100	34,433	34,229	35,436	3.5	29,981.3
Police officers Average days sick per officer	14.2	14.6	15.9	16.3	16.4	16.8	2.6	12.6
Police working days lost through assault	N/A	N/A	N/A	978	851	844	-0.8	617.7
% of total days lost through assault	N/A	N/A	N/A	2.8	2.5	2.4	-0.1	N/A
Support staff Total days lost sick	3,863	4,518	5,806	5,434	5,794	7,200	24.3	14,928.3
Support staff Average days sick per support staff	8.6	9.9	14.4	11.4	11.4	12.7	11.0	12.9
% police officer medically retired	N/A	N/A	N/A	21	37	23	-37.8	30.6
% support staff medically retired	N/A	N/A	N/A	1	1	1	0.0	33.9

6.6 The Scottish inspection report undertook comparative analysis of BTP Scotland with other Scottish police forces sickness rates and compared them by working days lost. This included long term periods of working days lost and number of sickness absences per officer compared with mean officer age and mean length of service during the year 1999/00.

6.7 That analysis showed that mean length of service shows no correlation with either working days lost or sickness absences. However, the report identified that there was a significant linear correlation between mean age of officers and long term working days lost, and to an extent, between mean age of officers and working days lost, ie as mean age of officers increases, so too does number of working days lost per officer. The report indicated that with the highest mean age per officer, BTP Scotland also has the greatest number of working days lost and long term periods of working days lost per officer. See Figure 6.2.

6.8 The approach taken for analysis of sickness of the BTP in England and Wales is by comparing performance of each area by its major staff groups which man 24 hours stations with the local Home Office police force. For example North West area is compared with Cheshire, Cumbria, Greater Manchester, Lancashire and Merseyside, whilst London North is compared with the Metropolitan Police Service and Thames Valley. The table at Figure 6.3 illustrates this performance for 2000/01.

Figure 6.2:

	Mean Age	No. of working Days lost per Officer	Working days lost Per officer – long term	No. of absences per officer	Mean Length Of service
BTP – Scotland	39.3	18.0	12.9	1.4	14.0
BTP - National	38.7	14.9	9.9	1.4	13.3
Strathclyde	37.3	12.4	9.1	1.2	14.2
Northern	37.3	9.5	4.4	1.5	14.3
L&B	36.8	12.1	7.2	1.7	14.0
Tayside	36.7	14.3	8.4	1.6	13.8
Fife	36.4	10.7	4.8	1.3	13.3
Central	35.5	12.0	7.2	1.5	13.2
Grampian	35.4	6.2	2.6	1.2	12.7
Dumfries & Galloway	35.3	7.9	3.6	1.1	12.8

6.9 Analysis of the table at Figure 6.3 indicates significant disparity with the local Home Office police forces in each area. For example the North East is the poorest poor performer with sickness rates for police officers 168.9% higher than Northumbria, 91.8% higher than South Yorkshire and 80% higher than West Yorkshire. Extending that comparison the other areas in England and Wales indicates that the North West area has a significantly higher police sickness rate than the police forces in which it operates. The two largest BTP stations are at Liverpool and Manchester. Comparison with Merseyside and Greater Manchester indicates that the BTP has 39.8% and 26.5% higher sickness than either force. Whilst both areas have civilian support staff sickness on par with the local Home Office police force.

6.10 This picture is reflected with varying degrees across the Force with the exception of the Midland area. When compared with West Midlands and Nottinghamshire, the Midland area had average police sickness and significantly better civilian support staff sickness rates. Her Majesty’s Inspector is deeply concerned about the number of days lost through sickness, particularly when concerns are expressed about the visibility and availability of police officers. For example:

- North East area with a staff of 192 police officers lost 23.4 days per officer, this equates to 4,493 working days or an additional 4.1 police officers per shift. If sickness were reduced to provincial average of 12.6 days this would give an additional **2.1** police officers per shift;
- North West area with a staff of 270 police officers lost 18.6 days per officer, this equates to 5022 working days or an additional 4.6 police officers per shift. If sickness were reduced to provincial average of 12.6 days this would give an additional **1.5** police officers per shift;

- Midland area with a staff of 179 police officers lost 12.4 days per officer, this equates to 2219.6 working days and is below the provincial average;
- South West area with a staff of 141 police officers lost 20.1 days per officer, this equates to 2834 working days or an additional 2.5 police officers per shift. If sickness were reduced to provincial average of 12.6 days this would give an additional **1.0** police officers per shift;
- London North area with a staff of 310 police officers lost 15.0 days per officer, this equates to 4650 working days or an additional 4.2 police officers per shift. If sickness were reduced to provincial average of 12.6 days this would give an additional **0.74** police officers per shift;
- London South area with a staff of 300 police officers lost 19.6 days per officer, this equates to 5880 working days or an additional 5.4 police officers per shift. If sickness were reduced to provincial average of 12.6 days this would give an additional **2.0** police officers per shift.

Figure 6.3:

Area 2000/01	Days sick per police officer	% difference	Days sick per support staff	% difference	% difference BTP police total	% difference BTP support staff total
Headquarters	5.1		11.3		-69.6%	-11.0%
North West	18.6		14.2		+10.7%	+11.8%
Cheshire	13.7	+35.8%	15.8	-10.1%		
Cumbria	13.1	+42.0%	8.0	+77.5%		
Greater Manchester	14.7	+26.5%	15.7	-9.6%		
Lancashire	13.4	+38.8%	13.1	+8.4%		
Merseyside	13.3	+39.8%	16.6	-14.5%		
North East	23.4		13.5		+39.3%	+6.3%
Northumbria	8.7	+168.9%	12.6	+7.1%		
South Yorkshire	12.2	+91.8%	14.8	-8.8%		
West Yorkshire	13.0	+80.0%	11.0	+22.7%		
Midland	12.4		12.3		-26.2%	-3.1%
West Midlands	13.1	-5.3%	16.1	-23.6%		
Nottinghamshire	11.2	+10.7%	16.0	-23.1%		

Figure 6.3: – continued						
Area 2000/01	Days sick per police officer	% difference	Days sick per support staff	% difference	% difference with BTP total	% difference with BTP total
London North	15.0		11.9		-10.7%	-6.3%
Metropolitan	10.9	+37.6%	11.3	-5.3%		
Thames Valley	14.3	+4.9%	11.5	-3.4%		
London Underground	14.3		8.1		-14.9%	-36.2%
Metropolitan	10.9	+37.6%	11.3	-5.3%		
London South	19.6		14.5		+16.6%	+14.2%
Hampshire	12.2	+60.6%	10.1	+43.6%		
Kent	11.6	+69.0%	11.5			
Metropolitan	10.9	+37.6%	11.3	-5.3%		
Sussex	11.2	+66.1%	11.6			
South West	20.1		19.0			
Avon & Somerset	13.4		12.3			
South Wales	15.0		14.1			
Force Total	16.8		12.7			
Provincial Average	12.4		12.7			

6.11 Since the introduction of the sickness absence policy in 1994 the BTP have introduced 34 further initiatives to reduce sickness absence. These include:

- Delphi computerised personnel system;
- physiotherapy;
- research into shift patterns;
- return to work interviews;
- monthly monitoring of sickness absences by Force management team and Police Committee;

- provision of counselling services.

6.12 Despite these initiatives there has been a singular failure by BTP management to reduce sickness absence. Area management teams are in dispute with headquarters personnel department over the sickness statistics provided by DEPLHI, which they consider, are flawed and are now recording sickness absences locally using spreadsheets.

RECOMMENDATION 8

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends the BTP to examine its sickness recording practices and ensure a common and accurate recording mechanism across the Force is in place to provide accurate and timely data.

