



*Oversight Commissioner
Al Hutchinson*

This is the 13th report on the progress of policing reforms in Northern Ireland, which flow from the 175 recommendations published by the Independent Commission on Policing Reform in 1999. It is a pivotal report in several ways. Firstly, my term as Oversight Commissioner, scheduled to end on the 31st of May 2005, has now been extended a further two years until the end of May, 2007. The oversight team, which consists of David Bayley, Roy Berlinquette, Gil Kleinknecht, Robert Lunney, Charles Reynolds, Mark Reber and Bob Warshaw, has also agreed to continue their commitment. This provides the opportunity to conclude the systematic reporting of those

recommendations that have been evidenced as achieved, while concurrently focusing increased attention on those recommendations not yet completed. It also allows time for a broader thematic approach to the charting of progress, particularly in the areas deemed critical to overall success: human rights, accountability, policing with the community, and ultimately the means to sustain change, training. The shift in evaluation methodology is undertaken primarily for practical monitoring reasons, as much of the Independent Commission's report has been achieved, but also to send a wider message acknowledging the significant progress made.

The Independent Commission noted the uncertain political situation that existed in 1999, but nevertheless felt that its recommendations could proceed, since they touched overwhelmingly on the efficiency, acceptability and accountability of the police service. Moreover, the Independent Commission understood that these changes could proceed for a period of time without a final political resolution. What this 13th oversight report clearly demonstrates is that some six years after the release of the Independent Commission's recommendations, the primary institutions of policing - the Police Service, the Policing Board and the Ombudsman - have largely accomplished or are well on the way to accomplishing the recommendations' full intent. As a consequence, the spotlight must shift onto other related factors that might be hindering further progress: these are the larger societal and political issues that remain essentially beyond the control of the policing institutions.

One of the strengths of democracy is that politics proceeds at its own pace, even if this is in often unpredictable ways. As this report is being written towards the end of May, 2005, Northern Ireland is still without a functioning local assembly, and therefore also the attendant devolved powers over policing recommended by the Independent Commission. This was seen as a critical accountability and legitimacy mechanism for policing in Northern Ireland. In 1998 the majority of voters in both the north and south of Ireland supported the goal of a new beginning to policing in Northern Ireland by overwhelmingly supporting the Belfast, or Good Friday, Peace Agreement. This called for a police service capable of attracting and sustaining support from the community as a whole. Unfortunately, this crucial and worthwhile goal cannot be achieved through the efforts of the policing institutions alone, and will remain unmet as long as it is not accompanied by a broader political resolution.

Another critical factor impeding further progress relates to the lack of full community support for the new policing structures. In 1999 the Independent Commission recommended that policing with the community become the core function for the new Police Service of Northern Ireland



(PSNI). This meant police participating and working in partnership with the community and responding in positive and constructive ways to its needs, with the community reciprocating not only by supporting the police, but by becoming legitimately involved in its own policing.

So where do we stand in May of 2005? While the Police Service is clearly attempting to perform its role in this partnership, police officers are not accepted equally in all parts of Northern Ireland. At the same time, there is little doubt that people across the entire community in Northern Ireland are both frustrated and frightened by ongoing paramilitary and criminal acts, as well as related involvement in organised crime, the victimisation of the elderly and the young, growing racial and homophobic intolerance, and of course the ongoing threatening of those courageous enough to step forward and serve their communities more constructively, whether as police officers or other emergency personnel, or by participating in the crucial accountability mechanisms such as the Policing Board and the District Policing Partnerships, set up in response to the Independent Commission's recommendations.

These issues can ultimately only be dealt with by an effective, capable and accepted police service and criminal justice system, working in partnership with a community that desires the same goals: safety and stability. The irony of course is that a lack of sincere participation in and full acceptance of the democratic policing institutions now in place, across the whole community, will simply continue the cycle of victimisation and instability, to the ultimate detriment of all communities.

It is important to note that institutions of governance and accountability in the form of the Policing Board, the District Policing Partnerships and Ombudsman are in place and functioning as intended. There are remaining issues that are within the purview of the Police Service, the Policing Board and Government. While the status of all recommendations will continue to be monitored, and will be reported on more fully in May of 2006 and 2007, there are some recommendations that will be more closely monitored.

Despite the recommendations that remain to be implemented, and the significant political issues spelled out above, I am confident that the remaining recommendations of the Independent Commission will be achieved in time. The new beginning to policing envisioned by the Independent Commission almost six years ago is well under way. But it will not come about without the consent and participation of all communities – and that remains a formidable challenge.

H. Alan Hutchinson
Oversight Commissioner

ACC	Assistant Chief Constable
ACPO	Association of Chief Police Officers
AEP	Attenuating Energy Projectile
ALR	Armoured Landrover
CASE	Citizen and Safety Education
CCTV	Closed Circuit Television
CS	O-Chlorobenzylidene Malononitrile
DCU	District Command Unit
DIP	Discriminating Irritant Projectile
DPP	District Policing Partnership
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation
FTR	Full Time Reserve
GB	Great Britain
HMIC	Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary
ICS	Information and Communications Services
ICT	Information, Communication, Technology
IT	Information Technology
IMC	International Monitoring Commission
KPI	Key Performance Indicators
LAC	Learning Advisory Council
NIHRC	Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission
NIM	National Intelligence Model
NIO	Northern Ireland Office
PACE	Police and Criminal Evidence
PBR	Plastic Baton Round
PITO	Police Information Technology Organisation
POPT	Police Officer Part Time
PRD	Primary Reference Document
PRRT	Police Retraining and Rehabilitation Trust
PSNI	Police Service of Northern Ireland
PTR	Part Time Reserve
RPA	Review of Public Administration
SEA	Station Enquiry Assistant
SLA	Service Level Agreement
TED	Training, Education and Development
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
VSSU	Voluntary Severance Support Unit

▶▶ **commissioner's overview**



The Independent Commission published its 175 recommendations in September of 1999. This was followed by the release of the Government's Implementation Plan in August of 2001. Subsequently, in September of 2001 my predecessor as Oversight Commissioner, Tom Constantine, delineated 772 performance indicators, through which the process of implementation could be objectively measured and verified; this began the actual charting and measurement of change to the present day. Although my own term as Oversight Commissioner was scheduled to end on 31 May 2005, this has since been extended by the Government until 31 May 2007. This is an appropriate time frame, since by then most recommendations should either be completed, or should have progressed far enough to be considered embedded and sufficiently advanced so as to be considered nearly complete.

The request by Government for the extension of policing oversight allows me to accomplish several things. Firstly, I can acknowledge, through the demonstrable results achieved by the policing institutions in Northern Ireland, the substantial progress towards fulfilling the intent of the Independent Commission's recommendations. This progress creates a situation whereby only annual updates are required for completed recommendations. The first of these yearly reports will be in May of 2006, with the final report due for publication in May of 2007. It also somewhat reduces the administrative and other burdens represented by the various layers of oversight of policing. Secondly, it allows me to focus more intently, within the context of our mandate, on those issues that have not progressed sufficiently, citing the reasons and identifying where the responsibility lies. Thirdly, it allows a shift in our methodology to support the first two points. I will focus two of our three mandated reports per year on thematic issues that are critical to a modern and accepted police service. The first of these will be on human rights and accountability in September of 2005, re-scheduled from May of 2005, and the second will be on training in December of 2005, which will update a previous training thematic released in September of 2004.

This present report will serve as a benchmark for the progress achieved since the release of the Independent Commission's recommendations in September of 1999. The report starts with a Commissioner's Overview, which is a general summary of the oversight team's principal findings since September of 2001. The Overview has two sections: Progress and Accomplishments and Areas of Concern. For more detail, the reader can review each chapter and recommendation summary in the pages following, in particular the section entitled Remaining Issues. I have once again appended easy-to-read tables that allow for a visual display of the progress or lack of progress made on each recommendation.

Progress and Accomplishments

The Independent Commission felt that the protection and vindication of the human rights of all was an essential foundation for their recommendations. The Police Service and Policing Board have made substantial progress in achieving the human rights regime envisaged by the Independent Commission. A Human Rights Plan and subsequent Programme of Action were published in 2004; the recommended Police Oath has been institutionalised; a human rights lawyer has been hired by the Police Service and is actively involved in providing advice; a Code of Ethics is operating and is a best policing practice; human rights training has been incorporated into training curricula, and human rights is an annual appraisal requirement. The Policing Board has appointed a human rights advisor, Mr. Keir Starmer QC, and has set in place an extensive programme of evaluation and special reports. Its first annual report was published in March of 2005. Although some concerns

remain, and are spelled out in greater detail below, on balance most of the objectives set out by the Independent Commission's recommendations on human rights have been achieved. The final step is to ensure that the desired behaviours and expected outcomes are being manifested as intended.

The Independent Commission also noted the significance of proper policing accountability for a democratic society, where policing can only be with the consent of the people. Accordingly, it set out a series of recommendations that dealt with democratic, legal, financial and internal accountability. Substantial progress has been achieved within the areas of accountability through the establishment of the Policing Board, District Policing Partnerships, transparency policies, legislation for covert policing, financial and internal accountability. The leadership of the Policing Board, Chairman Sir Desmond Rea and Vice-Chair Dennis Bradley, and their committees has been key to achieving these results. In addition, the Ombudsman has professionally provided an important accountability mechanism to balance police behaviour and actions. While some concerns remain, the progress and functioning of the institutions of accountability meet the intent of the Independent Commission's recommendations.

The importance of policing with the community, to both the functioning and acceptance of the new Police Service of Northern Ireland, was recognised by the Independent Commission. Leadership by the Police Service and Policing Board ensured that a great deal of formative progress was made on the commitment to have policing with the community become a core function for policing in Northern Ireland. The PSNI has been recognised both in the United Kingdom and internationally for crime prevention and community problem solving projects. The thematic report on policing with the community in our Report No. 12, released in December of 2004, noted the remaining challenges. These included the concern that the Police Service viewed policing with the community as a specialised duty rather than as a responsibility which affected the entire police organisation, as well as the failure of responsibility by some parts of the community to accept their own role in democratic policing. The Police Service has already acted on some of these observations and what remains is for politics and communities to complete their part. The policing with the community effort has been very positive considering all of the circumstances, and there is no doubt of the commitment of the Police Service and Policing Board to this concept.

Efforts to achieve the normalisation of policing continue to demonstrate progress. Although issues surround the Estate Strategy, a great deal of progress has been made around police vehicles and reduced dependence on the army. The exteriors of some police stations have been modified to provide more accessibility to the public, and the new builds at Moira and Coleraine have a normalised appearance, providing both security and public accessibility.

With respect to policing public order situations, it remains the situation that no plastic baton rounds (PBR) have been discharged by the police or the military in a public order situation since September of 2002. A new round called the Attenuating Energy Projectile (AEP) is scheduled to replace the existing PBR in June of 2005, and is reported as a safer and more accurate round. In addition, water cannon are now available for public order disturbances and CS spray has been issued to officers for regular policing duties and personal protection. The fifth research report of the Government's Steering Group is due to be published in late June, and Northern Ireland is playing a leading role in international research efforts to increase the availability of less than lethal equipment used around the world, including projectile weapons. Perhaps the most important



factor, one which is often not acknowledged, is that communities themselves are able to exercise their right to democratic protest largely without violence, thereby avoiding any need for the enforcement authorities to react; community and political leadership have been crucial to this outcome.

The change management programme and devolution process continue to exhibit the positive leadership and results attained since the beginning of the programme. The General Order on devolution, dated June of 2004, outlines the principles of empowering DCU Commanders and shifting decision making to the lowest possible levels. The oversight team remains impressed with the Regional ACC management review and accountability process, and its positive effects on DCU performance. Internal accountability with respect to the conduct of police officers continues its progress and we have full confidence in the operations of the Ombudsman's office to provide an effective check and balance to ensure that the Police Service operates in an accountable manner. An excellent example of the Police Service and Policing Board working together to ensure accountability is in the area of sickness absence, where absence numbers have been successfully managed down from a high of 23.4 days per officer per year in 2001/2002, to 17 days per year by 2004/2005.

The Independent Commission recommended a series of measures with respect to Information Technology (IT) that would put the PSNI at the forefront of law enforcement technology in three to five years. This did not happen in the anticipated time frame. Nevertheless, the progress has on balance been very positive. The Police Service developed an Information System strategy in 2001 and made significant progress from 2001 to 2004, with investment focussed on the provision of IT infrastructure and improved access to legacy systems. Some 6,500 new personal computers and 2,500 new printers were installed in DCUs and Headquarters, with a corporate intranet for easy access to duty briefings, policy directives and forms, as well as other features. These accomplishments provide some of the fundamentals on which the PSNI can deliver the information systems that are key to enabling improvements in efficiency and effectiveness. The Police Information Technology Organisation has assumed the role of Independent Validator under a formal agreement with the Police Service and the Policing Board. The potential barrier for future expedited progress will be funding, an issue that rests with Government.

The Independent Commission noted that the structure of a police organisation should reflect the role that police should perform, and accordingly advanced a number of recommendations in that regard. It felt that the district commands should be coterminous with district council boundaries, noting that this could change to align with any future reduction in the number of district councils. The establishment of the 29 DCUs quickly occurred and in due course received appropriate devolved operating authorities. The current Review of Public Administration has a proposal that includes three options regarding the size of councils in Northern Ireland: seven, eleven and fifteen district councils. The Police Service is considering an adjustment of their coterminous District Command Units on efficiency grounds. This would be in advance of any final determination of District Council size. Although I agree with this proposed move on the basis of efficiency and effectiveness, I do have a concern that it will dilute the carefully established principle of the District Policing Partnerships, and their evolving relationships with police officers and expertise in policing issues.

There were a series of recommendations relating to Special Branch. Functionally, the recommendations have largely been achieved. However, they will continue to be closely monitored due to the importance of the issues within Northern Ireland. In April of 2001 Special Branch was brought under the command of one Assistant Chief Constable, and in September of 2002 both Crime and Special Branches became part of a new Crime Branch. In November of 2003 Crime Branch adopted the UK-wide National Intelligence Model, which followed outside reviews by HMIC, Lord Stevens and HMI Blakey. Although a security intelligence function is still conducted by a unit within Crime Branch, there is clear evidence that the effort of the Police Service is now focused on the investigation of criminal activities. Previous security support activities are focusing some 80% of their efforts in combating criminal activity. The Government has announced that the Security Service and not the police will have primacy for national security in 2007. However, no details of this recent proposal have yet been announced. When details become available, they will be examined to assess their impact on the Independent Commission's recommendations.

The Independent Commission recommended that the future police service should not include a Full Time Reserve (FTR). The Commission's model assumed a phase-out of the FTR over a three year period, providing that the security situation had improved. The phase out was also intended to coincide with the Police Service reaching a recommended strength of 7,500 regular police officers. Concurrently, the Part Time Reserve (PTR) was meant to be significantly increased. In November of 2002 the Police Service and Policing Board extended the contracts of the remaining FTR members until April of 2005; in the interim the number of FTR members had been reduced from 2,256 in December of 2001, to 1,387 by February of 2005. In September of 2004 the Chief Constable announced a decision to retain a smaller FTR, with the goal of reducing its complement to 680 members by the end of 2008. This smaller FTR would be assigned to specific duties, based on the prevailing security situation, with a decision on the remaining 680 members to be made in 2008. The Police Federation and the Government also agreed on a severance package for FTR members.

The recommendations respecting the size of the future Police Service included a ten-year projection, with a regular force size of 7,500 assuming the security situation did not deteriorate significantly. This figure has now been reached due to the Police Service's successful severance and recruiting programme. If the remaining 1,300 FTR members are included, the total uniformed complement of the Police Service rests at approximately 8,800 officers; this figure does not include approximately 900 PTR members and a civilian support staff of around 3,300. In essence, the Police Service has approximately 2 to 2.5 times the number of uniformed officers at its disposal, on a per capita basis, compared to other police services in the UK.

The Independent Commission had a series of recommendations recognising the importance of a police service which is more representative of the society it polices. While the representative nature of the civilian workforce remains problematic, the recruitment of regular police officers, particularly with respect to community representation, continues to be a quantitative success. Much of this success can be attributed to the early support for policing given by church and other leaders, however we have yet to see wider political endorsement and support for the changes undertaken.



As mentioned above, the recruitment of new police officers has been a notable success, despite some lack of support for the 50:50 legislation, and the lack of political encouragement to participate in policing. Since 2001 over 43,000 applications have been received, which has resulted in some 1,500 new recruits hired on a 50:50 Catholic/Non-Catholic basis. The legislation supporting 50:50 has withstood legal challenges on the basis of discrimination, and the legislation was renewed in March of 2004 for another 3-year period. Through nine competitions, almost 36% of the applications have been from those identified as Catholic while 36% of all applications have been from females. The regular Police Service is now 17.7% Catholic, a notable increase from the 8% reported by the Independent Commission in 1999. However, when members of the Full Time Reserve are added, the "blended" percentage of Catholic police officers is 16%. However, this still marks good progress toward achieving a quantifiably representative Police Service.

The Independent Commission noted that the training, education and development of police officers and civilian staff would be critical to the success of the Police Service's transformation, and included a number of recommendations that focused on training. Our previous thematic on training, appended to our Report No. 11 released in September of 2004, identified the capacity to train as the main strategic issue for the Police Service and Policing Board to address, however there has been progress on a new training college, the recruit foundation training programme and other areas.

Culture, ethos and symbols were considered by the Independent Commission to be important for how policing saw itself, and how others perceived it. There were a number of recommendations that covered the name of the Police Service, uniform and badge, memorials and the establishment of a neutral working environment. All of these have been accomplished.

In 1999 the Independent Commission noted a condition that still exists: the globalisation of crime. This necessitates collaboration by police services around the world, as well as the exchange of best practices and ideas to assist domestic policing. It is no different in Northern Ireland, and the Independent Commission had a number of recommendations to facilitate this goal. These focused in part on north/south relationships between the Garda Síochána and the PSNI, as well as between the PSNI and other UK and international police services. There has been a great deal of progress on north/south policing relationships, culminating in a protocol to exchange specialised officers and liaison officers, although no actual exchanges had occurred by April of 2005. Good operational cooperation and relationships exist between the Garda and PSNI, with three annual conferences held to date, as well as cross-border disaster planning. Some progress has been made on the training cooperation recommendations, which will be measured in more detail in the thematic update on training scheduled for release in December of 2005. Certainly, on balance the cooperation recommendations are making reasonably good progress.

Areas of Concern

In this section I deliberately focus on those higher-level strategic issues that I believe will be important to sustain the intent of the Independent Commission's recommendations over the longer term. More detail on the remaining issues, for each recommendation not completed, can be located in the chapters that follow.

The Independent Commission's first topic was the important area of human rights and policing. The impact of the human rights recommendations remains an overarching concern only because it

will take some time to verify that the expected human rights behavioural outcomes and ethos are embedded in the organisation. The foundation for effective human rights policing is in place. The Police Service quickly established a regime for human rights policing, and demonstrated an early and sustained effort. The Policing Board has established an excellent human rights monitoring regime for its governance of the Police Service. The monitoring by the Policing Board, the Ombudsman, the Courts and the police themselves will be crucial to the success of this effort. The specific items left to accomplish relate to the establishment of a forward-looking and self-correcting human rights programme, more focus on an effective human rights training programme, and the assessment of police officer's human rights performance.

The Independent Commission had a number of recommendations with respect to accountability and a great deal has been accomplished. The devolution of policing powers remains a major recommendation that has not been completed. While this is a function of political resolution, it has yet to occur. The Independent Commission recommended that this devolution occur as soon as possible, excluding matters of national security. It will be important for local accountability and further policing progress that the political process succeeds.

Another important element of accountability is represented by the Policing Board and the District Policing Partnerships (DPPs), which the Policing Board has now established in each district council. Although leading citizens have stepped forward to participate, there remain concerns. First, at both the Board and DPP level full political representation is not in place. While that is again a result of a political process that must proceed at its own pace, one consequence is that full representation is denied to part of the population, and an important voice is absent from these important accountability processes. Secondly, there exists the risk of 'role confusion' and effort overlap among the plethora of community and other groups involved in supporting policing and justice. The DPPs, Community Safety Councils, Community Police Liaison Committees and a host of other groups, amounting to over 500 that the police interact with, are often in competition for time and resources, which is counter-productive. The Police Service and the various groups involved should be applauded for their energy and commitment, however their longer term interests might be better served with a more strategic approach to their efforts.

The third accountability concern, which I have previously raised, relates to the future functioning of the DPPs. The Independent Commission recommended that DPPs be established for each district council and coterminous District Command Units (DCUs), so that there was an effective interface between local police officers and the community. They also recognised that this would change in time since, there were proportionality too many district councils. The current Review of Public Administration is likely to propose either 7, 11 or 15 councils in total, with the Police Service likely to establish a 12 to 15 DCU organisational model. This is for understandable efficiency reasons, however could be in advance of a final decision on the number of councils. While I agree with the principle of Police Service realignment for purposes of efficiency and effectiveness, I have a longer term concern that the important principle of local accountability, community involvement and representation could be diluted in the Police Service's drive for efficiency. I have seen nothing to allay this concern, and it will be important with respect to local accountability that the Police Service and Policing Board address this issue.



Policing with Community (PWC) was a core theme of the Independent Commission, with a number of supporting recommendations. The Police Service, with the support of the Policing Board, has done an excellent job in making this concept operational, and it is very much a success story in those communities that accept the contemporary policing model. The Police Service has received local, national and international awards for some projects and efforts. As noted in our thematic report of Policing with the Community, released in December of 2004, the next step was to move from a dedicated PWC, or split-force, concept to one in which every element of the Police Service finds some way to support a PWC ethos. The Police Service appears to have accepted this critique and is moving forward with an effort to achieve this. The oversight process will continue to closely monitor results with an updated PWC thematic report in 2006.

The Independent Commission recognised that policing in a peaceful society was both symbolic and practical, and that if the new police service was to be an integral part of the community, then it had to be accessible. In this regard, they made a number of recommendations around the appearance of police stations, police vehicles, civilian receptionists and other matters. While the majority of these recommendations have been accomplished or are underway, the failure to effectively deal with an estate strategy in a timely manner has meant that six years after the Independent Commission published its recommendations, results are only now being observed, with some de-fortification of stations and impressive new builds at Coleraine and Moira. A visible example of the consequences of inaction is Musgrave Street Station in the centre of Belfast: while the surrounding city area has been almost wholly transformed over the past six years, with new and vibrant development all round, this old fortified station lingers as an unsightly monument to the past, the very antithesis of the Independent Commission's intentions. At a practical level these all amount to lost opportunities: the loss of resources to support redundant stations, the loss of funding opportunities and a missed opportunity to put more police officers on patrol. In a similar vein, we have noted the lost opportunity in acquiring a representative cadre of civilian receptionists to populate enquiry offices across the PSNI, thereby releasing even more officers to patrol duties. By the time this report is released, it is expected that the Policing Board will have approved a new estate strategy produced by the Police Service. Given the relative lack of outcomes in this area, oversight will continue to closely monitor and report on results.

The Independent Commission recognised that a key to organisational change was sound management and leadership, and a number of recommendations touched on these areas. This was seen as particularly important given the Police Service's moving from the RUC's 'control' model to one marked by more devolved decision making. There have been good results over time in the achievement of the recommendations, and the change management programme has been a strong contributor. While not an immediate concern, the devolution of appropriate power and resources to DCU Commanders will need to be monitored over time as the inevitable tensions between centralised control and devolved decision making swing back and forth.

Civilianisation was another important area, but unfortunately progress on recommendations aimed at making the Police Service more representative and competent in certain administrative fields has not been achieved as intended. There are two consequences of this: firstly, there are fewer police officers on patrol than there could have been while secondly, the civilian workforce remains largely unrepresentative of the wider population. The Government has recently approved funding for an additional 300 positions and this may spur results, releasing more police officers to patrol and increasing the representative nature of the civilian workforce.

The Independent Commission recognised in 1999 that the Police Service's information technology lagged far behind other UK police services, and recommended the development of an IT strategy and programme that would put the Police Service at the forefront of policing technology within 3 to 5 years. Although this has not happened in the anticipated time frame, the Police Service has made great strides nonetheless. However, the longer term concern remains acquiring and sustaining appropriate funding to support this crucial initiative, and it is important that the Police Service and Policing Board present properly detailed business cases to Government, and for Government to rigorously sustain funding over the course of the programme.

The Independent Commission made a number of recommendations regarding the former Special Branch, which have largely been accomplished. While I have no immediate concerns in this area it will continue to be monitored to ensure that the changes put in place by the Police Service allow it to focus its efforts on combating increasingly violent and organised crime as intended. We will also monitor the impact of the Government's recent decision to shift primary responsibility for national security to the Security Service in 2007; it is important that any proposed changes do not undermine the need for increased accountability in this sensitive area, nor render the Police Service ineffective in its mandate to deal with organised crime, particularly that flowing from paramilitary group activities.

The Independent Commission recommended that, in conjunction with an improved security situation, the Full Time Reserve (FTR) be phased out. Concurrently the Part Time Reserve (PTR) was to be augmented on a more representative community basis. None of the three events envisioned have occurred. Based upon the improving though fragile security situation, the Chief Constable presented a plan to the Policing Board proposed retaining 680 FTR members until 2008, with the remaining members leaving through severance in the interim. Although I endorse this approach my concerns have been previously expressed, and relate to a plan to fill the "operational gap" caused by the loss of many dedicated and experienced FTR members, who in many cases do excellent police work, particularly in community policing roles. A related concern regards the welfare of FTR members who leave the Police Service, and it will be important to ensure that proper retraining and job placement opportunities are provided.

In the area of the composition and recruitment, the success of the recruiting efforts for police officers is tempered by the lack of similar progress in recruiting civilian staff. Thus, the representation of Catholic civilian staff has risen from 12.3% to 14.5% of the total. This will result in an evolving Police Service that is representative of the community with respect to uniformed officers, but not for civilian staff. This concern has been raised in past oversight reports, however progress has been slow.

The Independent Commission also had a number of recommendations designed to make the new Police Service more open and transparent. One of these related to identifying the number of police officers who belong to specified organisations that might be perceived to affect their impartiality. Identified as the registration of notifiable interests, progress on this initiative has once again slowed in the absence of clearer legislation. Although the Police Service has put policy in place, and has communicated with officers regarding the need to identify their memberships, it has been determined that amended legislation is now required, which places the onus for ensuring further progress back on the Government.



Finally, the structured training links with both the Republic of Ireland and the rest of the UK have not developed as far as originally hoped. This will impact both on the capacity of Training Branch to remain abreast of training developments in other jurisdictions, and also on the ability of the Police Service to disseminate its own emerging best practices among other police services. Although proper legislation and protocols are now in place to facilitate progress in this area, few structured exchanges of training staff or liaison officers particularly as this relates to links between the Police Service and the Garda Siochana, have taken place. The need to keep training current also underscores the importance of ensuring continued progress on completing the new police college, currently scheduled for 2007. Any broader training concerns will be addressed in our updated training thematic, scheduled for release in December of 2005.

▶▶ human rights



A. Chapter Summary

Background

Quoting the 1998 Belfast Agreement, the Independent Commission on Policing for Northern Ireland noted that the fundamental purpose of policing should be the: “protection and vindication of the human rights of all”. In order to achieve this goal, the Independent Commission recommended that the Police Service develop a: “comprehensive programme of action to focus policing in Northern Ireland on a human rights-based approach”, and that the performance of the Police Service in implementing such a programme be monitored closely by the Policing Board. The Independent Commission recommended several specific actions that the Police Service should take to bring about a greater emphasis on human rights in Northern Ireland policing. They were:

- promulgation of a new oath for all serving officers;
- development of a code of ethics;
- expansion of human rights training for all police officers, recruits as well as serving officers, and civilian staff;
- incorporation of human rights awareness and practice in the performance evaluation of individuals; and,
- appointment of a lawyer to advise the Police Service about the human rights implications of its activities.

B. Recommendation Summary

Recommendation 1: Human Rights Based Approach to Policing

Patten Recommendation:

1. There should be a comprehensive programme of action to focus policing in Northern Ireland on a human rights-based approach.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Full compliance with this recommendation has not yet been achieved.

History

A “Human Rights Programme of Action” was published in September of 2004. It reviews what the Police Service has done to meet the Independent Commission’s recommendations concerning human rights. Although the Human Rights Programme and other actions represent impressive accomplishments that, as will be shown below, meet most of the Independent Commission’s requirements, the Programme is not a plan for future action as such. In their first evaluation of the status of human rights in the Police Service of Northern Ireland, the Policing Board’s human rights advisors recommended in April of 2005 that the Police Service assess shortcomings in human rights practice and culture every year, and that it formulate a forward-looking plan for addressing any problems that have arisen.

Remaining Issues

The Independent Commission noted that human rights were at the core of its report. A human rights approach to policing should be less a matter of specific actions, more a philosophy of policing. Behaviourally, police officers should perceive their jobs in terms of the protection of human rights. As noted above, although the Police Service’s human rights programme represents an impressive accomplishment, it is not a plan for future actions with a clearly defined time line for future accomplishments.

Recommendation 2: New Police Oath

Patten Recommendation:

2. There should be a new oath, taken individually by all new and existing police officers, expressing an explicit commitment to upholding human rights.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

History

All recruits now attest to the new oath during graduation exercises at the end of their initial twenty weeks of training. All personnel recruited before September of 2002 have signed a statement that they understand the new oath and accept the new Code of Ethics. Police officers recruited laterally from other police services attest to the new oath at the end of their five-week induction course. The new oath follows the wording suggested by the Independent Commission, with the addition of the phrase “and that while I continue to hold the said office I will to the best of my skill and knowledge discharge all the duties thereof according to law” inserted after “traditions and beliefs”.

Recommendation 3: Code of Ethics

Patten Recommendation:

3. A new Code of Ethics should replace the existing, largely procedural code, integrating the European Convention on Human Rights into police practice. Codes of practice on all aspects of policing, including covert law enforcement techniques, should be strictly in accordance with the European Convention on Human Rights.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

History

A new Code of Ethics was approved by the Policing Board and published by the Police Service on 13 February 2003. It explicitly cites international conventions, notably the European Convention on Human Rights, the United Nations Code of Conduct for Law Enforcement Officials, the United



Nations Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials, and the European Police Code of Ethics. Covert policing is made compliant with the European Convention on Human rights through the passage of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA), which in turn was required to be compliant with the Human Rights Act 1998 that incorporated the European Convention into UK law.

The new Code of Ethics became the conduct regulations for all police officers in the PSNI when the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2003 came into force in March of 2003. In their first annual review of human rights, the Policing Board's human rights advisors noted that these regulations make the Police Service of Northern Ireland the first police service anywhere in Europe with such an "overtly human rights-based approach to conduct and discipline."

Recommendation 4: Training in Human Rights

Patten Recommendation:

4. All police officers, and police civilians, should be trained (and updated as required) in the fundamental principles and standards of human rights and the practical implications for policing. The human rights dimensions should be integrated into every module of police training.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Full compliance with this recommendation has not yet been achieved.

History

The Police Service has undertaken most of the activities required to achieve compliance with this recommendation. It has developed a new curriculum designed to integrate human rights into programmes of instruction for recruits as well as in-service personnel; it has audited course content to ensure that instructors have included relevant human rights materials; and has developed but not yet implemented a system for observing and evaluating human rights teaching.

The Police service has given access to the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission (NIHRC) to do four studies of instruction in human rights. They are: An Evaluation of Human Rights Training for Student Police Officers in the Police Service of Northern Ireland (2002), Probationer Constables and Student Officers (2004), The Course for All (2004), and new recruits' reaction to training 30 months after recruitment, forthcoming later in 2005.

Remaining Issues

The issues remaining relate to the training of newly recruited instructors in human rights, the provision for updating of human rights material as laws change and problematic situations arise, the implementation of a system for monitoring instruction and the involvement of concerned professional individuals from the community, in the process. To further all these objectives, the Police Service will need to ensure that there is capacity with staff experts in human rights within Training Branch. Finally, an ongoing process for evaluating the effect of human rights instruction with both a cognitive and a behavioural component (see also Recommendations 129, 133 and 142) will be required. An update to the training thematic is scheduled for December of 2005 and all training issues, including Human Rights training will be examined in more detail.

Recommendation 5: Appraisal of Human Rights Performance in Individuals

Patten Recommendation:

5. Awareness of human rights issues and respect for human rights in the performance of duty should be an important element in the appraisal of individuals in the police service.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Full compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

History

A revised personnel appraisal system was introduced by General Order 8/2003, dated 9 April 2003. Training in the new system was delivered between 1 January and 31 March of 2003. A human rights component was included in the annual performance evaluations of every serving police officer. Although there is some concern about the quality of this appraisal, it does highlight the importance the Police Service attaches to human rights. With respect to promotion, evidence documenting problematic human rights behaviour will be a bar to nomination. However, assessing human rights sensitivity, knowledge and experience is not part of the assessment of candidates during the oral interview. There is also a sound monitoring and accountability mechanism in place, in the form of the Policing Board and its human rights advisors. The Policing Board released its first annual report on the human rights performance of the PSNI in March of 2005 (see also Recommendation 77).

Recommendation 6: Appointment of Human Rights Lawyer

Patten Recommendation:

6. A lawyer with specific expertise in the field of human rights should be appointed to the staff of the police legal services.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

History

A properly qualified lawyer with human rights expertise was appointed by the Police Service on 1 October 2001. Since then, she has reviewed all policies for human rights compliance, established an internal human rights website, provided training as needed throughout the Service, and responded to requests for advice about specific issues and events. She reports that she is consulted extensively about operational planning and serves on a committee to consider administrative recommendations made by the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland about police human rights performance.



Recommendation 7: Monitoring Human Rights Performance

Patten Recommendation:

7. The performance of the police service as a whole in respect of human rights, as in other respects, should be monitored closely by the Policing Board.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

History

The Policing Board appointed its human rights advisor, Mr. Keir Starmer, QC, in February of 2003. The human rights advisor was to have responsibility for developing a programme to monitor the human rights performance of the Police Service. The Board then established guidelines for the monitoring process and released these to the public. The human rights advisor also developed an extensive programme of evaluation, which included a detailed action plan for the collection of information. A first report, entitled: Monitoring PSNI Compliance with the Human Rights Act 1998, was published in December of 2003, with a subsequent, more comprehensive report published in March of 2005. The report is thorough, exhaustively researched and practical. The Policing Board provided all necessary support for the review, including a survey of police officers and civilian staff. The Police Service permitted the human rights advisor unrestricted access to documentary material as well as to operations. In addition, Mr. Starmer and Ms. Gordon produced a report on 5 November 2004 on the policing of the 12 July Ardoyne Parade.



A. Chapter Summary

Background

The Independent Commission devoted 35 of its 175 recommendations to providing oversight mechanisms designed to ensure the accountability of policing to the public and the law. Its recommendations cover the role of the Police Ombudsman and the creation of a Policing Board, District Policing Partnerships, a Commissioner and complaints tribunal for covert law enforcement operations, and the strengthening of financial accountability.

B. Recommendation Summary

Recommendation 8: Creation and Responsibilities of the Policing Board

Patten Recommendation:

8. An entirely new Policing Board should be created, to replace the present Police Authority.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

History

The Policing Board was created in November of 2001 under Parts II and IV of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000, incorporating all the requirements of the Independent Commission on Policing for Northern Ireland.

Recommendation 9: Primary Function of Policing Board

Patten Recommendation:

9. The statutory primary function of the Policing Board should be to hold the Chief Constable and the police service publicly to account.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

History

This provision was incorporated in the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000. The Policing Board monitors all aspects of police performance, most importantly its effectiveness in crime prevention and control, its efficiency in terms of obtaining value for money, and the lawfulness and propriety of its actions. The Policing Board reports that its requests for information from the Police Service have to date been met satisfactorily.