6.13 The BTP sickness policy dictates that all staff should be contacted within two days of reporting sick to ascertain what help that member of staff may require. Her Majesty's Inspector considers early intervention by management during the first few days of sickness to be an appropriate method of ensuring that the welfare of staff absent through sickness is addressed. Anecdotal evidence exists to suggest that this does not always happen. The success of such a procedure is dependent on the knowledge and skill of first line supervisors. He was therefore disappointed to learn that management training for newly promoted sergeants had fallen into abeyance and that little training existed for support staff in supervisory and management roles. He was re-assured of the commitment of the Force in conjunction with National Police Training to running management skills modules and would urge the Force to address this lacuna as soon as possible.

6.14 *'Lost Time'* urged police forces to adopt the Bradford Formula (BF) to analyse sickness absences where $S^2 D = \text{Score}$ where **S** = number of sickness absence episodes in the last 365 days and **D** = total number of days sickness absence in the last 365 days. Thus, three officers each with 14 days sickness absence could be represented:

- one continuous episode of 14 days = $1 \times 1 \times 14 = 14$ points
- seven episodes each of 2 days duration = $7 \times 7 \times 14 = 686$ points
- fourteen episodes each of 1 day's duration = $14 \times 14 \times 14 = 2744$ points

6.15 Whilst headquarters personnel appeared to be cognisant of the Bradford Formula, area senior management did not. This should feature as one of the criteria considered in the assessment for promotion and transfer to specialist posts. In some police forces sickness absence is commented upon during annual appraisal. *'Lost Time'* considered this approach to be good practice provided it is done with some sensitivity and the use of accurate records which allow reasonable sickness following an injury on duty to be distinguished from other sickness absence.

6.16 While HMIC has conducted initial analysis this is by no means conclusive. Her Majesty's Inspector continues to be concerned about the very high levels of sickness across the Force that is not reflected in direct comparisons with Home Office police forces. If sickness rates could be reduced

to the national average this would provide an additional 22 police officers available for deployment each day.

RECOMMENDATION 9

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that the Force conduct a more detailed examination of this analysis and information with a view to reduce sickness to the national average.

Grievance Procedure

6.17 During the 1998 Inspection Her Majesty's Inspector heard much disquiet expressed about the grievance procedures and some officers and civilians had a deep mistrust of the grievance procedure and even perceive it as 'career limiting'. Her Majesty's Inspector recommended that the grievance procedure be reviewed and re-launched as part of a revitalised employee relations strategy. He was therefore very disappointed to learn that the 'new grievance procedure' had yet to be launched and was still being audited for compliance with the Human Rights Act, especially as some police forces had completed this work many months ago.

6.18 Since 1998 the number of grievances made have fluctuated from 19 in 1998 to 29 in 1999/00 to 17 in 2000/01. The percentage number of grievances resolved at stage I have increased over the same time period from 21% to 35%. Her Majesty's Inspector is pleased to see that the use of first contact officers have helped to contribute to an increase in early resolution. However its value to management as well as to staff needs to be restated and insists that any perceived 'stigma' attached to those wishing to use it must be removed.

RECOMMENDATION 10

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that the Force complete the auditing of the 'new grievance procedure' immediately and re-launch the process as a matter of urgency and in the interim specific steps are put in place to raise the level of confidence of all staff in utilising the grievance procedure.

VII Best Value

7.1 In the current policing plan the Force and the Police Committee make a commitment to introduce ‘Best Value’, the obligation placed by the Local Government Act 1999 on all local authorities including police authorities, to review their services in a five-year programme to ensure that they are effective, efficient, economical and subject to continuous improvement. The Best Value reviews (BVRs) must:

- challenge – the purpose of the service;
- compare – performance with others;
- consult – all users of the service; and
- compete – to ensure the service is competitive.

7.2 This voluntary commitment (the BTP is not covered by the legislation) will provide a clear framework for organisational improvement. Furthermore, there is an opportunity to learn lessons from other forces, in which Best Value was introduced in April 2000, and to ensure that the review programme is fully integrated within the new strategic plan (see Section II). Her Majesty’s Inspector is pleased to note the contacts already established with some other forces that are enabling good practice to be adopted from the outset.

7.3 The Police Committee has agreed to take on a role similar to that of police authorities in other forces, although being much smaller than such authorities, those arrangements are, of necessity, being adapted and streamlined. The programme will be monitored at the Committee’s five meetings each year and ‘challenge panels’ will be established for each review, modelled on those introduced successfully in some other forces.

7.4 It is planned to conduct three ‘pilot’ reviews this year; on absence through sickness, community and race relations; and the management of crime. A good choice of subjects since they are all central to improving efficiency and effectiveness.

7.5 Her Majesty’s Inspector suggests that the word ‘pilot’ should not be used. Review methodologies have been thoroughly tested in other forces and, in spite of its national structure and different arrangements for funding and accountability, the BTP should be in a position to ‘get it right first time’ and complete reviews that lead to significant improvements in terms of cost and quality. During the first BVRs, however, it is important that the range of tools to enable the ‘4 Cs’ to be applied, the decision making processes, and the procedures for ensuring reviews lead to action are documented for future use. Tools and procedures should include:

- a pre-defined staged process for the conduct of reviews;
- process mapping;
- activity based costing;
- methods of analysing the strengths and weaknesses of reviewed services, eg, PEST and SWOT analyses, Business Excellence Model, etc;

- benchmarking strategy;
- consultation strategy;
- competition and procurement strategies;
- option appraisal systems;
- an approach to quantifying efficiency gains.

7.6 The above list may, at first sight, appear daunting and imply that Best Value reviews are long, complex, bureaucratic processes. Her Majesty's Inspector suggests that, not being bound by the legislation, the BTP has the opportunity to strike a reasonable balance between full compliance with statutory requirements and a streamlined approach that will produce maximum benefits for the resources applied. It should be borne in mind that the process is not an end in itself: the ultimate goal is an improvement in the quality of services delivered to the public.

7.7 A comprehensive proposal for the sickness BVR has been approved by the Police Committee and work is underway, based soundly on PRINCE II (projects in controlled environments) methodology. It is being managed and staffed by a reconfigured corporate development department, the intention being to involve staff from relevant departments and all areas in each review. In this way, by fully integrating the review programme with other elements of strategic planning and performance management, it is intended to resource the programme with only one additional post in corporate development department. At the time of Inspection there were still unfilled vacancies in the department and Her Majesty's Inspector stresses the importance of ensuring that the posts required are identified and filled at the earliest opportunity.

7.8 The deputy chief constable has lead responsibility for Best Value. He and other key staff have clearly grasped the underlying principles and implications of this new approach to continuous improvement. They appreciate, for example, that it is much more than another vague term to replace 'value for money', involving a comprehensive framework and methodology for fundamentally challenging existing services and the way in which they are undertaken. This does not mean, of course, that 'quick wins' that emerge during reviews cannot, where appropriate, be implemented promptly. Her Majesty's Inspector welcomes the initiative shown by the Force and the Committee in adopting Best Value and will monitor progress with interest.

VIII Race and Diversity

Staffing the organisation

8.1 One of the two national policing priorities issued by the Home Secretary is:

To increase trust and confidence in policing amongst minority ethnic communities.

The British Transport Police is well placed to advance the increase in trust and confidence as the new Chief Constable has a wealth of experience gained from policing within the Metropolitan Police Service that particularly equips him to tackle this priority.

8.2 For police forces to achieve this there is also a need to build trust and confidence amongst ethnic minority staff. The BTP lay claim to have been monitoring the recruitment, retention and progression of ethnic minority staff for ten years. This function is overseen by the head of personnel. In 1990 there were only ten staff from visible ethnic minority communities, by the end of 2001 the BTP projection is that the number will have increased to around 70 or 3.3% of police staff. The Force has a target to reach 8.4% by 2010 that equates to 177 police staff on current figures. The Force is not complacent about its success and acknowledges that it has a long way yet to go to achieve the target. The number of ethnic minority staff in managerial and supervisory roles amount to seven sergeants, one inspector and one chief inspector. Figure 8.1 provides a representation of police officers of minority ethnic origin.