Recommendation 10: Policing Board to Set Objectives

Patten Recommendation:

10. The Policing Board should set objectives and priorities for policing over a 3 to 5 year period, taking account of any longer term objectives or principles set by the Secretary of State or successor. It should then be responsible for adopting a 3 to 5 year strategy, prepared by the Chief Constable through a process of discussion with the Board, which should reflect the objectives and priorities set by the Board.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

History

Beginning in 2002 the Policing Board has published annual "Policing Plans" that set objectives, establish targets by which to measure performance, and specify budgetary resources for the ensuing three years. Four such plans have been published: 2002-2005, 2003-2006, 2004-2007 and 2005-2008. The annual Policing Plans are developed with extensive consultation with the Chief Constable and the Northern Ireland Office.

Recommendation 11: Annual Policing Plan

Patten Recommendation:

11. The Board should be responsible for adopting an Annual Policing Plan, developed by the Chief Constable, through a process of discussion with the Board, on the basis of objectives and priorities set by the Board, and within the agreed 3 to 5 year strategy.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

History

As described in Recommendation 10.

Recommendation 12: Annual Policing Budget

Patten Recommendation:

12. The Board should be responsible for negotiating the annual policing budget with the Northern Ireland Office, or with the appropriate successor body after devolution of policing. It should then allocate the police service budget to the Chief Constable and monitor police performance against the budget.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

History

As described in Recommendation 10.



Recommendation 13: Monitoring Strategic Trends

Patten Recommendation:

13. The Board should monitor police performance against the Annual Policing Plan and the 3 to 5 year strategy. It should watch crime trends and patterns, and police performance in public order situations. It should also follow such things as recruitment patterns and trends, including fair employment and equal opportunities performance, and training needs. It should assess public satisfaction with the police service and, in liaison with the Police Ombudsman, patterns and trends in complaints against the police.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

History

The Policing Board evaluates the performance of the PSNI against the specific targets of the annual plan. The Policing Board is organised into standing committees to facilitate its oversight work, and it reports that resources are sufficient to support a thorough review. The assessments of police performance are published in annual reports, of which there have been three to date: 2002-2003, 2003-2004 and 2004-2005. All plans and reports are available on the Policing Board's website at www.nipolicingboard.org.uk. As part of its assessment, it receives quarterly reports about police performance from the Chief Constable and undertakes annual surveys of the public about crime and safety concerns, opinions about the police, and knowledge of Policing Board activities.

Recommendation 14: Powers of Appointment

Patten Recommendation:

14. The Board should have the responsibility for appointing all chief officers and civilian equivalents and for determining the length of their contracts. All appointments should be subject to approval by the Secretary of State (and successor after devolution) and the Chief Constable should be consulted in relation to the appointment of subordinate chief officers and civilian equivalents. The Board should have the power to call upon the Chief Constable to retire in the interests of efficiency and effectiveness subject to the approval of the Secretary of State (and successor) and to the right to make representations as at present. Similarly, the Board should have the same power in relation to other chief officers and civilian equivalents exercisable subject to the approval of the Secretary of State (and successor) and the same right to make representations and after consultation with the Chief Constable. The Secretary of State should have the power to require the Policing Board to call upon the Chief Constable to retire on the same grounds but this power should be exercisable only after consultation with the Board and subject to the same right to make representations already referred to. Additionally, after devolution the relevant Northern Ireland minister should have power to call for the retirement of the Chief Constable on the same grounds but this should be subject to the agreement of the Policing Board and the approval of the Secretary of State with an equivalent right to make representations. The Board should be the disciplinary authority for chief officers and civilian equivalents.

Lead Responsibility: Policing Board/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

History

All of the provisions called for in this recommendation have been enacted in the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000. Since its inception the Policing Board has appointed the Chief Constable, in September of 2002, the Deputy Chief Constable in March of 2003, and four Assistant Chief Constables, two in September of 2002, one in May of 2003, and one in May of 2004.

Recommendation 15: Board to Coordinate Work with Other Agencies

Patten Recommendation:

15. The Policing Board should co-ordinate its work closely with other agencies whose work touches on public safety, including education, environment, economic development, housing and health authorities, as well as social services, youth services and the probation service, and with appropriate non-governmental organisations.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

History

Authority to implement this recommendation was provided in the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000, although the Act does not explicitly mention non-governmental organisations (NGOs). Coordination with other government agencies and NGOs is routine and wide-ranging, and includes Community Safety, Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission, Police Ombudsman and the British Association for Women in Policing. The Policing Board also launched the Northern Ireland Neighbourhood Watch Scheme in 2004 jointly with the Police Service and the Northern Ireland Community Safety Centre.

Recommendation 16: Number of Members

Patten Recommendation:

16. The Policing Board should have 19 members, 10 of whom should be Assembly members drawn from the parties that comprise the new Northern Ireland Executive, selected on the d'Hondt system, who should not at the same time hold ministerial office in the Executive.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.



History

The Policing Board was established in November of 2001 in accordance with the stipulations as provided for in the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000.

Recommendation 17: Appointment of Members

Patten Recommendation:

17. The nine independent members of the Board should be selected from a range of different fields - including business, trade unions, voluntary organisations, community groups and the legal profession - with the aim of finding a group of individuals representative of the community as a whole, with the expertise both to set policing priorities and to probe and scrutinise different areas of police performance, from management of resources to the safeguarding of human rights. Their appointments should be for four years; but if it were necessary for the purpose of continuity to ensure that not all Board positions fell vacant at the same time as elections to the Assembly, some of these appointments could be for an initial period of two years.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

History

The backgrounds and interests of all members of the Policing Board are published in the Policing Board's annual reports. Independent members represent a wide diversity of backgrounds and abilities. Although the Independent Commission did not mention gender as a criterion to consider in the appointment of independent members, two of the Board's independent members are women.

Recommendation 18: Independent Members

Patten Recommendation:

18. The independent members should be appointed by the Secretary of State, in consultation with the First Minister and the Deputy First Minister, until such time as responsibility for policing is devolved, at which point the appointments should be made by the First Minister and the Deputy First Minister acting together. Until devolution, the Secretary of State should also determine the remuneration and expenses of Board members, in consultation with the First Minister and the Deputy First Minister.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

History

This procedure was followed in choosing and appointing independent members.

Recommendation 19: Appointment of Chairman

Patten Recommendation:

19. A Board member of high quality and standing in the community should be appointed by the Secretary of State to be the first chairman of the Board, with the agreement of the First Minister and the Deputy First Minister, for an initial term of four years.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved

History

This recommendation was fulfilled with the appointment of Professor Emeritus Sir Desmond Rea as Chairman of the Policing Board. A Vice-Chair, Mr. Dennis Bradley, was appointed at the same time.

Recommendation 20: Devolution of Responsibility for Policing

Patten Recommendation

20. Responsibility for policing should be devolved to the Northern Ireland Executive as soon as possible, except for matters of national security.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has not been achieved.

History

Responsibility for policing continues to rest with the Policing Board and the Government, as represented by the Secretary of State. The Independent Commission recommended the devolution of authority for policing, excepting national security. The Government has announced that primacy for national security would pass to the Security Service in 2007. Since the Independent Commission released its report the Northern Ireland Assembly ran between 2 December 1999 and 11 February 2000, between 27 May 2000 and 10 August 2001, and again between 11 August 2001 and 14 October 2002.

Remaining Issue

Although devolving responsibility for policing continues to be an area of active political interest and debate, the full implementation of this recommendation is now linked in particular to ongoing political developments.



Recommendation 21: The Powers of the Board

Patten Recommendation:

21. The powers of the Policing Board proposed in this report, in relation to both government (as now represented by the Secretary of State) and the Chief Constable, should in no way be diminished when the government role in the tripartite arrangement passes to the Northern Ireland Executive.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has not been achieved.

History

As described in Recommendation 20. In addition, the Independent Commission recommended that the powers of the Policing Board not be diminished with the transfer of responsibility for policing.

Remaining Issue

Although devolving responsibility for policing continues to be an area of active political interest and debate, the full implementation of this recommendation is now linked in particular to ongoing political developments.

Recommendation 22: Simplification of Roles in Tripartite Arrangements

Patten Recommendation:

22. The provisions of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 1998 should be simplified so that the respective roles of the Secretary of State (or successor), the Policing Board and the Chief Constable are clear.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

History

Compliance was achieved through sections 24-26 of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000, which came into effect on 4 November 2001.

Recommendation 23: Repeal of Power to Issue Guidance to the Police

Patten Recommendation:

23. The provision, in Section 39 of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 1998, that the Secretary of State may issue guidance to the police as to the exercise of their functions, should be repealed.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

History

This provision was repealed when Schedule 8 of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000 commenced by order on 4 November 2001.

Recommendation 24: Operational Responsibility

Patten Recommendation:

24. The Chief Constable should be deemed to have operational responsibility for the exercise of his or her functions and the activities of the police officers and civilian staff under his or her direction and control.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Full compliance with this recommendation has not yet been achieved.

History

There is verbal acceptance and understanding of this policy by the Policing Board and the Police Service. The development of written policy with respect to this recommendation is the joint responsibility of the Policing Board and the Police Service. The NIO's responsibility has been discharged with the enactment of section 33 of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000.

Remaining Issues

The Policing Board and the Police Service have decided not to develop written policy at this time. However, they both report that they are aware of the issue and discuss appropriate policies on an ongoing basis. While there are no concerns with the Chief Constable's scope of operational responsibility conflicting with the obligations and responsibilities of the Policing Board, this area will be kept under review throughout the remainder of the oversight mandate.

Recommendation 25: Powers of Policing Board to Require Reports

Patten Recommendation:

25. The Policing Board should have the power to require the Chief Constable to report on any issue pertaining to the performance of his functions or those of the police service. The obligation to report should extend to explaining operational decisions. If there is a disagreement between the Board and the Chief Constable over whether it is appropriate for a report to be provided on a particular matter, it should be for the Chief Constable to refer the question to the Secretary of State for a decision as to whether the Board's requirement should stand.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.



History

A “Code of Practice on Reports and Inquiries”, which implemented sections 59 and 60 of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000, was published by the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland in July of 2004. To date the Policing Board has received all necessary cooperation from the Police Service and has not had to invoke the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000 in order to receive reports or conduct inquiries. As a result, there is no requirement to assess records of dispute, nor ultimate decisions by the Secretary of State. On a number of occasions the Board has requested outside assistance, for example in the cases of the Crompton and Blakey reports into Special Branch and murder investigations. The Board has clearly been able to conduct professional and incisive studies without thus far requiring recourse to legislative authority.

Recommendation 26: Board to Follow-up Reports

Patten Recommendations:

26. The Policing Board should have the power, subject only to the same limitation set out in paragraph 6.22, to follow up any report from the Chief Constable by initiating an inquiry into any aspect of the police service or police conduct. Depending on the circumstances, the Board should have the option to request the Police Ombudsman, the Inspectorate of Constabulary or the Audit Office to conduct or contribute to such an inquiry, or to use the Board's own staff, or even private consultants for such a purpose.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

History

As described in Recommendation 25.

Recommendation 27: Establishment of District Police Partnerships

Patten Recommendation:

27. Each District Council should establish a District Policing Partnership (DPP), as a committee of the Council, with a majority elected membership, the remaining independent members to be selected by the Council with the agreement of the Policing Board. The chair of the DPP should be held by an elected member, with rotation between parties from year to year.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

History

District Policing Partnerships (DPPs) were created in March and April of 2003 in accordance with the provisions of this recommendation in all Districts except Dungannon and South Tyrone. Induction training was conducted for elected and independent members at that time. After extensive negotiations with the Policing Board and the District Council, a DPP was established for Dungannon and South Tyrone in the autumn of 2004, bringing the total number of DPPs to the prescribed 26. A Code of Practice for DPPs was published in August of 2002, and is currently

undergoing revision. Finally, the impact of the Government's ongoing review of public administration, which aims to reduce the number of councils and therefore also DPPs, will not be known for some time.

Recommendation 28: Arrangements for Belfast

Patten Recommendation:

28. The District Policing Partnership in Belfast should have four sub-groups, covering North, South, East and West Belfast.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

History

Sections 20-21 of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000 created a District Policing Partnership for Belfast with four sub-groups as called for by the Independent Commission.

Recommendation 29: Meetings between DPPs and District Commanders

Patten Recommendation:

29. There should be monthly meetings between the DPP and the police District Commander, at which the police should present reports and answer questions and the Board should reflect community concerns and priorities to the police. The views expressed by DPPs should be taken fully into account by the police and by the Policing Board in the formulation of policing plans and strategies at the central level.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

History

Minutes of meetings as well as our own observations show that meetings are being regularly held with DCU Commanders. DPP Members and DCU Commanders agree that consultation is frank and generally satisfactory. Although the views of DPPs are considered by Commanders, many DPP members say that their ability to amend annual strategic plans is limited because the parameters set by the Policing Board and senior management of the PSNI leave little latitude for local adaptation. There is a general feeling among DPP members that they would like more interaction with the Policing Board in shaping strategic priorities.

The functioning of the DPPs is an important outcome of the Independent Commission's recommendations, and a key function for community representation and views on policing issues. Accordingly, this recommendation will continue to be closely monitored throughout the remainder of the oversight mandate. In particular, the impact of the Review of Public Administration on council districts, and how the Police Service would subsequently restructure its DCU commands, as well as any threats to and attempted intimidation of DPP members, will



continue to be monitored. A special thematic on Human Rights and Accountability, which covers DPPs and their functions, will be released in September of 2005.

Recommendation 30: Annual Report of District Police Partnerships

Patten Recommendation:

30. The DPP should submit an annual report to the District Council and publish it.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

History

The first set of annual reports has been published. They are available through District Councils or through the Policing Board at www.nipolicingboard.org.uk

Recommendation 31: Administration Costs of District Police Partnerships

Patten Recommendation:

31. The approved administration costs of the DPP should attract a 75% grant from the Policing Board, the remaining 25% to be funded by the District Council.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

History

This recommendation was enacted by schedule 3, paragraph 11, of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000. The requirement has been elaborated in section 8 of the Code of Practice. Financial reports are audited by District Councils and the Policing Board.

Recommendation 32: Expenditures by District Police Partnerships

Patten Recommendation:

32. District Councils should have the power to contribute an amount initially up to the equivalent of a rate of 3p in the pound towards the improved policing of the district, which could enable the DPP to purchase additional services from the police and other statutory agencies, or from the private sector.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has not been achieved.

History

This recommendation was not adopted by the Government, and therefore not provided for in legislation.

Recommendation 33: Consultative Forums at Local Level

Patten Recommendation:

33. It should be the aim of every police beat manager to have a consultative forum in his or her patrol area.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has not been achieved.

History

The Police Service reported to the Policing Board in late 2003 that 600 Consultative Forums had been established. The Police Service's policy is laid out in the "Community Policing Implementation Plan". From interviews with beat officers and Commanders, it appears that there is considerable variety in the groups classified as consultative forums, as these include Community Police Liaison Committees, residents associations and neighbourhood watch groups.

Remaining Issues

Throughout our evaluations we have noted that there are a large number of consultative groups, which in its own right reflects good community support and involvement. Nevertheless, we note that there is no overarching strategy on the part of Government, the Police Service, Policing Board or criminal justice system that seeks to optimise public involvement, while preventing overlap and duplication. We note a significant amount of role confusion, particularly as this affects DPPs, Community Safety Partnerships and Community Police Liaison Committees. (see also Recommendation 44).

Recommendation 34: Contacts between Policing Board and DPPs

Patten Recommendation:

34. The Policing Board should maintain regular contact with the DPPs, through periodic meetings of chairpersons, annual conferences, seminars, training courses and by including them in the circulation of information.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Full compliance with this recommendation has not yet been achieved.

History

The Policing Board's facilitation, training, supervision and communication with DPPs is the responsibility of its Community and Training Division, assisted by three regional DPP supervisors. Policing Board staff meet regularly with DPP managers, sometimes in regional groupings. Training needs are assessed regularly and new programmes implemented. The Policing Board's 2004 survey of members showed them to be generally satisfied with the training received. Since December of 2003 the Policing Board has published a quarterly "District Police Partnership Newsletter".



Remaining Issues

Although this is an evolving issue, and there are no immediate concerns, the oversight team will continue to monitor and assess reports, minutes and schedules which address the regularity and quality of the Policing Board's contacts with DPPs.

Recommendation 35: Meetings of the Policing Board

Patten Recommendation:

35. The Policing Board should meet in public once a month, to receive a report from the Chief Constable.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

History

These meetings are occurring as recommended. Copies of the minutes of the public meetings of the Policing Board are available on its website at: www.nipolicingboard.org.uk.

Recommendation 36: Meetings of the District Policing Partnerships

Patten Recommendation:

36. District Policing Partnerships should meet in public once a month, and procedures should allow for members of the public to address questions to the Board and, through the chair, to the police.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

History

The DPP Code of Practice calls for six public meetings a year rather than monthly as recommended by the Independent Commission. In the view of many DPPs, public meetings have been less useful than anticipated. Attendance has often been sparse, questions formulaic and interaction limited by procedural rules. As a result, some DPPs are holding fewer than six public meetings a year. The Code of Practice is being revised to allow for a more informal exchange of views at public meetings. DPPs meet privately much more often, either in full committee or in various sub-committees.

Recommendation 37: Openness of the Police Service

Patten Recommendation:

37. The police service should take steps to improve its transparency. The presumption should be that everything should be available for public scrutiny unless it is in the public interest - not the police interest - to hold it back.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Full compliance with this recommendation has not yet been achieved.

History

The Police Service's Transparency Policy was published on 11 April 2003 after extensive consultation with the Policing Board. It sets forth guidelines for the release of information by the Police Service to the public, and refers explicitly to elements of the Independent Commission's recommendations as well as to our performance indicators. To facilitate the release of information, the Police Service has created a Freedom of Information Team to review all publications for compliance with the Freedom of Information Act.

The Police Service publishes the Chief Constable's annual report which includes statistics on crime, traffic accidents, racial and homophobic incidents, domestic violence and security-related incidents, as well as information about complaints against the police and disciplinary hearings. The annual report and other publications are available on the PSNI website at: www.psni.police.uk/. In conformity with guidelines prepared by the Association of Chief Police Officer (ACPO), the Police Service publishes all statements of policy, although it does not publish guidelines for implementing policies. This also follows ACPO guidelines.

Remaining Issues

The Independent Commission noted that transparency is an integral part of a more accountable, community and human rights-based approach to policing. While a tremendous degree of progress has been achieved, transparency is not an isolated issue, and there are others such as the registration of notifiable interests that are not yet resolved (see also Recommendation 126). Given the critical importance of assuring an ethos of openness and transparency, the implementation of this recommendation will continue to be verified throughout the remainder of the oversight mandate.

Recommendation 38: Police Ombudsman

Patten Recommendation:

38. The Police Ombudsman should be, and be seen to be, an important institution in the governance of Northern Ireland, and should be staffed and resourced accordingly. The Ombudsman should take initiatives, not merely react to specific complaints received. He/she should exercise the power to initiate inquiries or investigations even if no specific complaint has been received. The Ombudsman should be responsible for compiling data on trends and patterns in complaints against the police, or accumulations of complaints against individual officers, and should work with the police to address emerging issues from this data. He/she should have a dynamic co-operative relationship with both the police and the Policing Board, as well as other bodies involved in community safety issues. He/she should exercise the right to investigate and comment on police policies and practices, where these are perceived to give rise to difficulties, even if the conduct of individual officers may not itself be culpable, and should draw any such observations to the attention of the Chief Constable and the Policing Board. The Ombudsman should have access to all past reports of the RUC.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.



History

The Office of the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland formally set up on 6 November 2000 under the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 1998. Its main function is to ensure an efficient, effective and independent police complaints process for the people of Northern Ireland. As we have noted in past reports, the Ombudsman is performing her critical duties thoroughly and with professionalism, and she has striven to ensure that her office provides the independent and impartial police complaints system called for in legislation. The Ombudsman's role, along with those of the Policing Board and the District Policing Partnerships, is crucial to the evolving policing accountability structure. The Ombudsman also provides routine trend information on public complaints to the PSNI, thereby allowing the Police Service to meet its own internal accountability responsibilities.

Recommendations 39: Covert Law Enforcement

Patten Recommendation:

39. New legislation on covert policing should be fully compliant with the European Convention on Human Rights and should have the same application in Northern Ireland as in the rest of the United Kingdom.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

History

The Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (2000) has the same application throughout the United Kingdom, and is compliant with the European Convention on Human Rights. Codes of Practice were issued under this act in August of 2002.

Recommendations 40: Commissioner for Covert Law Enforcement

Patten Recommendation:

40. There should be a commissioner for covert law enforcement in Northern Ireland.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

History

The Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (2000) provides for a surveillance commissioner for Northern Ireland. The Chief Surveillance Commissioner for the United Kingdom released annual reports which covered 2001/2002, 2002/2003 and 2003/2004, indicating that oversight of covert law enforcement practices is sound. More information on these reports can be found at: www.surveillancecommissioners.gov.uk.

Recommendations 41: Covert Law Enforcement - Complaints Tribunal

Patten Recommendation:

41. There should be a complaints tribunal, comprising senior members of the legal profession, with full powers to investigate cases referred to it (either directly or through the Police Ombudsman) involving covert law enforcement operations.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

History

The Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (2000) provides for a complaints tribunal, via the authority contained in Sections 65 to 70. There is a UK-wide investigatory powers tribunal, which includes a former member of the Northern Ireland judiciary.

Recommendation 42: Strengthening of Financial Accountability

Patten Recommendation:

42. There should be a substantial strengthening of financial accountability, including a fully costed Annual Policing Plan; a strong audit department within the Policing Board, staffed by experts in budgeting, financial management and value for money programmes; and more systematic use of the Audit Office to study police resource management, either at the behest of the Policing Board or on its own initiative.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

History

The Policing Board was established in November of 2001 and carried forward the existing planning and budgetary processes of the former Police Authority into fiscal year 2001/2002. By the following year, both the reconstituted Police Service and Policing Board had established their own costed annual policing plans, along with sufficient audit capabilities to ensure appropriate best value. The current best value regime continues to improve year on year (see also Recommendation 93). The Police Service has continued to demonstrate financial accountability. The Policing Board in its governance role has ensured appropriate fiscal oversight.



▶▶ policing with the community

Recommendation 43: Designation of Chief Constable as Sub-Accounting Officer

Patten Recommendation:

43. The Chief Constable should be designated a sub-accounting officer, in addition to the Chief Executive of the Policing Board, so that either or both may be called, together with the Permanent Under Secretary as principal accounting officer, to give evidence to the Public Accounts Committee.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

History

As noted in our Report No. 4, released in April of 2002, the Chief Constable was appointed as the Accounting Officer for the Police Service of Northern Ireland in November of 2001. Appropriate policies are in place with capable management by an experienced Senior Director for Finance and Support Services, as well as monitoring by the Policing Board. Pending devolution, the final issue of providing evidence to the Public Accounts Committee is not a concern and the intent of this recommendation is deemed to have been achieved.



A. Chapter Summary

Background

The Independent Commission recommended that policing with the community be the core function of the Police Service and of every police station. Crucial to the new beginning envisioned by the Independent Commission, the theme of policing with the community has implications for the structure of the Police Service, for its management, culture, recruitment and training. The long term goal was to deliver truly effective, locally-based policing that would not only address some of the current issues unique to Northern Ireland, but put it at the leading edge of policing in the United Kingdom, Ireland and internationally.

B. Recommendation Summary

Recommendation 44: Community Policing as a Core Function

Patten Recommendation:

44. Policing with the community should be the core function of the police service and the core function of every police station.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Full compliance with this recommendation has not yet been achieved.

History

The Independent Commission published its recommendations in 1999 in the hope that an increasingly stable environment would encourage all parts of the community to commit to its progressive policing agenda. This was despite the lack of full political support and endorsement for the policing changes, circumstances that unfortunately exist to this day. The Police Service adopted the philosophy recommended by the Independent Commission and developed a Policing with the Community policy and implementation plan that remains impressive in design and delivery. Evidence gathered over the term of oversight evaluations indicates that there is a clear institutional commitment that is reflected in legislation, reports and pronouncements by the Policing Board, and annual reports and policies published by the Police Service itself.

Policing with the community represents a major change in policing style from that practiced over the past few decades. Even in the most positive and supportive of policing environments, a conversion of this magnitude, which addresses the organisation's core mission and culture, would be expected to take years of steady and consistent effort. The Police Service has displayed commitment and imagination in dealing with this challenge, and this dedication has been recognised both in the UK and internationally, particularly for its successful crime prevention and community problem solving projects. Equally as important, this aspect of the reform process has consistently been supported by the Policing Board.

Policing plans of the Policing Board and District Policing Partnerships (DPPs) are increasingly reflective of a balance between service-wide goals and local policing goals, a development reflected in the Policing Plan for 2005-2008. While the initial priorities of the DPPs focussed on accountability and policing priorities, the DPP role in developing practical ways of gaining the

public's cooperation and working to prevent crime remains relatively underdeveloped, and while there are numerous proactive partnerships involving Community Police Liaison Committees and other groups, there is less specific evidence of similar activities on the part of DPPs. The Policing Board is now working with local partnerships to improve this facet of performance. In addition, largely in response to quality of life issues raised by the DPPs, the Policing Plan 2005-2008 listed two emerging issues for attention: reducing fear of crime, and dealing with anti-social behaviour.

Success in policing with the community is measured by an array of outcomes, and crime statistics and clearance rates are often used as proxy measures for success. The Policing Plan 2005-2008 includes the objective of increasing the percentage of victims satisfied with the service received. Reductions in key crime categories most recently reported may also reflect improved confidence in the police by members of the public. Recorded crime for 2004-2005 declined 10% compared to the previous year, although recorded fear of crime, and public perceptions of crime rates, remain on the rise. Repeated public opinion surveys are also used as benchmarks for assessing relative trust and confidence levels in the Police Service. In addition, DCUs conduct their own quality assurance checks, which further suggest rising levels of public trust, and there is rich anecdotal evidence of improving relationships and contacts across the entire community in Northern Ireland.

The organisational model selected by PSNI for launching policing with the community with its structural split between neighbourhood policing teams and response units is a strategy common to a police service in transition, the theory being that the specialist unit will develop methods and techniques which are later applied across the organisation. Typically such a "split force" model exaggerates the difference between units, creates barriers to communication and marginalises the neighbourhood teams. The abstraction of neighbourhood officers to other duties has hobbled some units, and given the impression that beat patrols are a low priority. However, Craigavon DCU has opted to meet its policing with the community obligations by shifting from a "response and sector" model to an entirely sectoral approach.

Other DCU Commanders are also experimenting with a variety of modifications to the original template, towards achieving balanced performance. The annual awards for achievement in policing with the community are an effective method for recognising good work and demonstrating the importance of problem solving within the Police Service.

In April of 2005 a conference for DCU Commanders and their key managers was convened at Belfast by the Deputy Chief Constable. Regional ACCs made presentations on accountability and performance management, with performance indicators itemised for all levels of accountability from Constable to Commander. The highlight of the conference was the introduction of a £3M fund to promote innovation in policing with the community over a three year period, with funds made available from within approved budget limitations due to the success of other efficiency strategies. Applications for projects must include support from the local DPP and all grants will be subject to evaluation. The fund objectives are to develop innovative approaches to policing with the community, to build constructive and effective partnerships to assist policing, to increase public awareness of and support for the police, and to identify, pilot and evaluate projects which lead to more efficient and effective policing.



Remaining Issues

All efforts geared towards policing with the community effort would benefit from a renewed sense of vigour and purpose, although it must be understood that the PSNI is not alone in this partnership nor solely responsible for success in this important endeavour; the lack of full political and community support only serves to delay the new beginning to policing envisioned by the Independent Commission.

The influence of many Full Time Reserve (FTR) members involved in delivering policing with the community has been very positive. This will be affected now that the decision has been made to phase out the FTR. It remains for DCU Commanders to ensure that service to the public will not suffer as a result of losing these officers, and that their replacements are selected, trained and oriented to fill this impending "experience gap". Training in policing with the community concepts and practices was delivered early in the implementation process, followed by specialised training for beat officers. However, there is little evidence of the continuity of this training, which risks diminishing organisational capacity over time.

Building up contacts with and bridges to estranged or marginalised communities will continue to demand the attention of the Police Service. Over the period of assessment we have observed the unrelenting efforts of experienced neighbourhood policing teams consistently challenging and extending the perceived boundaries of policing difficult areas. Most recently concern for the emergence of hate crimes has focussed attention on support for diverse communities.

The values and beliefs of officers striving to improve relationships with the community are influenced by their working conditions. The fortified appearance of many of the current stations is inimical to the state of mind of a community officer and discouraging to members of the public seeking police assistance. This example epitomises the integrated effort required for full installation of policing with the community (see also Recommendations 52 and 53).

Recommendation 45: Dedicated Neighbourhood Policing Teams

Patten Recommendation:

45. Every neighbourhood (or rural area) should have a dedicated policing team with lead responsibility for policing its area.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Full compliance with this recommendation has not yet been achieved.

History

Dedicated policing teams were initially established in each DCU. As DCU Commanders gain experience with balancing resources between response, prevention and reassurance, progress consistent with the original intent is emerging. Although Neighbourhood Policing Teams have been established in DCUs, organisationally they exist as specialised units and not as the principal service delivery method for both response to call and community services, as initially conceived by the Independent Commission. Regular police officers and Full Time Reserve members attached to these units display initiative, ingenuity and a genuine will to progress this initiative in carrying out their duties.

Remaining Issues

The long absence of training Service Level Agreements (SLAs) threatened the ability of the Police Service to sustain the impressive progress being made by DCU Commanders, supervisors, beat officers, as well as individual members of neighbourhood policing teams. However, the Police College has now completed its SLA pilot scheme in four DCUs. The District Training General Order 13/2005, published on 17 May 2005, and appended SLAs, were approved and went into effect on 11 April 2005. SLAs for the 29 DCUs have been signed by the Head of the Police College and have now gone to DCU Commanders (see also Recommendation 132).

The abstraction of neighbourhood police officers to unrelated duties has been a continuing concern throughout the period of oversight, and is ultimately destructive of community relationships and successful problem solving. Increased attention to local goals and the emphasis placed on police visibility and reassurance strategies by DPPs, the Policing Board and Regional ACCs may serve to address this concern.

Recommendation 46: Service in Neighbourhood Policing Teams

Patten Recommendation:

46. Members of the policing team should serve at least three and preferably five years in the same neighbourhood. They should wear their names clearly displayed on their uniforms, and their uniforms should also bear the name of the locality for which they are responsible.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

History

Postings for neighbourhood policing positions within DCUs include the requirement for commitments of three to five years. This condition is included in the Police Service's draft Tenure Policy, although it has not yet been promulgated by General Order. A General Order providing guidance on the wearing of name badges in a variety of duty circumstances has been issued. While many officers initially took advantage of the exceptions that allowed them to carry out duties without displaying a name badge, members of neighbourhood teams are increasingly wearing their badges in a variety of circumstances, while neighbourhood policing supervisors and senior officers set an example by wearing name badges at all times.

Recommendation 47: Police Probationary Training

Patten Recommendation:

47. All probationary police officers should undertake the operational phases of their probationary training doing team policing in the community.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.



History

The requirement for probationers to spend their formative training period engaged in policing with the community has proved impractical. It created a barrier to the education and development of basic police enforcement skills by probationary officers assigned in a “split force” environment. This practice in effect clashed with the requirements of the instrument used to direct and assess probationer performance. A compromise was struck by DCU Commanders with a variety of methods for ensuring that during the probationary period, each probationer would serve a portion of field training assigned to a neighbourhood policing team, while also receiving tutoring from an experienced officer assigned to response duties. This solution is working to the satisfaction of Commanders and probationers alike, and supports the original intent of this recommendation.

Recommendation 48: Patrolling on Foot

Patten Recommendation:

48. Where practical, policing teams should patrol on foot.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

History

Duty rosters in DCUs across both urban and rural regions reflect the consistent assignment of officers to walking beats, varied according to local conditions. Observations and interviews of beat officers and community members confirm performance, although this must be tempered with concerns over short term abstractions to other duties. For veteran officers in many localities this recommendation represented the continuation of a familiar policing routine. In more difficult areas, police officers were observed to be expanding their range of patrol by location and time of day, while balancing this against the perceived risks. The high visibility jacket adopted for beat officers is a decidedly effective strategy, as are the bicycle patrols introduced in numerous DCUs. Surveys of public attitudes conducted by the Policing Board confirm an unwavering desire by the wider public for greater police visibility, accompanied by rising expectations.

Recommendation 49: Role of Neighbourhood Policing Teams

Patten Recommendation:

49. Neighbourhood policing teams should be empowered to determine their own local priorities and set their own objectives, within the overall Annual Policing Plan and in consultation with community representatives.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Full compliance with this recommendation has not yet been achieved.

History

Goals jointly established by DCU Commanders and District Policing Partnerships (DPPs) for the Policing Plan 2005/2006 contain increased evidence of consultation. In many cases, objectives calculated to prevent crime and disorder are assigned to neighbourhood policing teams as the focus for problem solving. Highly achieving teams produce detailed analyses of criminal activities prevented or suppressed. In these teams officers speak of a deep commitment to ensuring safety and security, within the context of an empowered organisational culture. There remains a sense however, that in the majority of instances problem solving has been limited to the activities of the police, with more limited evidence of community participation. While the Police Service's established training regime encourages more collaborative initiatives by officers, members of the public also share in the responsibility for effective partnerships.

The Policing Board commenced a review of the role and performance of DPPs in 2004. The Board wished to create a forum where meaningful discussion may take place between the DPP and the DCU Commander, and collaborative efforts would be promoted. To this end the Board will assist DPP members to explore how it can achieve its full potential within the framework of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000 and the DPP Code of Practice. The Policing Board is prepared to provide training and support to those DPP members who will be appointed in 2005. A successful outcome will be reflected in achieving an environment where the DPP and police work closely together to obtain the cooperation of the public to prevent crime, and where collaborative community problem solving is a standard operating practice.

Remaining Issues

Despite determined efforts by most policing teams, developing the participation of community members in local problem solving remains at a basic stage. The implementation of this important recommendation will continue to be verified throughout the remainder of the oversight mandate.

Recommendation 50: Crime and Complaint Pattern Analysis

Patten Recommendation:

50. The Northern Ireland police should, both at a service-wide level and at patrol team level, conduct crime pattern and complaint pattern analysis to provide an information-led, problem-solving approach to policing. All police officers should be instructed in problem-solving techniques and encouraged to address the causes of problems as well as the consequences (the priority being to train beat managers and their teams); and they should be regularly appraised as to their performance in doing so.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

History

The Crime Analysis Centre rapidly developed into a centre of excellence within the fabric of the Police Service with an international reputation for professional achievement. District and departmental analysts produce information essential for identification of priorities and the



▶▶ policing in a peaceful society

allocation of patrol and investigative services. Analysts deployed to DCUs provide support for Commanders in developing their action plans and informing their DPPs and other community forums about crime patterns and other issues. The Analysis Centre accepted a major role in the introductory phase of the National Intelligence Model, and participated in the initial training of neighbourhood policing teams. More recently there has been an increase in the frequency of crime analyst presentations to public forums, including DPPs.

Information and technical assistance alone are insufficient to exploit improved crime analysis, and front line officers require consistent in-service training in the skill sets and tools of problem solving if initial gains are to be sustained. While this is no reflection on the outstanding accomplishments of the Analysis Centre, the long absence of Service Level Agreements between Training Branch and DCUs only served to threaten the long term sustainability of policing with the community (see also Recommendation 76 and 132). While these have been recently approved by Training Branch, their impact and affect will be evaluated over time given the extensive delay.

Recommendation 51: Attendance at Police Training Courses

Patten Recommendation:

51. DPP members and other community leaders should be able to attend police training courses in problem-solving techniques.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

History

Invitations were extended to members of the District Policing Partnerships and other community leaders to attend a variety of police training, conference and seminar opportunities sponsored by the Police Service, both locally and in Belfast. These were arranged jointly between the Police Service and the Policing Board. More recently DPP members were invited to participate in a leadership training programme presented to senior and middle management police officers. The Policing Board has assumed responsibility for continuing the development of DPP forums, as well as the further training of members. Progress will be monitored on a yearly basis to ensure sustainability.