Figure 8.1: Police officers by ethnic origin

	Male	Female	Total
Black Caribbean	14	1	15
Black African	3	1	4
Black Other	8	3	11
Indian	12	3	15
Pakistani	6	0	6
Chinese	1	0	1
Other	11	3	14
Total	55	11	66

8.3 The highest ranking visible ethnic minority officer is a chief inspector who undertakes an operational role on London South area. The highest ranking female officer is a detective chief inspector who is based at the North West area. Whilst females account for 51% of the population they only account for 13% of police officers within the Force and 9.2% of the CID. A similar picture of low representation emerges for the number of visible ethnic minority officers.

8.4 Whilst minority ethnic officers constitute 3.1% of the Force they only form 1.9% of the CID and only 0.35% are performing a supervisory role within the department. Despite the good work being completed by the Force there is still a clear need for more adequate representation of female and ethnic minority officers in CID and the BTP as a whole. It is also noted that there are no police officers from ethnic minority backgrounds based at headquarters who would be seen as role models for the Force.

RECOMMENDATION 11

Her Majesty's Inspector therefore recommends that action be taken to increase the representation of female and ethnic minorities within the Force and the CID and that there is a greater representation of ethnic minority officers based at headquarters.

Figure 8.2: Ranks of police officers of ethnic origin

Area	C/insp	Insp	D/sgt	Sgt	Dc	Pc	Totals
Scotland	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
North West	0	1	0	0	0	5	6
North East	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Midland	0	0	0	0	0	8	8
South West	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
London North	0	0	0	1	3	7	11
London South	1	0	1	2	1	13	18
London Underground	0	0	0	3	1	16	20
Headquarters	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Totals	1	1	1	6	5	52	66

8.5 The picture of staffing diversity within the BTP is represented in the table at Figure 8.3. In 2000/01 the BTP managed to recruit five police officers from visible ethnic minority communities and lost three through wastage. During the same time period 28 support staff from visible ethnic minority communities were recruited and nine were lost through wastage. This left a net gain of two police officers and 19 support staff. Of the three police officers who left, one retired on an ill-health pension and the remainder transferred to the Metropolitan Police Service. Of the nine support staff, one was dismissed for unsatisfactory performance, three came to the end of fixed term contracts, one took early retirement and the remainder resigned from their posts.

Figure 8.3: Staffing Diversity					
	98/99	99/00	00/01	%change from 99/00 to 00/01	Provincial Forces Average 00/01
Police officers – strength	2,113	2,091	2,109	0.9	2,409.9
Police officers – female	270	273	276	1.1	423.8
% of total	12	13	13	1.1	17.6
Police officer – ethnic minority,	53	61	66	8.2	46.2
% of total	2.5	2.9	3.1	8.2	1.9
Civilians – strength FTE	456.5	481.3	537.7	11.7	1,131.5
Civilian staff FTE – female	306.9	315.4	335.6	6.4	703.2
% of total	67.2	65.5	62.4		62.1
Civilian staff FTE - ethnic minority	38.9	41.7	59.9	43.8	52.9
% of total	8.5	8.6	17.8		4.7
Special Constabulary – total	33	68	68	0.0	292.3
Special Constabulary - female	4	6	6	0.0	95
% of total	12	8.8	8.8	0.0	32.5
Special Constabulary – ethnic minority	2	6	6	0.0	7.9
% of total	6	8.8	8.8	0.0	2.7

8.6 It is not clear what effect exit interviews are having on the control and understanding of staff wastage or indeed whether this tactic has in the past been generally developed.

RECOMMENDATION 12

Her Majesty’s Inspector recommends that the Force follow up every departure with an exit interview designed to obtain a true picture of why staff from all backgrounds no longer wish to be part of the BTP and put in place measures to learn from these interviews.

Her Majesty’s Inspector also suggests that the Force may benefit from collaborative working in the recruitment of ethnic minority staff with Home Office police forces and look to the arrangements in place between Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire as an example of good practice.

8.7 The number of female police officers has seen a slight increase over the past year, but the percentage number remains significantly below the provincial average of 16.8%. Focus groups of female officers expressed concern about the attitude displayed by older officers who did not treat females as equals and about the problem of ill-fitting items of uniform, such as boots and stab resistant vests. Her Majesty’s Inspector suggests that the Force explore ways of overcoming the difficulties of ill fitting uniforms for female officers and learn from the experiences of Home Office police forces.

8.8 Whilst the current status of the grievance procedure is commented on in Section VI female officers indicated that they had little or no confidence in the system and that they felt there was no long

term support for officers who may challenge inappropriate behaviour. Her Majesty's Inspector has already made a recommendation concerning the grievance procedure in 1998 and in Section VI of this report. He therefore strongly urges the Force to address the lack of confidence in the grievance procedure and insists that any perceived 'stigma' attached to those wishing to use it must be removed.

8.9 At the time of the pre-inspection the Support Association for Minority Ethnic staff (SAME) was officially launched. SAME evolved from a seminar and a series of workshops in 2000 involving the BTP Federation, the Black Police Association (BPA) and interested staff. It is an inclusive organisation that welcomes membership from all staff, but full membership is limited to those of an ethnic minority background and includes those of Irish, Scots or Welsh origin. The staff involved in setting up of the organisation received a mixed reaction from senior managers, whilst some were extremely helpful others were less so and the perception of ethnic minority staff is that they are a problem and the culture is one of obstruction and isolation. Some managers were viewed as making it difficult for staff to attend SAME meetings and were not afforded the support or encouragement needed for this embryonic organisation to flourish. The Chief Constable is seeking ways to include SAME in the policy and decision making of the Force.

Race and community relations

The Strategy

8.10 The railway infrastructure impacts upon the population in the immediate vicinity of stations and railway property and, with this in mind, the BTP as a Force has sought to build and maintain a close liaison with a wide range of representative community groups. However the degree of consultation with the community is left largely to each of the area commanders and the level of accountability is restricted owing to a lack of an independent police authority. Therefore there is no uniform and established mechanism for accountability to the public.

8.11 The 1998 Inspection report included a recommendation "... that a *Community Relations Strategy is developed to give guidance on partnership arrangements with reference to the requirements of the Crime and Disorder legislation, as well as articulating the Force's responsibility to the travelling public, their representative organisations and the TOCs*".

8.12 Originally a community relations strategy was drafted to answer the recommendation. More recently a paper was put to the COG in September 2000 outlining two options for the development of a community and race relations strategy.

- the first option was a stand alone strategy document;
- the second option was an overarching strategy that facilitates the service of internal and external relationships and acts as an umbrella strategy designed to be a golden thread that impacts upon everything the Force does.

The second option was chosen but the launch was delayed pending the outcome of the Force restructuring to ensure that terminology was right.

8.13 The area commander for Scotland (assistant chief constable) was accountable for the community policing portfolio within Force as a whole and was responsible for the formulation of the strategy. (Since the Inspection this responsibility has moved temporarily to the assistant chief constable (operational support) pending the appointment of a new area commander for Scotland). The strategy

was launched in March 2001 and details how it will serve the community, how it will consult, how partnerships will be developed and how the Force will be accountable. In addition it has six commitments:

- improving partnerships;
- supporting travellers;
- supporting communities adjacent to railways;
- hate crime;
- valuing diversity;
- openness.

8.14 The implementation of this strategy requires a number of actions by key people within the organisation. The aim is to monitor and evaluate the strategy through performance indicators across a range of functional areas, rather than monitor as a stand alone policy. The result of this has been an apparent lack of co-ordination across the Force, different interpretations of the strategy, a lack of formal implementation plans and an absence of robust monitoring and evaluation process. This may mean that it will be difficult to achieve the aspired progress or even recognise success if and when it is reached, particularly as area commanders and management appear to have considerable autonomy.

8.15 Implementation of the strategy ought to have seen the development of a Community and Race Relations Unit based at Force headquarters. Originally the chief inspector territorial operations had this as an additional role. Between the pre-inspection and formal Inspection a chief inspector was appointed with sole responsibility for community and race relations.

8.16 The Force accepts that the implementation of the community and race relations (CRR) strategy has been hampered by poor marketing of the CRR Workbook which was sent out to all staff (police and support) through the internal post with an explanatory letter. The 'Workbook' was bought in from Kent County Constabulary, where it had been successfully used, and adapted for local use. Staff associations were consulted in the initial stages of re-crafting of the workbook but not its implementation and have since distanced themselves from it. It was not well received amongst the workforce, completion was a duty requirement and time should have been set aside for its completion with a certificate of completion signed by a supervisor and sent to the personnel unit on each area and department.

8.17 It appears that some senior managers within the Force were not amongst the first to complete the workbook and were therefore not seen as leading by example. Many staff were concerned that the workbook could be used against them in the form of disciplinary action if they revealed any latent prejudices, despite the fact that they retained the only copy. Advice from staff associations was not to complete the workbook. This resulted in management issuing a directive about completion being a duty requirement and disciplinary action would follow. This has led to negative publicity in both the Police Review and national newspapers. At the time of Inspection 80.6% of the organisation have completed the task although there are variations across areas and departments. It is the view of Her Majesty's Inspector that this was an ineffectual means of communicating such an important message which has led to some unnecessary resistance and hostility. There appeared to have been no effective means of insuring or reinforcing the learning from the workbook. The Force recognises that it is now time to

move on from this and the Force is exploring the possibility of utilising practical operational guidance issued by Avon & Somerset Constabulary.

RECOMMENDATION 13

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that to improve the understanding of race and diversity issues:

- **the Force bring forward the debate on diversity issues and include all staff associations in consultation;**
- **the Force undertake work to restore the confidence of all staff to prepare and create a receptive climate before additional training is delivered;**
- **that action plans be drawn up which are subsequently monitored and evaluated.**

Race and community relations

Fair access

Figure 8.4: Racial incidents

	1998/99	1999/00	2000/01	% change 99/00 to 00/01	Provincial Forces Average 00/01
No. of recorded racial incidents	177	364	465	27.7	595.4
141a % subject to further investigation	100	100	100	0.0	96.5
No. of racially aggravated crimes	data not available	data not available	372	N/A	data not available
141b % detected racial aggravated crimes	data not available	data not available	40.1	N/A	47.5

8.18 The number of recorded racial incidents has risen quickly over the past three years. This may well reflect the willingness of the public to approach the police service as a whole to report such crimes in addition to a better BTP response to race hate crime generally. Within the railway industry there has been a drive to ensure that travellers on the railway network have valid tickets, which has led in some instances to railway staff being abused and assaulted. Both the railway industry and the BTP have taken a robust stance in ensuring offenders are brought to justice.

8.19 Whilst 100% of all racist incidents reported are investigated there is however, little evidence of any proactive work being undertaken by area commanders to build trust and confidence with members of ethnic minority communities. Her Majesty's Inspector urges the organisation to review how it can establish and improve local relationships with members of ethnic minority communities and Her Majesty's Assistant Inspector for Race and Diversity has provided the Force with suggestions and advice as to how this might be achieved.

8.20 Whilst the Force has a policy on the use of stop and search powers, it does not have a position statement on recommendation 61 from the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry on the recording of

stops and stop and searches. The number of PACE stop and searches is quite low in comparison with the provincial forces average. The number of stop and searches does feature as a personal performance indicator within some areas of the BTP. Her Majesty's Inspector would encourage the Force to examine how effective the stop and search is before using it as an indicator. Her Majesty's Inspector believes quality rather than quantity being the key to success. Examination of the ratio of white people stopped and searched as compared to those from ethnic minority backgrounds indicates that the Force stops fewer people from ethnic minority backgrounds than the provincial forces average.

Figure 8.5 PACE stop and searches

	1998/99	1999/00	2000/01	% change 99/00 to 00/01	Provincial Forces Average 00/01
138a PACE stops/1000 white population	3.9	4.6	4.4	-4.1	10.9
138b PACE stops/1000 ethnic population	5.7	7.6	7.3	-4.1	25.3
Ratio white : ethnic stop and search	1:1.5	1:1.7	1:1.7	0.0	1:2.3

8.21 The BTP has said that it tries to identify representative groups in order to monitor the use of stop and search powers. There is no independent scrutiny and Her Majesty's Inspector would encourage the Force to look to good practice identified in other police forces, such as Bedfordshire Police, in the use of independent representative bodies to monitor the use of stop and search powers.

Race and community relations

Visibility and accessibility

8.22 At the time of this Inspection Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary was also undertaking a thematic review of the visibility and accessibility of Home Office police forces. During the pre-inspection phase it became apparent that the BTP was not particularly visible even at London mainline stations. Whilst targeted high visibility patrols at peak commuter times ensured a degree of presence on railway station concourses, this does not necessarily translate into accessibility. The 2001/02 policing plan details the results of public consultation, aiming for greater visibility, more effective communication with the public and train operating companies, openness about response times and clarifying the differing responsibilities of the BTP and Home Office police forces.

8.23 Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary consulted with the Rail Passenger Committee for England and Wales and the London Transport User Committee as part of this Inspection, the bodies representing the interests of rail and underground passengers. Both committees expressed concern about the level of begging and drunkenness, the vulnerability of persons on late night trains, the lack of officers, difficulty in finding how to contact the British Transport Police and locate their police stations and the time taken to respond to calls for assistance. The pre-inspection team found that the signage to BTP police stations at many railway stations was either poor or non-existent. All stations have an outside telephone link for public use if the police station is unattended. The instructions for the use of such telephones were often not clearly marked and sometimes confusing. There was little if any public notices on display on how, when and where to make contact with the BTP and no

provision for non-English speaking travellers and the needs of travellers at remote stations are overlooked.

RECOMMENDATION 14

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that to improve the public profile of the BTP:

- **a review should be undertaken of how it interfaces with its customers including a study of the signage and access to its police stations;**
- **the review should revisit the issue of the level of public awareness of the Force and finally;**
- **should increase the accountability of area commanders by requiring them to consult regularly with local representatives groups of the travelling and residential population.**

IX Information Technology

Strategy

9.1 The Force technology strategy, part of the overall Force communications strategy, was approved by the Police Committee in February 1992, with the radio strategy being approved in 1993. In following years until 1995 the technology strategy was regularly reviewed with changes being again approved by the Police Committee. In 1995, Her Majesty's Inspector recommended a formal review of the strategy to ensure it continued to meet the changing needs of the organisation. An outside engineering consultancy who originally assisted with the production of the strategy, were commissioned to conduct the review.

9.2 This review was published in July 1997. Its aim was to examine the strategy and to determine whether any changes or refinements were needed to take into account progress on implementation and lessons learned, and internal and external changes since it was developed. It concluded that the strategy had broadly met the needs of the Force, with the focus being the provision of improved systems to support the Force and management information to allow Force managers to monitor and improve efficiency and effectiveness.

9.3 The question of reshaping the strategy was addressed. The review stated the objectives of the future technology strategy should be:

- continuing to provide high quality services to operational users, especially by providing maximum system interoperability, with a target of single data entry;
- maximising the interoperability of Force systems with those operated by other police forces, the courts, Department of Transport and CPS, providing benefits to the BTP in areas such as prosecution and crime that depend on efficient information exchange;
- providing focus for the technology department's activities and a basis for prioritising them.

9.4 The external influences were seen as the National Strategy for Police Information Systems (NSPIS), the Public Safety Radio Communications Project (Airwave) and the Lord Chancellor's Department Information System Strategies. There were a series of recommendations made not all of which were actioned.

The most pressing issues were seen as:

- to upgrade the computer infrastructure before it became incapable of supporting the strategic applications. (This was done by moving to a Windows NT platform);
- to provide additional information system support to crime related activities (i.e. PINS replacement). (This was not done apart from providing some basic data warehousing allowing searching of the PINS database via a browser);
- to resolve the incompatibilities between UHF radio systems in London above ground and VHF below ground. (The VHF coverage above ground has been strengthened).

It concluded that:

- general approach with BTP systems managed by the BTP staff and maintenance contracted out was appropriate;
- basic telephone services and ICCS communications support was competitively priced, but suffering low service levels;
- data communications had opportunities for cost savings of £100,000 p.a.