A. Chapter Summary

Background

The Independent Commission made several recommendations covering the appearance of police stations, appropriate types of patrol vehicles and the need to increase devolved authority to District Commanders. In addition, recommendations included those on army support, the use of emergency powers, administration of detention facilities, and other issues affecting the ability of the Police Service to deliver the kind of law enforcement service a peaceful society would require.

B. Recommendation Summary

Recommendation 52: Appearance of Police Stations (New Builds)

Patten Recommendation:

52. Police stations built from now on should have, so far as possible, the appearance of ordinary buildings; they should have low perimeter walls, and be clearly visible from the street; but they should have security features, which may be activated or reinforced as necessary.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

History

The Police Service, NIO and Policing Board have been successful in ensuring that new police stations are built consistent with the recommendations of the Independent Commission. The new facilities at Moira and Coleraine have the appearance of ordinary buildings, have low perimeter walls and are clearly visible from the street. They were built using impact resistant design standards and other security features that can be reinforced as necessary.

The revised Estate Strategy was agreed by the Policing Board on 20 May 2005. It identifies several new builds with ordinary appearance to be completed by 2009, including Downpatrick, Ballymoney, Cookstown, Craigavon, Musgrave Street and Omagh. Construction will be in accordance with new security designs. The unanswered questions as to the future number and location of the DCUs, the number and location of police stations reporting to the DCUs, and the size of the headquarters will have to be resolved in an amendment to the Estate Strategy before additional new builds are authorised or funded.

Recommendation 53: Appearance of Police Stations (Existing)

Patten Recommendation:

53. Existing police stations should - subject to the security situation in their areas and to health and safety considerations - be progressively made less forbidding in appearance, more accessible to public callers and more congenial for those working in them. The public reception areas inside police stations should be made more welcoming, and civilian receptionists could replace police officers.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has not been achieved.

History

As noted by the Independent Commission, one legacy of the past has been that police officers are physically separated from the public they serve by fortified, and fortress-like, police stations. Even those in quiet rural villages have forbidding exteriors. This did not help in policing with the community. Accordingly, they recommended that, subject to the security situation, existing buildings be made progressively less forbidding, more accessible to the public and that civilian receptionists replace police officers.

In November of 2003 the Chief Constable ordered a full review of the police estate, which would form the basis of a revised Estate Strategy. Among other things the Estate Strategy would include plans for the renovation of existing police stations, and a de-fortification scheme for the rest of the police estate. In April of 2004 the Police Service advised the oversight team that an Estates Committee had been formed to address these and other issues concerning the police estate. DCU Commanders submitted their recommendations concerning the future needs of the police estate, and the two regional ACCs prepared a summary of these recommendations for the Estates Committee.

In April of 2005 the Police Service announced that a completed Estate Strategy, including an extensive improvement and maintenance programme, had been forwarded to the Policing Board for approval. The strategy was approved in May of 2005, which will permit the use of mobile policing units or the sharing of community facilities to create "store front" police stations. DCU Commanders will also have the authority to remove out-of-date security walls from a police station without seeking headquarters approval. The strategy includes a list of police stations that should be sold by the Policing Board, as well as written guidance and a template for DCU Commanders to follow when recommending that a station be closed or sold.

Since commencing its work the oversight team has visited over half of the 135 police stations in Northern Ireland for the purpose of inspecting conditions and appearance. Progress has been noted on the renovation of several enquiry offices, which will make these areas more welcoming to members of the public. The oversight team also observed that several enquiry offices currently scheduled for renovation appeared to be in satisfactory condition already, while several enquiry offices scheduled for renovation are only open a few hours a week. Only 55 stations, or 40% of the total, are open to the public during normal police business hours, this being either 8:00 A.M. to midnight or a full 24 hours. The interiors of several police stations are in poor condition and are unpleasant places to work in or to visit.

The Independent Commission noted that there was no operational need for a police officer to perform receptionist duties, and that many members of the public may find it more comfortable to deal, at least in the first instance, with a civilian employee. This would bring Northern Ireland into line with the rest of the United Kingdom and elsewhere, and would allow police stations to be more integrated with their local communities. In 2002 the Police Service initially reported that the new civilian receptionists selected to replace police officers would be classified as permanent contract employees, and that 50:50 community representation for the new receptionists would be maintained.



In late 2002 the Police Service decided to use a private sector firm, Grafton Recruitment, as well as internal trawls to begin filling civilian receptionist positions. In our Report No. 8, released in September 2003, we noted that regardless of other organisational benefits, the use of internal trawls to fill receptionist positions would do little to address the issue of community representation. In June of 2003 Grafton Recruitment completed a recruitment campaign which resulted in a merit pool of 236 qualified applicants. From this 58 candidates were selected on a 50:50 basis. 20% of applications received were from Catholics.

To ensure proper utilisation of the new SEA positions, the Police Service distributed a policy document in September of 2003 detailing how the SEAs would be managed and how an equal number of police officers would be transferred to operational duties. According to the Police Service's own estimates the full implementation of this recommendation would have potentially released up to 260 police officers to perform patrol or investigative duties. There remains some confusion among several DCUs as to the replacement of police officers with SEAs. Several DCU Commanders interviewed understand that a SEA would be assigned only to replace the second police officer assigned to the enquiry office, while other Commanders believe the SEA programme applies to all police officers assigned to enquiry offices.

The Police Service then prepared a second business case seeking funds for additional 96 positions. Following approval of the business case by the NIO and Treasury, Grafton Recruitment intend to initiate a second SEA campaign for eight to ten additional positions. The Police Service provided a chart indicating where the SEAs would be assigned. The Police Service reports that 76 SEAs were in place as at April of 2005. The Police Service also advised that it would use periodic business improvement reviews to inspect the use of SEAs, to ensure they have replaced rather than supplemented police officers previously assigned to reception duties.

Remaining Issues

The Policing Board approved the new Police Service Estate Strategy on 20 May 2005. It will be reviewed by oversight evaluators for sufficiency, and more importantly to see if further progress is accomplished in line with the recommendations.

In April of 2005 the Police Service reported that the project to increase the number of SEAs was placed on hold until several issues involving duties performed and police officer replacement could be resolved. The findings and recommendations contained in the 31 March 2005 Best Value Review of the enquiry offices and use of the SEAs to date would support the project not moving forward until several critical issues are resolved. As at April of 2005 a comprehensive implementation strategy and timetable for the staffing of all 260 positions had not been provided. The oversight team will continue to examine the actual placement of SEAs in order to determine if they have had any effect on the deployment of police officers back to operational duties.

Recommendation 54: Devolved Authority of District Commanders

Patten Recommendation:

54. District police commanders should have discretion to decide in consultation with their local community how best to balance their resources between static posts and mobile patrols.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Full compliance with this recommendation has not yet been achieved.

History

The Independent Commission recommended that DCU Commanders be granted the discretion to decide, in consultation with their local community, how best to balance their policing resources. Of the DCU Commanders interviewed by the oversight team in the summer of 2002, none had received specific authority to implement the discretion noted in this recommendation. The Police Service also reported that this recommendation could not be fully implemented without the District Policing Partnerships (DPP) being established by the Policing Board, and the necessary authority being granted to District Commanders.

DPPs were ultimately established in 2002, thereby giving each DCU Commander the means for consulting and analysing problems with the local community, including a mechanism for deciding on a balance between static posts and mobile patrols. In addition, in September of 2003 the Police Service distributed a satisfactory definition of static and mobile patrols to DCU Commanders in order to provide guidance to help implement this recommendation. In April of 2004 the Police Service advised that it planned to develop further written definitions regarding devolved authority in order to resolve any misunderstandings and uncertainties that might remain.

Remaining Issues

The Independent Commission noted the importance of working in partnership with communities in order to develop policing strategies that meet both police and community objectives. The oversight team will continue to monitor the implementation of this recommendation to ensure that consultation has the intended effects, and that the deployment of police resources reflects community input (see also Recommendations 29, 44 and 76).

Recommendation 55: Police Vehicles (Patrol Vehicles)

Patten Recommendation:

55. Police cars should continue to be substituted as patrol vehicles in place of armoured Landrovers, and the use of armoured Landrovers should be limited to threatening situations.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Full compliance with this recommendation has not yet been achieved.



History

The Police Service has demonstrated considerable progress in replacing Armoured Landrovers (ALRs) with police cars for the purpose of performing patrol duties and responding to calls for service. The Police Service has a fleet of 2,800 vehicles, including 448 ALRs.

In early 2002 the Police Service provided the oversight team with an inventory of police vehicles by make, model, type, and district/department assignments. This document included budget summaries for a multi-year period, but did not include the required long and short range plans to substitute police cars for ALRs. However, the Police Service did provide a schedule for placing 448 ALRs in strategic reserve by the end of 2006, which was recently revised to April of 2009. The Police Service has issued orders describing the use of liveried saloon vehicles or police cars while on patrol, with emphasis on the care and maintenance of the vehicles.

By December of 2002 the Police Service began to reduce the number of ALRs assigned to DCUs for use in routine patrols, thereby requiring DCUs to make greater use of regular liveried and non-liveried vehicles. Between 2003 and 2005 the replacement of ALRs with police cars has continued. For example, by April of 2005 a total of 77 ALRs were assigned to DCUs for regular patrol duties, a decrease from the 113 that were available in April of 2003. A reduction in the number of ALRs assigned to the Tactical Support Groups has also taken place.

A three-year plan was received from the Police Service to purchase 100 additional police cars, at a cost of £4.9M, to replace an equal number of ALRs. In November of 2004 the Chief Constable announced plans to double the number of liveried patrol vehicles over a 24-month period.

The oversight team also verified the implementation of this recommendation during visits to each of the 29 DCUs, as well as to a large number of smaller police stations. During these visits it was observed that police stations do not suffer a shortage of regular police cars with which to fulfill their daily patrolling assignments, and the use of ALRs for routine patrol purposes when there are an insufficient number of regular police cars is not a controlling factor.

Remaining Issues

The Police Service has not yet provided documentation on the actual number of ordinary police vehicles purchased and placed on patrol in each DCU, as well as the number of these vehicles that are armoured.

Recommendation 56: Police Vehicles (Landrovers)

Patten Recommendation:

56. As soon as possible (that is, as soon as the incidence of deployment ceases to be regular) armoured Landrovers should be moved to depots, to be kept in reserve for use in public order policing for as long as this contingency may be required.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

History

The Police Service initiated implementation of this recommendation through the issuance of General Order 58/2001, Issue of Strategic Reserve Armoured Landrovers (ALRs). The Order outlined the requirement and procedure to be followed to move ALRs to five depots where they would be held in reserve for use in public order situations. It also provided an interim target of having 50% of ALRs, or 225, in five reserve depots by 31 March 2002. Further documentation required that all 448 ALRs be placed in strategic reserve by the end of 2006; however, this was revised recently to have all ALRs in strategic reserve by April of 2009. As the security situation continues to improve, the goal to transfer 448 ALRs to strategic reserve should be accomplished.

By April of 2003 the Police Service had placed 35% of ALRs, or 157, in strategic reserve. By April of 2005 the number has increased considerably with 58% of ALRs, or 261, assigned to strategic reserve depots. The Police Service has provided detailed information that clearly demonstrates progress in this area, and it has used several locations to place ALRs in reserve, rather than just the five designated depots.

In late 2004 the Police Service conducted an extensive best practice review of ALR utilisation, and of the inventory and recording practices used by the Transport Services unit. This evaluation identified several areas of improvement, including a recommendation to begin immediately to reduce the size of the ALR fleet due to reduced usage by DCUs, as well as the high cost of sustaining the entire ALR fleet.

The Police Service plans to conduct an additional overview of ALR utilisation, as well as the role of armoured police vehicles in the Police Service. A survey conducted by the Urban and Rural regions in March of 2005 identified an additional 52 ALRs assigned to police stations that could be replaced by a regular patrol vehicle, with the ALR then being placed in reserve. By April of 2005 the Police Service had successfully implemented the intent of this recommendation within a reasonable time period, particularly considering the periodic need for ALRs due to public order situations.

Recommendation 57: Police Vehicles

57. The word 'Police' should be painted onto the sides of all Landrovers.

Lead Responsibility: Chief Constable/Policing Board

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.



History

In September of 2002 the Police Service provided written documentation that the word “Police” had been painted on all of its Armoured Landrovers (ALRs), to make them less forbidding. One year later, in September of 2003, further progress was accomplished when 440 ALRs were painted white, thereby replacing the dark grey colour previously used.

As of this report, all 440 ALRs had also been painted with the Battenberg colour scheme similar to other liveried police vehicles. Visits by the oversight team to vehicle depots and police stations verified compliance with this recommendation.

Recommendation 58: Army Support, Security Demands

Patten Recommendation:

58. The role of the army should continue to be reduced, as quickly as the security situation will allow, so that the police can patrol all parts of Northern Ireland without military support.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

History

In April of 2002 the Police Service provided a basic plan to reduce its dependence on army support. The plan described the areas and circumstances where the army would provide support to the Police Service, the procedures used to acquire that support, and the extent of the support generally provided. Since 2002 the security situation has changed and the army has reported a considerable reduction in troop levels and patrols in support of the Police Service. In the Policing Plan for 2003-2004, the Policing Board reported on the security situation and noted that the number of shooting incidents had decreased from 348 to 207, while bombing incidents had decreased from 178 to 71. The number of deaths as a result of the security situation decreased from 15 to 7.

Further evidence of a changing security situation is in the 2004 report by the Independent Monitoring Commission (IMC). The IMC noted significant progress in the normalisation of the security situation and verified the reduced role of the army in support of the police. Specifically, the IMC reported that the troop numbers “based” in Northern Ireland in support of public order policing had declined from 14,892 in 1999 to 12,000 in May of 2004, a decrease of 19%. During this same period 25% of the army bases were closed and 53% of the army watchtowers and observation posts were demolished. In February of 2005 the Police Service announced the closure of two additional army installations in North Belfast.

In April of 2005 the army reported further reductions in troop levels in Northern Ireland. There are now 11,000 army personnel assigned to Northern Ireland, with no troops rear-based. The army has also increased the requirements a DCU Commander must satisfy before assistance from the army is approved. There remain three DCUs that can directly request support from the army. Although support from the army has been significantly reduced, the army still provides patrols along the border area in support of local police officers. To further reduce dependency on the

army, the Police Service has purchased and made operational, items of specialised equipment previously available only from the army.

The Police Service will continue to require technical support from the army over the longer term, particularly when investigating bombs and other explosives. Data provided by the Police Service and the army indicate a continuing reduction in the support provided by the army during the past several months, although the army retains its capability to support the Police Service if needed. This is also the case if the army is called on to provide support to the Police Service in meeting public order demands. The General Officer Commanding and the Chief Constable continue to coordinate army support for public order demands (see also Recommendation 58).

Recommendation 59: Army Support, Public Order Demands

Patten Recommendation:

59. For as long as the prospect remains of substantial public order policing demands on the scale seen at Drumcree in recent years, the army should retain the capacity to provide support for the police in meeting those demands.

Lead Responsibility: NIO/Chief Constable/GOC

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

History

The army has retained its capacity to provide support for the Police Service in meeting public order policing demands. Reports have been provided periodically to the oversight team indicating where the army has been used to assist the Police Service to meet public order demands. The General Officer Commanding and the Chief Constable continue to coordinate army support for public order situations.

Recommendation 60: Emergency Legislation

Patten Recommendation:

60. Provided the threat of terrorism in Northern Ireland diminishes to the point where no additional special powers are necessary to combat it, legislation against terrorism should be the same in Northern Ireland as in the rest of the United Kingdom.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

History

The Terrorism Act (2000) stipulates that, depending on the security situation, the Secretary of State can phase out Part VII of the Act. The Act grants special powers specific to Northern Ireland. Based on analysis of the quarterly reports provided by the Police Service, the oversight team has observed a steady reduction in the use of emergency powers by police officers. The



Independent Reviewer of the Terrorism Act (2000) conducted an examination of the Act and also reported that the use of emergency powers by the Police Service and the army has decreased each year.

In April of 2005 the NIO reported that Parliament concluded that Part VII powers were justified and that the threat level required the use of particularly focussed legislative provisions. Based on an annual review of the situation emergency powers under Part VII will continue. The Government stated that it recognised the exceptional nature of these provisions and is committed to their eventual removal. The Part VII provisions expire completely in February of 2006. Considering the current security situation as determined by the Government, compliance with the Independent Commission's intent in this regard has been achieved.

Recommendation 61: Records on the Use of Emergency Powers

Patten Recommendation:

61. In the meantime, with immediate effect, records should be kept of all stops and searches and other such actions taken under emergency powers.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

History

Following adoption of the Terrorism Act (2000) the Police Service took steps to implement the provisions of the Act by issuing General Order 37/2001, The Terrorism Act 2000 – Human Rights and Monitoring Issues. The Order outlines in detail the justification and procedures for all stops and searches under an emergency and establishes a reporting and review responsibility for all stops/searches made under the Act. The Order also includes specific responsibilities of the DCU Commanders for monitoring and administratively reviewing these reports. A new non-discriminatory PACE form was issued to record the number of stops, searches and seizures. The form included a human rights checklist to be used by police officers. The General Order also made PACE records available to the suspect if requested.

Initially, progress by the Police Service to implement this authority at the DCU level was slow and inconsistent. To improve effective implementation, the Police Service conducted two internal audits that identified several problems requiring correction, including a significant variance in compliance with the administrative procedures set forth in the Order. In October of 2004 the Police Service amended the previous policy statement and issued General Order 49/2004, The Terrorism Act 2000 – Monitoring the Use of Emergency Powers. The amended Order standardises the procedures for the use, recording and monitoring of these powers. It requires DCU Commanders to use a standard template document to analyse the use of the powers and the regional ACCs to include a review of this in their accountability meetings with Commanders. The requirement ensures that administrative reviews of stops and searches are conducted and corrective actions taken where needed.