9.5 Regrettably, and somewhat understandably since the concentration on millennium issues, activity pursuing the recommendations made in the review has been sporadic. Also, it is difficult to measure the relative compliance with the past strategy and its plans due to the time period elapsed since it was produced. The original technology strategy is now approaching its tenth birthday and the review its fifth birthday. The technology department no longer regards the original strategy or its review in 1997 as living documents to be progressed. This has inevitably led to a certain amount of frustration within the user community with the lack of progress in meeting their information needs, especially the lack of desktop facilities for operational officers to access vital information systems.

9.6 Since the original review in 1997, there has been no formal review of the technology strategy. The Force corporate strategy expired in April 2001, just as the new Chief Constable came into office. Under his leadership, the replacement corporate strategy is in preparation by COG and FMT. This should provide the basis for the strategic direction of the Force, reflecting its present and future business needs, and it is on this that any technology strategy must be based.

9.7 ACPO encourages forces to have an information management strategy. This entails them examining their business processes, which define information management needs, that is what information is needed to provide a policing service, who needs it and in what form. This in turn defines the information systems needs, the applications needed to collect, collate and manage the information, the information technology needs, and the infrastructure needed to support the applications.

RECOMMENDATION 15

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends production of completely new technology and communications strategies and plans to support delivery of the aims of the corporate strategy. This involves the taking of business drivers from that strategy and their translation into strategic plans for maintenance and development of current systems and business cases for replacement or augmentation by new systems.

9.8 The production of the strategies, their regular review and updating, and recording of action taken in support of them should form the basis for the delivery of improvement to the organisation. The organisation should also consider whether it needs to increase the use of benefits management and measurement.

Project management

9.9 A recognised project management methodology in an organisation provides it with a structured auditable method for the control of change, and an opportunity not to repeat mistakes, as lessons can be

learned and applied to future developments. Project management in the Force, when done, was based on the old system adopted by British Rail. PRINCE II (Projects In Controlled Environments) is the methodology adopted for the management of projects in the corporate development department of the BTP and many other organisations, but is not widespread in the BTP other than in that department.

RECOMMENDATION 16

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends the adoption and use of a single project management methodology throughout the organisation, that for compatibility should be PRINCE II.

9.10 In the past, the IT User Group has been used to capture requirements at a local level with the strategic view being provided by the assistant chief constable (operations support) and the IT manager. There is a need to reduce the side-tracking of resources into non-strategic aims, whilst retaining the flexibility to include activities necessary because of changes to the business, and ensure sufficient user input and ownership of the process to meet operational needs and ensure buy-in.

RECOMMENDATION 17

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends the use of a strategic development group, consisting of senior managers from all business areas, to form a programme executive steering the prioritisation and resourcing of the projects resulting from the strategies.

9.11 Formation of the strategic development group would necessitate considerable effort in informing and training members regarding their roles and responsibilities on programme and project boards, supporting project teams delivering the strategy. A clear distinction will have to be made between those resources dedicated to supporting the day-to-day business and those dealing with future developments. Some of the recommendations from the 1997 review are still sound, and after validation in the business area, should appear in any new strategies produced.

Budgetary provisions and projections

9.12 Due to the expiry of the strategic plan, real difficulties are emerging for the technology department and the Force in planning the business activities and the level of budget required for their support. For example, to provide the technology department's approved level of resources to deliver the desired level of service since reorganisation would require a budget increase of 28%. This means that the department runs well below required and authorised staffing levels.

9.13 Difficulty is also experienced in the transitional process for planning and procurement of systems, based on former British Rail procedures, and illustrated by the intelligence project. The project board was formed only after tenders were received, to evaluate and decide on a product. Only after the product was chosen, was a business case prepared to support its acquisition. It had to go to the Police Committee to be authorised. Within the department the ensuing difficulty is attributed to a

perception that authorisation had to be sought from the British Railways Board representative and that the Board had been replaced by the Strategic Rail Authority. However this interpretation is challenged by the Police Committee as the delay was owing to the interregnum between chief constables. Eventually purchase approval was obtained, but only after considerable delay to the project. Use of a recognised methodology such as PRINCE II could have ensured full consultation with the Police Committee at a much earlier stage and possibly the delegation of authority to proceed at the business case stage much earlier in the process.

How priorities are decided

9.14 Lack of strategic direction can cause technology priorities to be determined partly by levels of complaints/vocalisation of needs by the users and partly by the pragmatic views of the suppliers, the technology department staff. There is evidence to show that this is the case. Organisations must recognise the vital role played by the application of technology in all the business processes carried out by them, and the necessity of providing strategic rigour in decision making. This recognition could usefully be shown by the inclusion of the technology head in the highest level discussions and decision making, as is done in similar organisations, since it is on his resources that the burden of implementation will fall.

Departmental structure

9.15 The department is headed up by an experienced professional with a loyal and dedicated staff, who show a lot of respect for him. The department has been recently reorganised in an attempt to improve its communication with and service to the rest of the organisation who form its customers. This improvement is however being limited by the inadequate budget provision to fill all the roles identified and approved, and the spread of skills in the department.

9.16 Outsourced IT supply and maintenance requires skills in contract management rather than engineering. Succession planning for those staff recruited as engineers who are approaching retirement needs examination. New skills requirements may give an opportunity for transfer of contract management to the procurement department and removal of a layer from the existing management structure. This could have a positive effect on the resources available for vacant posts in the department. Devolving budgeting responsibilities as low as possible in the technology department could have a positive effect on their management by individual section heads.

RECOMMENDATION 18

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that the management structure and responsibilities of the technology department staff be re-examined to provide a best fit for their new focus.

Data protection

9.17 Whilst there is a data protection officer in post to conduct audits of the use of data within the organisation, the post of technical support officer (information security) is one of those currently vacant due to budgetary restrictions. This is an unsatisfactory situation that should be rectified as soon as possible to ensure the Force is not vulnerable to attack through its information systems, especially in view of the increasing use of its systems to support intelligence, and look to Home Office forces for

models of successful implementation (e.g. Kent County Constabulary). Paragraph 9.33 looks at the related issue of the accuracy of PNC/Phoenix records where Force performance is some of the worst in the country.

Communications

9.18 The Force operates predominantly on one VHF channel for vehicles and VHF hand-portables within London to ensure coverage on the Underground system. VHF has national coverage, with transmissions steered towards the appropriate area control room dependent on the location of the vehicle. This is supplemented by UHF hand-portable radio schemes outside London. There are UHF schemes in London used for special events above ground, and for provincially based BTP officers who need to work in London. As some 40% of BTP staff work in the three London areas, the channels are very congested, and there is some concern for officer safety in overload situations. There is extensive use of both Force owned and personal mobile phones to overcome coverage and congestion problems.

9.19 The BTP do not take 999 calls from the public directly, but take emergency calls from railway staff and the public on the London Underground system. Each area has its own control centre supervised by a sergeant, whilst the three London areas are controlled by the management information and communications centre (MICC), supervised by an inspector. It has some traditional Force control functions, such as acting as the single destination for Freephone calls to British Transport Police, and bomb threat assessment.

9.20 It is administered by a chief inspector, but he has no overall responsibility for the other centres. Management of the MICC is by the superintendent (territorial operations) for London, based nearby, whilst each area communications centre is managed as part of its area. Staff in the MICC occupy HQ posts rather than being part of area establishment. Contrary to practice in similar organisations, there appeared to be no recognised communications strategy or development plan. It was also surprising to find no overall head of communications to act as champion for the communication function in the Force. It is interesting to note that whilst an IT user group has, as been mentioned earlier, been established to capture user level requirements and issues, the MICC, even though it is a primary user of many of the Force's IT systems, is not represented on the group.

9.21 Whilst an integrated communications control system (ICCS) is employed for control of radio transmissions and telephone calls, with the ability for one centre to take over another's work in fallback position, the module to allow automatic call distribution to balance the telephone workload between centres has not been installed. A precursor system to NSPIS command and control, the RAIL system is in use at each centre for incident control and logging, and is also used for recording crime details outside office hours when crime management centres are closed. This results in at least double entry of the crime information onto the RAIL and PINS crime systems and often a paper crime report.

9.22 The MICC has a structured training process involving use of the Oxford, Cambridge and RSA (OCR) diploma for call handling, as used in Thames Valley Police and Gloucestershire Constabulary, but this is not pursued in other areas within the BTP. The diploma is regarded as good practice and the Force is urged that this opportunity is made available to other areas and communication centre and CMC staff encouraged to obtain the qualification.

9.23 The Midland and South West areas are considering merging their area communication centres, but it is unclear what the possible fallback arrangements would be in the event of this occurring. The MICC appears to be running understaffed supplemented by overtime. This is owing to the high level of

sickness within the Force and the establishment appears too low, whilst there is some evidence of over-capacity at other area control rooms. This is of particular concern as operators are working rostered twelve-hour shifts, and overtime on top of this cannot be good for health or operational efficiency.

Figure 9.1: Staffing levels of Control Centres

Control	Chief Inspector	Inspector	Sergeant	Constable	CO4		Civilian		
					F/T	P/T	CO3	CO5	
									MICC
North East		1*	5		10				
Scotland					8				
North West			7	2	8				
Midland		1*	4	3	6				
South West			2		7	1			
Total	1	8	23	14	85	13	1	1	

Posts shown * are combined with other duties

Figure 9.2: Number of incidents recorded on RAIL within the BTP

	1998/99	1999/00	2000/01	% change 98/99 to 00/01
MICC	130,341	142,885	145,397	11.6
North East	28,772	28,977	27,536	-4.3
Scotland	17,210	25,011	25,754	49.6
North West	31,699	33,577	33,979	7.2
Midland	23,160	24,936	24,492	5.8
South West	14,273	18,904	20,034	40.4
Total	245,455	274,290	277,192	12.9

9.24 The MICC handles all incoming calls for incidents in the three London areas and nationally all mobile calls for BTP related incidents. Examination of data on incident handling indicates that the MICC handles 52% of all incidents recorded onto the RAIL command and control system, this does not include those incidents which are reported using a mobile phone and occur elsewhere. Excellent voice

and data network links exist over the entire rail network, which enable options to be explored for the way the communications control function is managed. This coupled with an NSPIS compliant Geographic Information System, recently installed for use in each centre, but not yet functional, will allow for calls to be received and incidents handled anywhere in England, Scotland or Wales.

RECOMMENDATION 19

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that a Best Value type review of the communications function be conducted as a matter of priority.

The review should include:-

- **Examination of the business case for options for the future for communications and call taking including:**
 - **consideration of the appointment of a senior manager with overall responsibility for the function;**
 - **production of a Communication Strategy and Development Plan;**
 - **examination of the potential to reduce the number of sites;**
 - **partnerships and outsourcing in call taking;**
 - **maximising civilianisation and the training and development of staff;**
 - **strategy for the provision of electronic services to the public and other customers.**

Intelligence

9.25 Her Majesty's Inspector has commented in paragraph 5.18 his views on the adoption of the NCIS national intelligence model. Further the Force recognised two years ago that it was not good at sharing information. This was partly due to its area based intelligence systems and structures, and partly because the force-wide RAIL and PINS systems, that contain most of the intelligence information, were not joined up, do not exchange information and are not suitable for use as force-wide intelligence systems. Analytical tools are used in areas and the Force Intelligence Bureau but can only work on restricted breadth of data.

9.26 Whilst information from locally held intelligence is used during briefings, especially the intranet briefing system used in the London Underground area, intelligence is not used as the core for briefing activity or preparation elsewhere. Even the London Underground area does not use this system to its fullest potential. This does not encourage officers to either supply or use intelligence to its maximum. Partly as a result of this recognition, and partly as a result of a previous HMIC Inspection, an intelligence strategy was prepared and is due for ratification in September. This included a requirements study that led to adoption of the National Intelligence Model and the procurement of a system to support it. Implementation of the system is underway by the same project team responsible for implementing the National Intelligence Model in the Force. This should be complete by the end of 2001.

9.27 It is hoped that training in the system and the Model that goes with it will make intelligence a priority for all officers. It should make intelligence visible and accessible throughout the organisation, and encourage the redeployment of staff to proactive intelligence gathering activities rather than relying on reactive measures. Her Majesty's Inspector urges the Force to grasp the opportunity of the introduction of the Model and the system to reappraise the way intelligence is gathered and used in the organisation.

9.28 This should focus especially on what might be regarded as community intelligence as well as crime intelligence, gathered from the public and partner staff and systems. It could also usefully include the role, territory and organisation of area intelligence bureaux and the Force Intelligence Bureau, and whether, with a force-wide system, these should be centrally managed and/or located, or left under the control of area commanders. It should also provide a method of encouraging interest by including feedback on the quality of intelligence supplied to be included in officers' personal development records and using intelligence output as the core of effort at both pre-planned and routine briefings. Further comment on the intelligence system is detailed in Section VII – Crime Management and Detection.

Crime Reporting

9.29 The PINS system, now over twenty years old and considerably altered since its original introduction, is used as the crime reporting and management system for the Force. It has no technical links with any other system in the Force, necessitating much double-keying of information in this and other systems.

9.30 Whilst in some areas PINS is used in its entirety for these two functions, in others, due to limitations of recording range on PINS, RAIL is used as a capture and storage system for crime report details and investigation logs. The use of RAIL for this purpose originated from a procedural instruction, but has not been fully adopted in all areas. It also means that there are severe limitations on the searching of crime and investigation data. This facility is not directly available to investigators, at least two systems have to be searched to obtain a complete record, and some of the analytical tools such as Watson, cannot be used on RAIL. Her Majesty's Inspector believes there is merit in examining the quality and effectiveness of the crime reporting and management process. It is possible it could be raised firstly by the adoption of a new interim computerised system prior to NSPIS crime, and then consolidating crime reporting into one centralised function, either as part of a multi or single function call handling centre. He also believes that it is worth examining whether crime management could be carried out at fewer locations.

NSPIS Migration

9.31 The Force has recently produced a position statement in respect of all its strategically important applications. This includes an assessment of the likely replacement dates by NSPIS applications. There are a number of gaps between critical replacement dates due to operational shortcomings with existing systems or unsupportability, and likely availability of replacement systems. Among the systems affected by this gap analysis are PINS, Payroll, and Finance. The Force will need to consider whether the gaps can be reduced either by stretching the life span of some existing systems or the purchase of commercial off the shelf systems to cover the interim periods.

PNC/Phoenix

9.32 All enquiries on PNC have to be carried out through area control rooms as there are no facilities for officers to conduct their own. This poses operational problems due to the congested radio channels,

only partially overcome by the use of mobile phones. Her Majesty's Inspector urges that consideration be given to extension of the provision of PNC enquiry facilities, perhaps through the Force intranet.

9.33 A review is being conducted by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary to ensure compliance of all police forces in respect of the accuracy and timeliness of data held on PNC. Until recently the full significance of this situation was not widely appreciated. Unless reversed urgently it is for policing nationally a potential scandal of awesome proportion. The ACPO compliance requirement is for arrest/summons reports to be placed on PNC within 24 hours (one day). As of 31 July 2001, it took an average of 69 days for the BTP to create an arrest/summons report on PNC. This places it in the bottom quartile of forces in Great Britain. Performance in respect of reduction in the number of outstanding impending prosecutions is showing an increase of 1% cases rather than a required decrease of 4% for every two week period. This also places the Force in the bottom quartile of forces. Her Majesty's Inspector has grave concerns over the lack of improvement and the lack of urgency attached to this task by the Force.

RECOMMENDATION 20

Her Majesty's Inspector recommends that immediate remedial action is taken to decrease the number of days taken for arrest/summons reports towards the ACPO requirement and decrease the number of outstanding impending prosecutions.