Both the Police Service and the army provided periodic statistical reports on the use of powers under the Terrorism Act. A review of the reports over a three-year period shows a general decline in the use of emergency powers by the Police Service. This decline was supported by the analysis conducted by the NIO in comparing the period January to September of 2004 with the three previous years. The analysis generally represents a significant decline in the use of Terrorism Act powers both the Police Service and the army. Likewise, the Policing Board fulfilled its responsibilities by examining Police Service policies and procedures on stops and searches.

Recommendation 62: Holding Centres

Patten Recommendation:

62. The three holding centres at Castlereagh, Gough barracks and Strand Road should be closed forthwith and all suspects should in future be detained in custody suites based in police stations.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Full compliance with this recommendation has not yet been achieved.

History

In December of 2001 documents were received from the Police Service indicating that the three holding centres, including Gough Barracks, had been closed, and that all prisoners arrested under section 41 of the Terrorism Act (2000) would be held at the Lisburn DCU. The construction of the custody suite at Lisburn DCU served as an interim facility until a permanent joint custody suite could be constructed at Antrim DCU in April of 2003. The permanent Serious Crime Suite at Antrim DCU incorporated the special conditions and safeguards required for detaining terrorist suspects. The Police Service provided the number of prisoners detained at Gough Barracks and the Lisburn temporary suite, as well as an inventory of cells and total detainee population. A Scoping Study on terrorist detention space needs was also received and reviewed. An inspection of the Gough facility in April of 2002 found the facility closed and no signs of recent use.

Following consultations with DCU Commanders the Estate Services Business Unit recommended a £27M plan to create four serious crime suites at Antrim, Craigavon, Foyle and Musgrave Street. This was agreed in March of 2004. There would also be 13 smaller designated custody suites at the police stations located throughout Northern Ireland. The Independent Commissioner for Detained Terrorist Suspects released a report in 2003 containing a reference that Gough Barracks had been designated by the Secretary of State as a temporary custody facility to hold terrorist suspects. Due to the lack of designated space at other sites, Gough Barracks had been reopened on 18 January 2003 to house terrorist suspects, however this designation was revoked three days later. In the end, Gough Barracks had been temporarily used to house terrorist suspects on three different occasions in 2003, all due to a lack of space at Lisburn and Antrim. However, the oversight team was not notified that Gough Barracks had been placed back in operation, and the routine reports received from the Police Service indicated the three holding centres were still closed, as the Police Service considered Gough Barracks a "mothballed" facility equipped to be opened at short notice.



The new Serious Crime Suite at Antrim DCU for housing terrorist suspects became operational in April of 2003, followed by the closure of the temporary suite at Lisburn. The NIO also approved funding to renovate the detention facility at the Grosvenor Road police station to house terrorist suspects in case the Antrim custody suite was closed or its capacity exceeded. The Grosvenor Road facility, which opened in November of 2004, placed Gough Barracks back in the permanently closed category. Also, the Grosvenor Road facility is considered temporary until the Musgrave DCU station is built in 2007. In March of 2005 it was announced that demolition work would begin on the Castlereagh Holding Centre, with the land to be used by the Police Service. As at April of 2005 all the three holding centres are closed and a plan to house all suspects in custody suites located at police stations has been approved.

Remaining Issues

The outstanding issue involves the issuance of authorisation for the design, building and refurbishment of police stations to accommodate custody suites.

Recommendation 63: Video Recording in PACE Custody Suites

Patten Recommendation:

63. Video recording should be introduced into the PACE custody suites.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Full compliance with this recommendation has not yet been achieved.

History

After some delay the Police Service initiated a pilot scheme at Musgrave Street DCU in 2002 to test the equipment and procedures necessary to introduce video recording (CCTV) into PACE custody suites. The pilot scheme was limited to video recording of custody areas only, with interviews recorded if the suspect gave his or her permission. Audio and video recording equipment had been installed at the Lisburn temporary custody suite for interviewing persons detained under terrorist legislation. When the custody suite at Antrim DCU became operational, video and audio recording equipment was included in its construction (see also Recommendation 62).

The pilot project at Musgrave Street DCU was completed in early 2003. The evaluation and recommendations coming out of this pilot were distributed to assist with the installation of CCTV equipment at other locations. A set of operating instructions based on the Musgrave Street pilot project was also adopted and is in use at Antrim and other sites. The requirement for a Code of Practice for the video recording was determined to be unnecessary.

The Police Service's General Order 47/2003, Custody CCTV Standing Orders, is an excellent comprehensive policy statement on the use of CCTV and sets forth the forms necessary to manage the project. The Order states that the CCTV system has as its main purpose the creation of a safe environment for officers, prisoners and all individuals in the custody suite, to provide evidence to substantiate or rebut any allegations made in relation to offences either within or without the custody suite, and for the improvement of performance and quality of service.

The Government and the Police Service agreed to implement this recommendation, however as at April of 2005 this had not been fully accomplished, as video recording equipment has been installed at just four of the 17 sites: Musgrave Street, Antrim, Grosvenor Road and Enniskillen. It is noted that only two of the four locations were designated as serious crime suites: Antrim and Musgrave Street. Coleraine and Enniskillen were not selected to serve as enhanced suites, but are considered new builds.

Remaining Issues

A business case for £11.3M was prepared by the Police Service to install CCTV video recording equipment in each of the remaining custody suites. The NIO declined to fund further CCTV projects until the Policing Board approved the Estate Strategy, which included the final number and specific location of custody suites necessary to support the future operational needs of the Police Service. The Estate Strategy was finally approved by the Policing Board on 20 May 2005.

The Police Service has been unable to move forward with the installation of video recording in the remaining custody suites due to a lack of Government funding, caused in part by the delay in approving the Estate Strategy (see also Recommendations 52 and 53). This should now be able to proceed.

Recommendation 64: Inspection of Custody and Interrogation Suites

Patten Recommendation:

64. Responsibility for inspecting all custody and interrogation suites should rest with the Policing Board, and Lay Visitors should be empowered not only to inspect the conditions of detention (as at present), but also to observe interviews on camera subject to the consent of the detainee (as is the case for cell visits).

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Full compliance with this recommendation has not yet been achieved.

History

In 2003 the Secretary of the State made the necessary designations to authorise lay visitors and the inspection scheme. In the same year the Policing Board extended the responsibility for inspecting all custody and interrogation suites to the existing Custody Visiting Scheme. At that time the Policing Board had a set of guidelines under consideration for volunteers visiting detained terrorist suspects. The Policing Board agreed that only those custody visitors who are willing to assume an expanded role, and observe terrorist suspect interviews on camera, would be required to do so.

The Policing Board requires and receives monthly reports from the custody visitors summarising their activities and ensuring that the goals pertaining to detainees' complaints, as well as recommendations for physical improvements, are accomplished. Field visits by the oversight team confirmed that custody visitors perform unannounced inspections at various police custody facilities on a routine basis.



Remaining Issues

These involve extending the role of the Lay Visitors to observe interviews with detainees on camera. A legal decision released in June of 2004, on the potential liability of the lay visitors should they be privy to certain information, advised the Policing Board to seek an amendment to the existing legislation to permit visitors to observe interviews of terrorist suspects on camera. The NIO has advised that such an amendment to the legislation would not occur until September of 2005.

Recommendation 65: Objective of an Unarmed Police Service

Patten Recommendation:

65. The question of moving towards the desired objective of a routinely unarmed police service should be periodically reviewed in the light of developments in the security environment.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved, but will be monitored on a yearly basis.

History

In September of 2002 the Chief Constable reported that this recommendation would be reviewed and a determination made twice each year, on 1 April and 1 October. Accordingly, the Chief Constable has notified the Oversight Commissioner with regard to the prevailing security situation, and whether this had reached the peaceful environment envisioned by the Independent Commission that would permit the implementation of this recommendation. The notification for April of 2005 has been received indicating that the security situation does not yet allow the conditions for a routinely unarmed police service. The Chief Constable has recently commissioned an HMIC review of firearms policy and practice, which may have some bearing on this recommendation. As required by the Independent Commission's recommendation, the oversight team will confirm ongoing assessments in April of 2006 and April of 2007. The NIO is also monitoring progress on the implementation of this recommendation.



A. Chapter Summary

Background

The Independent Commission recognised that the public order policing experience of Northern Ireland's Police Service differed significantly from that of any other police force. It therefore saw the need for research into other tactical and strategic ways with which to address recurring public order situations. In addition, the Independent Commission made several recommendations that covered the role of the army, the establishment of a parade partnership and marshal training, and for identifying equipment that might be utilised by the Police Service to better deal with public order situations and other emergencies.

B. Recommendation Summary

Recommendation 66: Public Order Emergencies

Patten Recommendation:

66. The Northern Ireland police should have the capacity within its own establishment to deal with public order emergencies without help from other police services and without more than the present level of support from the army.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

History

Although estimated costs were not available, the oversight team has received documentation on the level of army support to DCUs from August 2002 through March 2005. These reports indicated a steady decrease in the level of support provided to DCUs. The Police Service provided documents in 2002 concerning compliance with this recommendation, including a plan to reduce dependency on the army for support as the security situation improved. The plan described the areas and circumstances where the army would provide support and the procedures for and extent of the support provided. Also included was a comprehensive plan detailing procedures to be followed in public order emergencies. This plan outlined policies and procedures for a police response to potential public order situations associated with contentious parades and protests.

The overall performance of Foyle DCU in providing security for the Lundy parades is an excellent example of the capacity of the Police Service to plan and deal with public order incidents without relying on increased help from the army. Likewise, the peaceful annual parades at Drumcree, Co. Armagh and in Derry/Londonderry in 2003 and 2004, among others, illustrates the ability of the Police Service to deal effectively with potential public order situations. Controversial parades, such as those in the Ardoyne in July of 2004, now have other resolution mechanisms available even if outcomes do not satisfy all parties. For example, the Police Ombudsman has review of all related public complaints, and in the case of the Ardoyne parades the Policing Board has produced a special overview regarding human rights applications by its human rights advisor, Mr. Keir Starmer, QC. This was released in November of 2004.

A reduction in public order situations has also affected Tactical Support Groups, which have been able to devote more time to assisting DCUs with proactive policing duties. The Police Service has demonstrated the capacity to deal with public order emergencies without assistance from other police services and with decreasing levels of support from the army. Retaining 448 Armoured Landrovers in strategic reserve and operationally ready gives the Police Service the ability to respond to public order emergencies with the maximum number of police officers, thereby further reducing dependence on army support (see also Recommendations 55 and 56).

Recommendation 67: Conditions for the Approval of Parades (Marshals)

Patten Recommendation:

67. It should be a condition for the approval of a parade that the organisers should provide their own marshals, and the organisers and the police should work together to plan the policing of such events. This should involve as appropriate the representatives of the neighbourhoods involved in the parade route.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

History

The Police Service has successfully implemented this recommendation by working with the community in the planning of parades and other events and by adopting new parade procedures. In 2003 the Police Service amended two General Orders, 43/2000, Public Processions and the Parades Commission, and 44/2000, Human Rights Policy in Relation to Public Events. These two Orders require the recording of police efforts to work with parade organisers and representatives of the involved neighbourhoods during the parade planning process. Preparation for the Lundy parade in December of 2002 and in the following years provide just one example where Foyle DCU, parade organisers and representatives worked together to provide effective policing for a contentious parade. During the oversight process there have been other observed examples that demonstrate a solid effort by the Police Service to plan with the community for parades and to cooperate successfully with parade organisers to facilitate the use of marshals.

In February of 2005 the NIO reported that a Government determination providing marshals as a condition of parading was not appropriate in the current parading climate. This decision followed a request by the NIO for a full review of the current parade arrangements, which was published in a report entitled: "The Parades Commission and Public Processions 2002". This report recommended the creation of two organisations, one specialising in mediation and the other deciding on disputed marches. The Government also indicated a lack of support in dividing the current Parades Commission into two separate organisations.



Recommendation 68: Conditions for the Approval of Parades (Marshal Training)

Patten Recommendation:

68. Marshal training should be further developed, with an appropriate qualification on successful completion of the training. All parades should be marshalled and, as soon as practicable, it should be a requirement that all potentially contentious parades requiring a decision or determination by the Parades Commission should be marshalled by qualified personnel.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

History

The NIO-sponsored report, entitled: "The Parades Commission and Public Processions 2002", was intended to review parades arrangements and considered a number of factors in respect to this recommendation and other parading issues (see also Recommendation 67). However, this report was silent on the Independent Commission's recommendation that only trained and qualified personnel serve as parade marshals. The Report made mention that all marshals should have at least basic training, but did not describe the subject areas to be covered.

In 2004 the NIO reported that 700 parade marshals had been trained over the previous two-year period using a training course provided by the College of Further Education in Dungannon. An evaluation of marshal training has been completed with the results submitted to the NIO and the Parades Commission.

Recommendation 69: Public Order Equipment (Research Programmes)

Patten Recommendation:

69. An immediate and substantial investment should be made in a research programme to find an acceptable, effective and less potentially lethal alternative to the Plastic Baton Round (PBR).

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

History

The NIO, in cooperation with the Police Service, has made a substantial research investment to find an acceptable alternative to the plastic baton round (PBR). As a result, the research initiative based on this recommendation has established itself as the leading international research authority on less lethal technologies; participants are to be commended for the thoroughness and comprehensiveness of their efforts. Between 2001-2004, the NIO released four separate detailed technical reports entitled "A Research Programme Into Alternative Policing Approaches Towards The Management of Conflict". This research was conducted by the NIO Steering Group in consultation with the Association of Chief Police Officers. It examined alternatives to the PBR currently in use by the Police Service, and the means by which the police might be equipped with a broader range of public order equipment.

These comprehensive research reports included an examination and assessment of the vehicle-mounted water cannon, the Attenuating Energy Projectile (AEP), the Discriminating Irritant Projectile (DIP), the 12-gauge sock round, CS spray and the Taser energy weapon. The research reports are available for public examination and can be located on the Northern Ireland Office web page at: www.nio.gov.uk.

The research conducted under the NIO's direction included an expanded review of published medical and technical data and other official documentation on the operation use of the water cannon. The research report concluded that there were no deaths from the police use of water cannon and a low incidence of life threatening injuries. The research also noted the successful deployment of two borrowed vehicle-mounted water cannons in the summer of 2002 during public order situations.

The Phase 4 report by the Steering Group stated that development of the AEP and DIP would continue, as these two projectiles represented the best opportunity to identify a viable alternative to the PBR across the UK. The objective is for the AEP to deliver an impact that is not intended to cause serious or life threatening injury, but is of sufficient force to dissuade a violent person from his/her intended course of action. Upon implementation of the AEP, the current L21A1 plastic rounds will be removed from operational use by the Police Service. The DIP, which delivers a localised cloud or burst of sensory irritant, will serve as a complement to the AEP and is not intended to cause serious or life threatening injury.

A fifth research report is anticipated for release in June of 2005, containing a further review of the AEP and other less than lethal technologies that will replace the current PBR, including the Taser technology. It should be noted that due to the degree and high standard of the research undertaken, the AEP has been adopted as the best possible alternative across UK police forces, as well as being adopted by the Ministry of Defence. The official date for the AEP coming into operational use in Northern Ireland is reported as 21 June 2005.

Although this recommendation has been implemented based on the Independent Commission's intent, and a full response to all performance indicators received from the Police Service, the research continues. Five years of extensive research has identified what is, at least at present, the best available alternatives to the existing PBR.

Recommendation 70: Public Order Equipment (Broader Range of Equipment)

Patten Recommendation:

70. The police should be equipped with a broader range of public order equipment than the RUC currently possess, so that a commander has a number of options at his/her disposal which might reduce reliance on, or defer resort to, the PBR.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Full compliance with this recommendation has not yet been achieved.



History

The Police Service has used baton rounds since 1973. The original rubber rounds were inaccurate and were replaced in 1975 with the plastic baton round (PBR). There have been several modifications over the years, progressing to the L21A1 round in use today. Tragically, these projectiles have caused some deaths and injuries in past years during extensive use. This issue led the Independent Commission to make recommendations on research to find a suitable alternative to the L21A1 round, as well as making recommendations dealing with the causes of disorder and the variety of means to deal with disorder.

Based on the research conducted by the NIO and Steering Group, the Police Service submitted a business case in January of 2002 for the purchase of vehicle-mounted water cannon for use in public order situations. Following an interim medical evaluation the Policing Board approved and the NIO funded the purchase of six vehicle-mounted water cannon, with delivery completed in the summer of 2004.

The decision to purchase vehicle-mounted water cannon provided police commanders with an alternative to the use of PBRs in public order situations, if circumstances permitted. The Police Service issued the necessary operational policy and guidance, General Order 29/2004, Police, Procedures, Guidelines - RCV 9000 Water Cannon Vehicles, for the deployment and use of the water cannon in serious public order situations. These policies and procedures represent a high standard of effective policy statements or protocols on the use of force by police personnel. The contents of the General Order are similar to the requirements for the deployment of the PBR during public order situations.

In early 2003 a decision was made by the Police Service to issue hand-held CS spray to individual police officers as a piece of personal protection equipment, to be carried during regular police activity. The CS spray was not intended as an alternative to the PBR during public order situations. The Police Service issued General Order 28/2004, CS Incapacitant Spray, outlining the operational guidelines in the use of CS spray. In addition, there is a mandatory training component before an officer is issued with CS spray. The Police Service has provided evidence of a mandatory training component for each type of less potentially lethal equipment issued by the Police Service to date. Each use of CS spray was referred to and investigated by the Ombudsman during the first six months of its deployment, with subsequent reports made back to the Police Service.

As noted in Recommendation 69 the NIO has identified two devices that are receiving further evaluation and testing as an alternative to the PBR. These are the Attenuating Energy Projectile (AEP) and Discriminating Irritant Projectile (DIP). In March of 2005 the Policing Board announced a decision to replace the current L21A1 baton round with the AEP impact round, subject to certain conditions, effective 21 June 2005. The army announced a similar decision.

Remaining Issues

The remaining issue involves the requirement for quality control measures used by the manufacturers and the adoption of the revised policies and procedures by the Police Service for each of the items of equipment that are adopted.