X Complaints and Discipline

10.1 The deputy chief constable, based at Force headquarters, oversees complaints and misconduct matters for the Force. All complaints are administered through the complaints and discipline department at headquarters, where central monitoring takes place. A computer based programme is used to record and monitor complaint investigation and provides management information on officers and complaint type.

10.2 The department is led by a superintendent and has investigators based at Force headquarters and at the satellite complaints and discipline office at York. The York office is led by a chief inspector. The department maintains good relations with the Police Complaints Authority and the Crown Prosecution Service. The York office also deal with Scottish area complaints and, as a result, have developed particular expertise in relation to Scottish criminal law and liaison with Procurators Fiscal.

10.3 The department has yet to move from a complaint and discipline to professional standards footing. A paper outlining the proposed concept has been put to the COG for discussion.

RECOMMENDATION 21

Her Majesty’s Inspector recommends that the Force considers the creation of a professional standards department and look to Home Office police forces, such as Kent County Constabulary, for a model to follow.

10.4 The department is currently being restructured which began in April 2000 and will be completed by December 2001. This restructuring includes the recruitment of two civilian investigators which will release two police officer posts. The investigation of complaints against officers is normally undertaken by nominated officers and allocated according to region, the York office, investigates complaints in Scotland, the North East, North West and the northern half of the Midlands and the London office the remainder.

10.5 The table at Figure 10.1 indicates that over the past three years there has been a welcome decline in the number of complaints and complaint cases recorded. In 1998/99 there were 438 complaints and 240 complaint cases recorded, by 2000/01 that number had fallen to 388 and 227 respectively. When compared with provincial averages for 2000/01 the number of complaints recorded per 100 officers indicates a favourable position, being significantly below average.

Figure 10.1: Complaints Against Police					
SELECTED INDICATORS	1998/99	1999/00	2000/01	% change 1999/00 to 2000/01	Provincial Average 00/01
Total Complaints Recorded	438	420	388	-7.6	N/A
Total Complaints Cases	240	248	227	-8.5	383.4
Complaints Recorded per 100 Officers	20.9	20.3	18.6	-8.0	23.2

Figure 10.1: Complaints Against Police – continued

SELECTED INDICATORS	1998/99	1999/00	2000/01	% change 1999/00 to 2000/01	Provincial Average 00/01
Number of cases referred to PCA	10	10	4	-60.0	N/A
Number of cases supervised by PCA	6	5	2	-60.0	N/A
Total Complaints Completed	410	400	440	10.0	602.5
% Complaints Substantiated	2	4	4	0.0	N/A
% Complaints Informally Resolved	35.4	32.0	30.5	4.7	34.1
% Complaints withdrawn	12.7	13.3	14.1	0.8	N/A
% Complaints unsubstantiated	24.6	23.3	35.5	12.2	N/A
% Complaints given dispensation by PCA	23.7	25.2	16.1	9.1	N/A
Average Investigation Time (excludes informal resolution)	101	115	143	24.3	105.4
% Completed 120 Days or Less	75	60	48	20.0	73
Complaint cases arising from arrest	91	85	79	-7.1	N/A
Complaints arising from arrest	207	180	147	-18.3	N/A
Complaints arising from use of handcuffs	32	32	25	-21.9	N/A
Complaints arising from use of batons	10	10	4	-60.0	N/A

10.6 The percentage number of substantiated complaints has remained steady over the past two years at 4%. Whilst the 2000/01 provincial average was not available this figure is significantly higher than the provincial average in 1999/00. The percentage number informally resolved has seen a gradual decline from 35.4% in 1998/99 to 30.5% in 2000/01 and is below the provincial average of 34.1%. Her Majesty's Inspector urges the Force to increase the number of informally resolved complaints as it is a process that quickly addresses the dissatisfaction of the member of the public and allows resources to be devoted to other investigations, which are not suitable for resolution.

10.7 Her Majesty's Inspector was disappointed to note that there had been a decline in the percentage number of complaint investigations completed within 120 days. Performance over the past three years has seen a decline from 75% in 1998/99 to 48% in 2000/01. This figure is significantly below the provincial average of 73%. The recent influx of new staff will have had a bearing on this decline, as will recent major investigations, and the distance that officers in the York offices have to travel to interview complainants.

RECOMMENDATION 22

Her Majesty's Inspector acknowledges the work being undertaken to improve performance but nevertheless recommends that action continues to be taken to reduce the average time taken to complete full investigations into complaints against members of the Force, whilst increasing the proportion of files completed within 120 days.

10.8 The table at Figure 10.2 indicates the types of complaint received by the Force. Her Majesty's Inspector is pleased to note that there has been a reduction in a number of categories, particularly, assault, oppressive conduct/harassment and unlawful/unnecessary arrest. He is aware that many complaints are directed towards staff in the three London Areas and that they tend to be 'compensation' led complaints. He is pleased to note that the head of the department has a strong grasp of the 62 pending civil cases made against the Force and that lessons learnt from these cases are promulgated to all staff through induction and promotion training as well as through monthly management team meetings.

Figure 10.2: Types of Complaint

SELECTED INDICATORS	1998/99	1999/00	2000/01	% change 1999/00 to 2000/01	Provincial Average 00/01
Serious non sexual assault	3	3	2	-33.3	N/A
Sexual assault	2	1	2	100.0	N/A
Other assault	114	107	99	-7.5	N/A
Oppressive conduct/harassment	61	53	44	-17.0	N/A
Unlawful/unnecessary arrest or detention	30	35	19	-45.7	N/A
Racially discriminatory behaviour	7	9	7	-22.2	N/A
Perjury/irregularity in relation to evidence	11	15	5	-66.6	N/A
Corrupt practice	0	0	2	200.0	N/A
Mishandling of property	9	10	16	60.0	N/A
Breach of Code A on stop and search	6	5	1	-80.0	N/A
Breach of Code B on searching of premises and seizure of property	1	4	7	75.0	N/A
Breach of Code C on detention, treatment and questioning	11	7	10	42.9	N/A

Figure 10.2: Types of Complaint – continued

SELECTED INDICATORS	1998/99	1999/00	2000/01	% change 1999/00 to 2000/01	Provincial Average 00/01
Breach of Code D on identification parades	0	2	0	-100.0	N/A
Breach of Code E on tape recording	0	2	5	150.0	N/A
Multiple or unspecific breaches/ not allocated specific code	0	1	0	-100.0	N/A
Other – neglect of duty	60	58	50	-13.8	N/A
Irregularity in procedure	3	12	8	-33.3	N/A
Incivility	72	66	69	4.5	N/A
Traffic irregularity	3	4	6	50.0	N/A
Others	45	26	36	38.5	N/A
TOTAL	438	420	388	-7.6	N/A

10.9 During the pre-inspection phase of this Inspection an audit was conducted of a broad range of complaint files and Her Majesty's Inspector is satisfied that the Force discharges its responsibility for dealing with complaints satisfactorily and that the quality of file presentation is of a high standard.

Appendix “A”

Response to recommendations from 1998 Inspection report

1. Her Majesty’s Inspector recommends that, within the spirit of the Police Act 1996, the Police Committee should publish this report and forward a copy of it, together with their comments, those of the Chief Constable and any responses made to the Chief Constable’s submission, to the Secretary of State for the Environment, Transport and Regions.

Police Committee have sent copies to the TOCs, Railtrack and LU. A report has been sent to the Secretary of State for the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions.

2. An urgent review be undertaken of the internal communication and consultation strategies and procedures in order to facilitate the decision making process and a fuller involvement of staff in the management of change.

Chief Constable’s Communications Seminars have taken place throughout the Force. Force Intranet introduced, access provided to all staff. BTP Federation has declined an invitation to attend FMT. Area level Federation reps attend AMT meetings.

3. The Force implements a system of business planning at area level.

Area policing plans were implemented and copies have been forwarded to HMIC with pre inspection papers.

4. A review be conducted into the existing devolved budget arrangements and that key budget holders should be involved in this process to better represent the users’ view.

Review being conducted by the finance and administration director.

5. More effective communication and consultation arrangements with area personnel officers and other key members of the staff in the personnel department are established. This will enable them to contribute to a more useful human resources strategy following on from the new strategic plan.

Roles of personnel officers were upgraded to improve the consultation on a wide range of human resource issues. Regular personnel meetings held involving areas and FHQ, to enable more effective involvement in policy formulation.

6. The issue of track safety training is addressed urgently to ensure that all officers obtain current safety certificates without further delay.

Delivery of track safety training package based on a CD-ROM supported by a briefing note.

7. The grievance procedure be reviewed and relaunched as part of a revitalised employee relations strategy. Its value to management as well as staff needs to be restated and any perceived ‘stigma’ attached to those wishing to use it must be removed.

First contact training arranged. A new grievance procedure policy has been prepared and will be relaunched once first contact advisors have been trained.

8. An urgent review of IT training be conducted in order to invest ownership in one department and ensure that appropriate resources are allocated to the provision of such training.

IT training package formulated proposed to FMT in September 1998.
IT trainer has been appointed at the Force Training Centre.

9. A review of call handling and ‘immediate incidents’ policies, together with control room procedures, be undertaken in order to provide the correct balance between both corporate strategy and local procedures. In addition, appropriate management information and performance indicators could be collectively determined for the Force.

A review of call handling and immediate incident policies together with control room procedures will be undertaken.
Management information and performance indicators procedures are being reviewed.

10. An audit and review, led by a senior officer, be conducted on crime recording procedures to:

- i) ensure that a corporate approach to crime recording procedures is adopted;**
- ii) identify best practice aimed at making the system more user friendly;**
- iii) confirm the integrity of the system; and**
- iv) invest ownership of crime recording and ancillary procedures in a single department.**

Crime systems manager appointed.
Full audit commenced in 2001 which should be complete by mid May 2001. Report end of May.
The detective chief superintendent has been tasked to implement necessary changes.

11. A community relations strategy is developed to give guidance on partnership arrangements with reference to the requirements of the Crime and Disorder legislation, as well as articulating the Force's responsibilities to the travelling public, their representative organisations and the TOCs.

Community and Race Relations strategy published.

12. Her Majesty's Inspector repeats the 1995 recommendation (as amended) that: The Force considers the creation of a criminal justice department to provide strategic direction and co-ordination.

AJU created at Force HQ.

Appendix “B”

Recommendations

Her Majesty’s Inspector recommends that:

1. The Force develop a medium term strategy with its stakeholders to cover a 3-5 year period and that the new strategy and its supporting strategies are subject to periodic review.
(Paragraph 3.8)
2. The Force explores the potential to develop a medium to long term financial strategy, covering a 3-5 year period, which should include links with the new Force medium term strategy.
(Paragraph 3.19)
3. The Force review the victim referral procedures as a matter of urgency.
(Paragraph 4.27)
4. The Force to review urgently its approach to the recruitment of special constables in order to benefit from additional government funding that may well soon be available.
(Paragraph 4.29)
5. The current crime strategy is replaced, which then supports the new long term strategy and adequately reflects the needs of the Force and its customers.
(Paragraph 5.3)
6. An audit and review, led by a senior officer, continues to be conducted on crime recording procedures to:
 - ensure that a corporate approach to crime recording procedures is adopted;
 - identify best practice aimed at making the system more user friendly;
 - confirm the integrity of the system
(Paragraph 5.35)(Repeat recommendation)
7. The Force examine ways of how forensic science can better aid investigation taking full account of the good practice set out in the thematic report ‘*Under the Microscope*’.
(Paragraph 5.42)
8. The Force examine its sickness recording practices to ensure a common and accurate recording mechanism for sickness across the Force is in place to provide accurate and timely data.
(Paragraph 6.12)
9. The Force conducts a more detailed examination of this analysis and information with a view to reduce sickness to the national average.
(Paragraph 6.16)

10. The Force completes the auditing of the 'new grievance procedure' and re-launch the process as a matter of urgency and in the interim specific steps are put in place to raise the level of confidence of all staff in utilising the grievance procedure.

(Paragraph 6.18)

11. Action be taken to increase the representation of female and ethnic minorities within the Force and the CID and that there is a greater representation of ethnic minority officers based at headquarters.

(Paragraph 8.4)

12. The Force follow up every departure of a member of staff with an exit interview designed to obtain a true picture of why staff from all backgrounds no longer wish to be part of the BTP and put in place measures to learn from these interviews.

(Paragraph 8.6)

13. To improve the understanding of race and diversity issues that:

- the Force bring forward the debate on diversity issues and include all staff associations in consultation;
- undertake work to restore the confidence of all staff to prepare and create a receptive climate before additional training is delivered;
- action plans be drawn up which are subsequently monitored and evaluated.

(Paragraph 8.17)

14. To improve the public profile of the BTP:

- a review should be undertaken of how it interfaces with its customers including a study of the signage and access to its police stations;
- the review should revisit the issue of the level of public awareness of the Force and finally;
- should increase the accountability of area commanders by requiring them to consult regularly with local representatives groups of the travelling and residential population.

(Paragraph 8.23)

15. The production of completely new technology and communications strategies and plans to support delivery of the aims of the corporate strategy. This involves the taking of business drivers from that strategy and their translation into strategic plans for maintenance and development of current systems and business cases for replacement or augmentation by new systems.

(Paragraph 9.7)

16. The adoption and use of a single project management methodology throughout the organisation, that for compatibility should be PRINCE II.

(Paragraph 9.9)

17. The use of a strategic development group, consisting of senior managers from all business areas, to form a programme executive steering the prioritisation and resourcing of the projects resulting from

the strategies.

(Paragraph 9.10)

18. The management structure and responsibilities of the technology department staff be re-examined to provide a best fit for their new focus.

(Paragraph 9.16)

19. A Best Value type review of the communications function be conducted as a matter of priority. The review should include:-

- examination of the business case for options for the future for communications and call taking including:
 - consideration of the appointment of a senior manager with overall responsibility for the function;
 - production of a communication strategy and development plan;
 - examination of the potential to reduce the number of sites;
 - partnerships and outsourcing in call taking;
 - maximising civilianisation and the training and development of staff;
 - strategy for the provision of electronic services to the public and other customers.

(Paragraph 9.24).

20. Immediate remedial action is taken to decrease the number of days taken for arrest/summons reports towards the ACPO requirement and decrease the number of outstanding impending prosecutions.

(Paragraph 9.33)

21. The Force considers the creation of a professional standards department and look to Home Office police forces, such as Kent County Constabulary, for a model to follow.

(Paragraph 10.3).

22. Action continues to be taken to reduce the average time taken to complete full investigations into complaints against members of the Force, whilst increasing the proportion of files completed within 120 days.

(Paragraph 10.7)

Appendix “C”

Good Practice

Her Majesty's Inspector considers areas of potential good practice to be:

1 In the North West area where the commander, having identified a need to give regular and timely information on policing issues to the TOCs has taken to circulating a four page business specific activity report which attracted praise from many operators.

(Paragraph 4.6)

2 In the North West area the commander has adopted a system whereby brief notes of daily meetings with rail and BTP staff, detailing briefly the duration of the meeting and the matters discussed, are forwarded to him by relevant staff. This provides him with timely information so as to address emerging problems at strategic level.

(Paragraph 4.22)

3 The ‘**Help Us Help You**’ form as used in Scotland is seen as an effective form of feedback from the railway industry.

(Paragraph 4.23)

4 The London North tasking and co-ordinating meeting was found to follow closely the NCIS model, it was well-structured and targeted prolific offenders and other targets relating to objectives within the policing plan. Officers were able to bid for resources and were held to account for performance against previous targeted operations. Her Majesty’s Inspector views this meeting as a model for other areas to emulate.

(Paragraph 5.21)

5 The MICC has a structured training process involving use of the Oxford, Cambridge and RSA (OCR) diploma for call handling, as used in Thames Valley Police and Gloucestershire Constabulary.

(Paragraph 9.24)