Recommendation 71: Police Performance in Public Order Situations (Use of PBRs)

Patten Recommendation:

71. The use of PBRs should be subject to the same procedures for deployment, use and reporting as apply in the rest of the United Kingdom. Their use should be confined to the smallest necessary number of specially trained officers, who should be trained to think of the weapon in the same way as they would think of a firearm, that is as a weapon which is potentially lethal. Use of PBRs should in the first instance require the authorisation of a district commander. This should be justified in a report to the Policing Board, which should be copied to the Police Ombudsman. Wherever possible, video camera recordings should be made of incidents in which the use of PBRs is authorised.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

History

During the last several years there has been a substantial improvement in the way the Police Service handles public order situations, as well as the deployment of the PBR. The policies and procedures adopted by the Police Service for the deployment, use and reporting of PBR incidents are consistent with the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) Guidelines, as well as meeting the test for "best practices" on the use of lethal and less lethal force. This would include General Order 46/2000, Issues, Deployment and Use of Baton Rounds in Situations of Serious Public Disorder. This General Order was also amended and re-issued in April of 2005.

The Police Service continues each year to reduce the number of officers authorised to fire the plastic baton round. Documentation and evidence has been provided that a PBR training component for commanders, supervisors and police officers have been completed. The course also has a human rights component. Training was verified by the oversight team during a review of the PBR training programme at the training site.

The use of the PBR has steadily decreased since 1998, when 1,236 rounds were discharged. Since September of 2002 no PBR round has been discharged. This is reflective of the positive performance by the Police Service and others in successfully and fully implementing the Independent Commission's recommendations covering public order situations. The important role of community and political leaders cannot be overlooked, for they have reduced tensions that avoided conditions where increasing application of force was required. On 21 June 2005 the AEP impact round is scheduled to replace the plastic baton rounds previously in use during emergency situations. Finally, the Police Service reported that where possible, video recordings are taken during public order situations where the PBR may be deployed or used. This practice has been verified by the Ombudsman, although there is an issue of sufficiency that the Ombudsman will review.



Recommendation 72: Police Officers' Identification Numbers

Patten Recommendation:

72. Officers' identification numbers should be clearly visible on their protective clothing, just as they should be on regular uniforms.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

History

The Police Service successfully implemented this recommendation in 2001 with the issuance of General Order 33/2001, Wearing of Numeral Numbers and Rank Insignia on Riot Helmets by Officers of Inspector Rank and above. This policy directive requires all police officers, at all ranks, to wear an assigned serial number so displayed on their uniform as to be clearly visible at all times when on duty. Other policies require police officers, regardless of rank, to be issued with a number to be displayed on the front of their riot helmets, as the helmet had been designated as the "protective clothing" as specified in Recommendation 71. The Police Service reports that there have been no problems with implementing this recommendation. The oversight team has verified that this recommendation has been adopted.

Recommendation 73: Police Performance in Public Order Situations (Monitor)

Patten Recommendation:

73. The Policing Board and, as appropriate, the Police Ombudsman should actively monitor police performance in public order situations, and if necessary seek reports from the Chief Constable and follow up those reports if they wish.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

History

The Ombudsman and the Policing Board have successfully implemented this recommendation, and have been monitoring police performance in response to public order situations, particularly the use of the PBR. As an example of this monitoring, the Ombudsman released a report in May of 2002 detailing the investigation of seven PBR incidents, and reached the conclusion that the discharge of PBRs in all seven cases was fully justified and proportionate, as were the authorisation and directives given. As noted previously, there have been no discharges of PBR since 2002. The Police Service Code on Complaints and Discipline requires that the Ombudsman be contacted immediately when a PBR is discharged, with written notification provided within 48 hours. The Ombudsman has planned for further reviews of PBR deployments by the Police Service.

Once the Ombudsman releases an investigation report on a PBR incident a group of senior police officers reviews the findings to determine if there are any policy, discipline, human rights or training matters that should be addressed by the Police Service. This post utilisation review is considered a best practice with respect to the use of lethal and less than lethal force, and does not conflict with the investigation authority of the Ombudsman. The Police Service has reported that due to the fact that no PBRs have been discharged since 2002, there has only been one post utilisation meeting. However, Operations, Operational Policing Development Training, and the representatives from the two Operational Command Units meet every six weeks to review relevant operational and training issues, including public order and firearms issues.

The Police Service has adopted General Order 50/2002 that allows the Policing Board to actively monitor police performance in public order situations. One example of this was the observation of and public reporting on policing operations during one of the more contentious parades of 2004, in this instance by the Policing Board's human rights advisor. This General Order requires the DCU Commander to include in his or her report the circumstances and justification as to the need to discharge baton rounds. A subcommittee of the Policing Board reviews and monitors all reports on the discharge of PBRs and incidents of public disorder, and seeks follow-up reports from the Chief Constable where necessary.

Recommendation 74: Police Performance in Public Order Situations (Guidance)

Patten Recommendation:

74. Guidance governing the deployment and use of PBRs should be soundly based in law, clearly expressed and readily available as public documents.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

History

In 2000, the Police Service issued General Order 46/2000, as well as other related directives, as guidance governing the deployment and use of the PBRs in situations of serious public disorder. This Order is clearly written and details the procedures for the issue, deployment and use of PBRs by the Police Service, references ACPO Guidelines, the United Nations Code of Conduct for Law Enforcement Officials, and Article 2 of Schedule 1 of the Human Rights Act (1998). A commander or police officer seeking guidance in reference to the use of PBRs is presented with a comprehensive policy statement followed by the required procedures for recording and reporting incidents of use. The Order has been reviewed by legal counsel. The Police Service currently has a draft replacement order under consideration, dated 7 March 2005, to update the existing General Order.



In March of 2005 the Policing Board approved the purchase of the Attenuating Energy Projectile (AEP) impact round as a replacement for the L21A1. In order to implement use of the AEP impact round, the Police Service has also drafted a General Order in relation to the issue, deployment and use of the AEP in situations of serious public disorder. This draft is comprehensive and includes all the necessary issues to provide proper guidance to the police officers. It also supplements the National ACPO Guidelines on the use of the AEP.

The Independent Commission also recommended that the policies and guidance issued by the Police Service for use of the PBR should be readily available as public documents. In April of 2005 the Chief Constable placed the "Policy on Human Rights and Police Use of Force" on the Police Service's web page. The policy, which includes a discussion on the use of the PBR, can be reviewed by searching under "use of force" and represents a positive development in terms of the Police Service's increasing openness and transparency (see also Recommendation 37).

▶▶ management and personnel



A. Chapter Summary

Background

The Independent Commission called for extensive change to the management style of the Police Service, including devolving authority to district levels, enhancing the internal accountability structure, reducing lengths of tenure in specialised positions such as public order and security duties, and a more comprehensive sickness absence programme. Further recommendations proposed a rigorous programme of civilianisation to release uniformed police officers for patrol duties, as well as various other efficiency measures.

B. Recommendation Summary

Recommendation 75: Police Management of Change

Patten Recommendation:

75. The Northern Ireland police leadership team should include specialists in change management. These may be either civilians or police officers, preferably both. The leadership team should produce a programme for change, to be presented to the Policing Board and reviewed periodically by the Board. The efficiency and effectiveness of each chief officer should be judged on the basis of, among other things, their capacity to introduce and adapt to change.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved

History

A Change Management Team with outside consulting advice was appointed early in the process, to plan and monitor implementation of the Independent Commission's recommendations. As the change process unfolded accountable officers were appointed to key roles, beginning the task of devolving plans to the functional units. Operational responsibility for change management was delegated to the ACC Corporate Development and Change Management, a responsibility that will remain in place until the conclusion of the oversight mandate.

The change process was successfully launched and well managed throughout this period. The achievement of devolution to the 29 District Command Units (DCUs) was a considerable success, as were the culturally significant changes to symbols and uniforms. In the period since April of 2001 DCU Commanders assumed a leadership role with the community, re-structured sector boundaries, changed shift work patterns, modified patrol methods and inspired a new performance-based ethos among front line managers and supervisors. Progress has been hailed as a major cultural shift, an assessment confirmed by HMIC's Baseline Inspection of 2004. The Chief Constable and his command team now manage a dynamic programme of ongoing change under the leadership of the Chief Constable's Forum, responsible for policy, performance, and exception reporting from committees. Reporting to this forum are six senior committees meeting on a regular basis throughout the year, with responsibility over all critical operational and administrative activities. There is significant managerial effort to institutionalise a fully joined up strategic planning process, compliant with UK standards. The operating principles derived from the Independent Commission's recommendation are reflected throughout this management structure.

The Police Service adopted a performance evaluation system for senior police officers based on ACPO competencies, with provisions for the assessment of Deputy Chief Constables and Assistant Chief Constables. Officers participate by establishing personal objectives and a personal development plan, including an in-year review and self assessment. ACPO Competencies includes a factor for openness to change. The performance of the Chief Constable is evaluated by the Policing Board.

While the implementation of change is steadily subsumed into the standard managerial practices of the Police Service and the Policing Board, primary responsibility for the change management process remains with the Chief Constable. The Chief Constable and responsible officers report progress to the Board at regular intervals. The Police Service has put into place the policies and systems to institutionalise acceptance of the constancy of change, but the management of change, and the demands of effective internal communication, will continue to prove a challenge, as they do in any organisation.

Recommendation 76: Devolved Authority of District Commanders

Patten Recommendation:

76. District commanders should have fully devolved authority over the deployment of personnel (officer and civilian) within their command, devolved budgets (including salary budgets), authority to purchase a range of goods and services, and to finance local policing initiatives. They should reach service level agreements with all headquarter support departments.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has not been achieved.

History

A General Order, 35/2004, Policy on Devolution, concerning Police Service policy on devolution, was issued on 23 June 2004 and described in principle the empowerment of Commanders to make devolution work in practice. This policy replaced a number of specific authorities issued during the transition process. Outlining the Chief Constable's vision the policy prescribes moving away from hierarchical structures while driving decision making down to the lowest possible level. It is also intended to give DCU Commanders and their staff greater autonomy. A Service Level Agreement (SLA) between Crime Operations and DCU Commanders is in place and functioning effectively, as are those between Crime Analysis and DCUs. Assessment of the progress of devolution is now the responsibility of the Deputy Chief Constable through twice yearly reviews of the business plans of regional ACCs and department heads. SLAs between Information Services and Headquarters departments and DCUs are expected at a later point in the Information System project's development, and SLAs have very recently been agreed between Training Branch and DCUs (see also Recommendation 45 and 132).

Finance Department responded with remarkable speed to the challenge of devolution. Local Financial Management was introduced across the Police Service in April of 2003, providing for the



devolution of budgetary authority to DCU Commanders, with business managers to assist where necessary. A detailed budget manual provides ready reference and a Headquarters help desk is available. Devolved budget management now amounts to 87% of the total. SLAs are in place governing the relationship and respective responsibilities of DCU Commanders and the seven branches of Finance Department. The following budgets were devolved to budget holders, including DCU Commanders:

- Salaries;
- Overtime;
- Travel and subsistence;
- Pensions;
- Estates (utilities, minor works and rates);
- Information Services (non-strategic hardware, visual presentation devices; mobile phones);
- Supplies (consumables, computer consumables, stationery, transport fuel and accident repair costs and incidentals).

A comprehensive management system provides detailed monthly reports and consolidations for all categories of expenditure. Consultation meetings with other departments and Commanders are regularly scheduled. Finance Department operates a continuous consultation and feedback system effective in flushing out problems and seeking solutions. An earlier reported concern regarding the timeliness of financial reports to DCUs, and the limitations of devolved authority, was found to be based on incorrect information. Managed savings on police overtime in the current year permitted the diversion of funding for operational equipment. Any concern for the effectiveness of devolution of financial management was dispelled when the Police Service reported within budget for the fiscal years 2003/2004 and 2004/2005.

A managed approach to budgeting currently provides for a broadened authority to transfer funds between accounts. Installation of activity-based costing is the final step in the design of a comprehensive and devolved financial management system. In future the Police Service will undertake inter-service benchmarking with other UK forces, to work towards achieving best practice. The benchmarking of the performance of DCU Commanders will be a further incentive for efficiency. Budget development in successive years aims for a fully joined-up estimates process. A healthy process of vertical and lateral consultation exists between Regional ACCs and their DCU Commanders, and among department heads reporting to the Chief Constable.

Remaining Issues

As noted above, Service Level Agreements between Information Services and the user departments and DCUs are expected at a later point in the IS project's development.

Recommendation 77: Police Appraisal System

Patten Recommendation:

77. It should be a high priority of management to ensure that the appraisal system is fully effective. This system should be used as part of the promotion and selection process. An officer's capacity for change should be assessed and should also be taken into account in the promotion and selection process.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Full compliance with this recommendation has not yet been achieved.

History

A revised Police Appraisal System was introduced by General Order 8/2003, Annual Performance Review, dated 9 April 2003. Demands on the Leadership and Management Faculty of Training Branch precluded an extensive classroom-based training event. Human Resources arranged for delivery of a training package by district trainers in conjunction with other training needs from 1 January to 30 March 2003, and the Police Service published and distributed a comprehensive booklet explaining the purpose and application of the new system. The system is designed to function with devolved responsibility to regions, DCUs and Headquarters departments. Personnel Branch is responsible for review and analysis.

Police officers from Constable up to and including Chief Superintendent are now appraised in April of each year on their performance over the preceding 12 months. The new appraisal process focuses on personal development and includes a factor for evaluating openness to change. There is a direct link with promotion and selection at the recommendation stage of competitions. There now seems to be an appreciation within the Police Service that performance is the new criterion for promotion. By design there is no direct link between the compensation system and the appraisal system, a cause for occasional misunderstanding.

The Annual Report of the Policing Board relating to the human rights performance of the Police Service, released in March of 2005, expressed dissatisfaction with the process however, stating: "We are not satisfied that there is an effective appraisal process to monitor the human rights performance of PSNI officers or that good human rights performance is rewarded in any tangible manner, or given due consideration in promotional competitions. While the Appraisal Form includes a discrete human rights element, this is not adequate". The report recommended corrective action.

Remaining Issues

Verification has not been completed regarding the relationship between the new appraisal system and the Independent Commission's emphasis on human rights (see also Recommendation 5).



Recommendation 78: Accountability of District Commanders

Patten Recommendation:

78. District commanders should be required regularly to account to their senior officers for the patterns of crime and police activity in their district and to explain how they propose to address their districts' problems.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

History

An executive level operational review system is now firmly in place. The accountability process is increasingly recognised as a driving force for performance improvement. Regional ACCs conduct performance reviews of DCU Commanders in May and October of each year. The first cycle occurred in October/November of 2002. Regional ACCs adopted a common template with quantifiable measures for reviewing performance, a format initially developed with the assistance of the Crime Analysis Centre and recently improved. The review includes accounting for performance against local goals developed through consultation between the DCU Commander and the DPP, but the wide-ranging assessment also includes performance with finance and human resource management and the practice of policing with the community, including problem solving. In many instances members of the local DPP are in attendance for portions of the session.

Early uncertainty about consistency of content, tone and format was overcome by collaboration between the ACCs, who now record and share good practices identified during reviews. A common rating system for DCUs is evolving, based on Home Office research work. This process is responsible for establishing and sustaining a culture of performance that extends beyond the management interface down to supervisory practices, as well as an acceptance of common objectives by front line officers.

Recommendation 79: Trend Information on Complaints (Automated Trend System)

Patten Recommendation:

79. An automated trend identification system for complaints should be introduced.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Full compliance with this recommendation has not yet been achieved.

History

The basic requirements for trending and tracking for repeat problems and patterns are fulfilled through cooperation with the Ombudsman and reliance on an internal information system. Information on complaints against individual officers is reported monthly and disseminated electronically to DCU Commanders. While for legal and confidentiality reasons it is not possible for the Ombudsman to expand on the detail of management reports to the degree desired by the Commanders, she is amending her office's procedures to screen out incidents that would not contribute materially to the objective of tracking and trending. DCU Commanders expressed

relative satisfaction with the new policy and future intentions. Complaint statistics by DCU, including complaint outcomes, are now available to the public on the Ombudsman's web site.

Many of the processes of Internal Investigations Branch (IIB) are based on paper records. Information Services submitted a business case to create a budget for a more comprehensive case management system and funding was approved by NIO in December of 2004. Installation of this system will enhance the capability of IIB to manage complaints and ultimately develop a comprehensive early warning system.

Remaining Issues

An upgraded computer-based case management system is planned by the Police Service, and an IT business case is currently before the NIO for approval.

Recommendation 80: Trend Information on Complaints (Follow-up by Management)

Patten Recommendation:

80. The use of trend information should be followed up by management, and as appropriate by the department responsible for discipline, and guidance should be drawn up to help managers use this information effectively.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved

History

The Police Service issued a General Order, 38/2004, Trending, tracking of Complaints Against Police, on 28 June 2004 that fulfils the criteria that DCU Commanders should be properly directed and empowered to manage tracking and trending information from the Ombudsman. The policy includes direction for identifying suspected disparities in the performance of individual officers and prescribes preventive strategies with the desirable attributes of an early warning system. Continuing guidance from the executive level and staff advisory assistance will be needed before the system realises its potential as a preventative strategy and a tool for quality improvement.

The Ombudsman is represented on the Professional Standards Committee chaired by the Deputy Chief Constable. Representatives of the Ombudsman meet regularly with staff of Internal Investigations Branch (IIB) for the purposes of coordination and problem solving. Finally, an e-mail link between IIB and the Ombudsman's Office, intended to facilitate the more efficient sharing of information, was established in December of 2003.

Recommendation 81: Random Checks on Officers' Behaviour

Patten Recommendation:

81. Police managers should use random checks as a way to monitor the behaviour of their officers in dealings with the public and their integrity.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.



History

Internal Investigations Branch (IIB) conducts an active programme of integrity checks. Responsibility for quality assurance checks resides with Operational Support Services, within the scope of the Police Service's Best Value and Continuous Improvement model. A business case to institutionalise quality assurance checks is under consideration, together with plans to probe the needs of crime victims. In many instances DCU Commanders are conducting local quality assurance checks. The Head of IIB is a member of the ACPO Advisory group on internal investigation issues, and the Northeast Advisory Group of police forces. Policy development on a series of integrity issues such as gifts and gratuities, substance abuse and participation in political activities are included in IIB's annual work plan. The Police Service engaged an outside consulting firm to conduct an audit of IIB, to include core functions, policies and procedures. The report was delivered in November of 2004, completing the final step in the programme's evaluation.

Recommendation 82: Ensuring High Ethical Standards

Patten Recommendation:

82. Police management should use all the tools at its disposal, including when necessary the administrative dismissal process, to ensure that high professional and ethical standards are consistently met.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

History

The Code of Ethics for the Police Service of Northern Ireland was issued to all officers in February of 2003. The Code establishes ethical expectations and will serve as the basis for internal discipline. Issues encapsulated in the Code include: professional duties, police investigations, privacy and confidentiality, use of force, detained persons, equality, integrity, property, fitness for duty, and duty of services.

Provision for administrative dismissal is contained in the Unsatisfactory Performance Regulations 2000, and this option has been exercised by management. Incoming appraisal reports are screened for unsatisfactory performance and service reviews conducted as warranted. The Police Service operates an independent reporting line, "Safecall", which is available to report potential wrongdoing by members of the organisation. It is the first police service in the UK to provide this facility.

Recommendation 83: Tenure Policy on Police Postings

Patten Recommendation:

83. There should be a tenure policy, so that officers do not have inordinately long postings in any specialist area of the police.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Full compliance with this recommendation has not yet been achieved.

History

A tenure policy ensures that police officers do not become so highly specialised that they lose the capability to undertake core policing duties throughout their career. A policy endorsed by the Policing Board and HMIC in October of 2003 satisfies the intent of this recommendation but requires the issue of a General Order. Despite the absence of an official policy, many of the staffing practices of PSNI recognise the relevance of tenure. Vacancy bulletins refer to tenure of post limitations and the appraisal system includes the identification of officers falling into the end of their tenure category.

The draft policy sets objectives for the length of time officers spend in particular postings by category, and will underpin the career management policy for officers up to the rank of Inspector. It provides for exceptions and extensions. The policy forms part of the overall Human Resources Planning Strategy in the context of succession planning. The policy is also included in the Training, Education and Development Strategy. Although extended tenure in some areas of the Police Service was identified as a problem by the Independent Commission, the dynamics of organisational change have accelerated in the years that followed. It was estimated that since January of 2001 over 2,000 officers have left the PSNI and another 1,600 may depart over the next two years. In addition, over 3,000 staffing transactions have taken place (see also Recommendation 102).

Remaining Issues

While a draft policy endorsed by HMIC and the Policing Board has been available since October of 2003, it has no force or effect until promulgated in a General Order. In addition, although the trend in police management is away from enforced movement of personnel, as this is seen to be inconsistent with professionalism, the Independent Commission's recommendation was based on a significant degree of consultation, including interviews with serving officers. Although a draft policy was approved by the Chief Constable and endorsed by HMIC and the Policing Board, there is no obvious reason for continued delay. The tenure policy should be published by the Police Service at the earliest possible opportunity.

Recommendation 84: Officers Injured on duty to be treated separately for sickness recording

Patten Recommendation:

84. Officers injured on duty should be treated as a separate category for sickness recording purposes.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.



History

A Managing Attendance policy was first introduced in 2001. In July of 2003 the Police Service issued three detailed General Orders providing updated information and guidance to Commanders, supervisors and staff on all features of the sickness absence policy. A Managing Attendance Distance Learning Module and a lesson plan were released concurrently for the assistance of line managers. The devolved management system provides a comprehensive break-out of all categories of sickness absence, including officers injured on duty as a separate category. The directive establishing responsibility for reporting and recording of sickness includes a requirement for the submission of medical certificates.

Recommendation 85: New Policy to Manage of Sickness Absence

Patten Recommendation:

85. A new policy should be formulated for the management of long-term sickness absence, incorporating appropriate arrangements for medical retirement, career counselling and welfare support. A system of rewards, as well as sanctions, should be introduced as part of the sickness management policy.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

History

Reports are distributed to all DCUs and the Chief Constable's management committee monthly, with sickness absence by category. The Policing Board works with an Independent Observer to monitor policy implementation and performance, and it is provided with trend reports on a full range of statistics on a quarterly basis. The Corporate Health Policy was installed through local orders including fire policies and injury reporting procedures. Monitoring at DCU level confirmed that local managers have implemented this policy. Sickness absence performance is also included in the twice-yearly DCU reviews conducted by the two regional ACCs.

Performance data on absenteeism has been applied to promotional competitions since November of 2002, and absenteeism has been a factor in the Selection and Appraisal System since April of 2003. An active case management process, making full use of in-service Health and Safety professionals, targets long-term illness cases. Case conferencing was introduced linking medical advisors with local management. Rewards and recognition are also a factor in the management of sickness absence, although reportedly a minor one.

Recommendation 86: More Detailed Review of Sickness Absence

Patten Recommendation:

86. There should be a more detailed review of sickness absence, to establish underlying causes and to make recommendations to address them.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

History

Reporting in 1999 the Independent Commission quoted the average sickness absence rate as 15.3 days in a year, compared with 12.5 in England and Wales, with some 16% of absences related to injuries on duty. In the intervening 5 years the PSNI's sickness levels rose temporarily, then trended downward in response to targets established by the Police Board, as well as a managed approach to sickness absence. Year end statistics for 2004/2005 reflect 13 days lost per year for regular officers, 23.5 days per year for Full Time Reserve members and 15 days for civilian staff. The target for regular officers for 2005/2006 is 11.5 days and 13 for civilian staff.

The Police Service and the Policing Board are to be complemented on their determined approach and attention to this issue, as well as on the visible results achieved. The comprehensive statistics maintained by the Police Service facilitates managerial focus on problem areas, such as short term absence by civilian staff, and on psychological illness across all categories. There has been a steady decline in numbers of officers on long term sick leave, reflecting in part an increase in medical retirements.

The Police Service maintains a comprehensive employee assistance programme consistent with modern police administration standards, with a communication programme featuring a variety of pamphlets and posters for the assistance of staff. Preventive health and workplace safety measures are designed to diminish the impact of days lost to injury and sickness. For example, with a better management system now in place, the Police Service can focus on absence-causing conditions with a view to understanding and isolating root causes, even economic, that might lend themselves to some resolution. A parallel review of casual absence practices is also ongoing. Overall, the Police Service has proven a centre of good, professional practice for health and safety services, an assessment confirmed by HMIC's Baseline Inspection.

Recommendation 87: New Police Fund

Patten Recommendation:

87. A substantial fund should be set up to help injured police officers, injured retired officers and their families, as well as police widows.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

History

The creation of The Royal Ulster Constabulary GC Foundation and the Northern Ireland Police Fund was announced on 14 November 2001. The Foundation provides practical and tangible recognition of the achievements and sacrifices of the Royal Ulster Constabulary, while the work of the Fund will be to bring additional assistance to injured and disabled police officers and retired officers and their families, as well as to police widows who have been affected by terrorism in Northern Ireland. Funding will be provided by the Government, although additional sources of revenue may be considered in future.



Trustees were named to each Fund. A working group comprising representatives from the Police Associations, the Policing Board, the Police Service, and the Government was formed to consider the status and functions of the Foundation and to make recommendations on funding, administration, procedures and accountability. The Board of Trustees is to draw upon advice from the Chief Constable and the Chair of the Policing Board, and to work closely with various stakeholders including the Police Associations, the RUC Benevolent Fund and the Widows' Association. The Board of the Northern Ireland Police Fund obtained articles of incorporation and established a small staff and office. Administrative systems and procedures were put in place and auditors appointed. A wide variety of stakeholder consultations were undertaken ranging from Government through the police associations, Disabled Officers' Association, RUCGC Widows' Association and others.

Following allegations of financial irregularities with the Northern Ireland Police Fund, the Government directed a review. Completed in October of 2004, the review recommended that the work of the Fund continue for the foreseeable future and that it be resourced by Government. Other recommendations include a reiteration of relevant proposals from the Steele Report, published in October of 2000, improvements to administration, controls and communication, and more effective means of recognising the sacrifices of widows and disabled officers through an ongoing process. The Government accepted the recommendations in principle and will work with trustees of the Police Fund on their implementation. Implementation is complete for the greater part of the recommendations and others are sufficiently underway.

Recommendation 88: Funding for Widow's Association

Patten Recommendation:

88. The Widows' Association should be given an office in police premises, free of charge, and a regular source of finance adequate to run their organisation.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

History

The Widows' Association occupies office space at the Maryfield complex. The NIO has approved a budget to cover maintenance expenses. All immediate needs have been satisfied.

Recommendation 89: Replacement of Assistant Chief Constables

Patten Recommendation:

89. The Assistant Chief Constables currently responsible for support services should be replaced by two civilian Assistant Chief Officers, one responsible for personnel issues and one for finance and administration.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

History

Senior management positions in Human Resources, staffed in 2001, and Finance, staffed in 1999, are now filled by qualified civilian managers.

Recommendation 90: Efficiency Initiatives

Patten Recommendation:

90. There should be a rigorous programme of civilianisation of jobs which do not require police powers, training or experience, exceptions being made only when it can be demonstrated that there is a good reason for a police officer to occupy the position.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Full compliance with this recommendation has not yet been achieved.

History

For a variety of administrative reasons the Police Service made limited progress on this recommendation between 2001 and 2004. Human Resources Department is reported as being preoccupied with multiple staffing actions related to organisational restructuring and other challenges of the change programme. The Policing Board found it difficult in turn to assess various representations in the absence of a comprehensive human resources strategy. The development of this plan became a top priority of the Board and following a series of consultations and drafts, the strategy was approved in December of 2004.

The Human Resources Planning Strategy encompasses a significant number of important factors: the Chief Constable's decision on the Full Time Reserve, the Criminal Justice Review and associated Causeway Project, the Gershon Report on efficiency in the public service, an HMIC Thematic on "Modernising the Police", a forthcoming Review of Public Administration, and new legislation protecting persons with disabilities. All these affect the costs of administration, supervision and command, as well as rank ratios for front line officers and supervisors. The Strategy also identifies opportunities for efficiencies through re-deployment or staff reductions.

Progress in the period prior to the acceptance of the draft Human Resources Planning Strategy was limited however. Initially some 650 opportunities for conversion and reallocation were identified by senior management. By December of 2004 the number of police posts civilianised since 2001/2002 was 378, including 89 positions from Headquarters strength. In the interim the complement of civilian posts had been reduced from 3,546 to 3375 in order to remain within budget for fiscal year 2003/2004.

In September of 2004 the Government approved a Police Service business case for the funding of an additional 300 civilian posts over a three year period. The Human Resources Planning Strategy approved by the Board in December of 2004 projected a further 100 civilianised posts, for each of three years commencing in 2005/2006. Finally, the report of the Independent Observer for evaluating the Police Service's human resources strategy estimated in March of 2005 that up to 441 police posts were suitable for civilianisation.



Remaining Issues

While the Police Service, largely as a result of Policing Board focus and attention, has more lately provided evidence of firmer direction with regard to this recommendation, results to date have not met the rigorous programme standard of civilisation envisioned by the Independent Commission. This is an area where the Policing Board will need to continue to exert its governance responsibilities.

Recommendation 91: Review Police Support Services

Patten Recommendation:

91. The Policing Board and the police service should initiate a review of police support services with a view to contracting out those services where this will enhance the efficient management of resources. Consideration should be given to allowing 'management buy-outs' of support services by police or civilian employees interested in continuing to provide those services as a private sector company, and in such cases management buy-out contractors should be offered a secure contract for at least three years to enable them to establish themselves before having to tender for renewal.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

History

Transportation at post within the PSNI was outsourced effective 13 April 2003, releasing 14 police officers to return to operational duties. Agency staff were engaged as an interim solution. The process to examine opportunities for contracting out cleaning services across the Police Service's estate has begun. Community Safety Branch has transferred out responsibility for cross-community leisure activities, and is in the process of auctioning off equipment. Welfare Services is in the process of outsourcing the provision of welfare services within the PSNI. Other areas which do not have service-wide implications are under consideration as well, including the Lost Property Service. The possibility of management buyouts has been considered and while not discounted, Government controls on tendering procedure makes this option unlikely.

The Policing Board established a Continuous Improvement Strategic Working Group to take forward its commitment under Part V of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000. The membership of this group now includes among others the National Audit Office, the Association of Police Authorities, the NIO and the PSNI. Best value and continuous improvement objectives established for 2004/2005 included: managing the vehicle fleet, managing the estate, staff retention, enforcing legislation and four DCU reviews. Best Value reviews are moving away from a more bureaucratic, process-oriented methodology to one modeled along the lines of Home Office Best Value reviews. The revised methodology will be:

- Integrated into police performance management;
- Focussed on outcomes and not compliance with process;
- Recognising that all processes do not need the same depth of analysis;
- Proportionate and focus on improvements in service delivery or performance.

During 2005/2006 there will be only one Best Value Review focussing on the patrol function, plus a series of initiatives aimed at continuous improvement.

Recommendation 92: Comprehensive Estate Audit

Patten Recommendation:

92. The police should commission a comprehensive audit of the whole police estate, to include outside experts, and develop a strategy for achieving an effective and efficient estate to meet the objectives for policing as outlined in this report.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has not been achieved.

History

Beginning in 2000 the Police Service provided the oversight team with numerous documents to demonstrate the completion of a comprehensive audit of the police estate. The oversight team has closely reviewed and evaluated these documents. In addition, since 2000 the oversight team has visited over half of the 135 police stations as well as a number of other police facilities within the police estate.

The police stations visited showed the need for extensive interior and exterior building upgrades and for the right sizing of the police estate. In addition, the oversight team found several police stations listed on both the early renovation programme and the closure programme, stations on both the renovation programme and the rebuild programme, or a station on the renovation programme but open to the public on a very limited basis. Only 55, or 40%, of the operational police stations identified by the Police Service are open to the public during typical or normal business hours for a police service.

In December of 2004 the Police Service provided the oversight team with a draft of the proposed multi-year Estate Strategy, which contains an audit of the police estate. The proposed Estate Strategy represents a multi-million pound investment in new stations, improved buildings, reduced fortifications and maintenance, which is designed to address the recommendations of the Independent Commission for a more effective police estate. As part of the Estate Strategy, the Police Service has proposed to the Policing Board a list of stations to be sold. The Policing Board only recently agreed the Estate Strategy in May of 2005 (see also Recommendations 52 and 53).

Remaining Issues

The Independent Commission noted in 1999 that there existed considerable scope for the rationalisation of the police estate, including the disposal of valuable sites in Belfast. By reducing the estate the Police Service would also reduce its significant maintenance backlog and release needed funds for the substantial investment required to modernise other police stations, or build new facilities. Equally important is the release of more police officers to patrol instead of occupying unnecessary estate. The Police Service has not as yet completed a comprehensive audit in a manner that achieves an effective and efficient estate meeting the objectives outlined by the Independent Commission. This issue has been noted repeatedly in earlier oversight reports.

▶▶ information technology



A. Chapter Summary

Background

The Independent Commission recommended an urgent, independent and in-depth strategic review of the use of information technology in policing. Ambitious and far-reaching objectives were proposed to devise a properly resourced plan that would place the Police Service at the forefront of law enforcement technology within 3 to 5 years.

B. Recommendation Summary

Recommendation 93: Development of Police IT Strategy

Patten Recommendation:

93. There should be an urgent, independent, and in-depth strategic review of the use of information technology (IT) in policing. It should benchmark the Northern Ireland police against police services in the rest of the world and devise a properly resourced strategy that places them at the forefront of law enforcement technology within 3 to 5 years. It should be validated by independent assessment. The strategy should deliver fully integrated technology systems that are readily accessible to all staff, and should take advantage of the best analytical and communications systems currently available. Users of the technology should play a key part in devising the strategy, and in assessing its implementation.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has not yet been achieved.

History

In response to the Independent Commission's recommendation the Police Service developed an information systems strategy in 2001 intended to cover the period 2001 to 2005. The broad vision articulated with this strategy was defined in these terms: "By March 2005, all personnel will have ready access to whatever accurate and up-to-date information they need to achieve their job objectives, irrespective of their location". The Strategy was accepted with qualifications by an independent validator.

The Police Service has undergone and accommodated an extraordinary amount of organisational change since 2001, including radical restructuring and the devolution of authority. This came about largely as result of recommendations in place, but also as a consequence of management's effort to improve performance. The result was a significant re-engineering of business processes, to a degree which could not have been foreseen by the drafters of the 2001 strategy.

External influences impinging on the plan included adopting the National Intelligence Model, introducing the Police Performance Assessment Framework, and the Association of Chief Police Officer's information strategy. Additional factors were the need to be in compliance with interoperability standards between components of other UK police services, and the Police Information Technology Organisation (PITO) sponsored National Information System project. The European Union's Schengen agreement of 2001 also required the Police Service to comply with national and international legislation permitting participating EU countries to exchange information

on a range of criminal records and alerts. The e-Government initiative, and plans for information exchanges between various criminal justice agencies in Northern Ireland, was another influence. An accumulation of these factors, plus internal resource pressures, deflected the PSNI from its original intended purpose.

Although significant progress was made between 2001 and 2004, most of the efforts and investment focussed on the provision of IT infrastructure and improved access to existing systems. For example, some 6,500 new personal computers and 2,500 printers were installed within DCUs and Headquarters departments. In addition, all staff were provided with e-mail accounts, and the corporate intranet now allows easy access to duty briefings, policy directives, an electronic problem solving folder, as well as the latest versions of commonly used forms. Individual units may now order supplies, computer consumables and uniforms online, and the Livescan system is available to provide instant identity checks of suspects based on an interface with the Police Service's existing fingerprint database.

These accomplishments provide some of the fundamental building blocks on which the Police Service can deliver the information systems that will be key to increasing efficiency and effectiveness. While none contribute directly to the goal of a fully integrated systems architecture, cumulatively they represent an important contribution to operational effectiveness across the organisation. Police officers at all ranks and in all duty settings view these developments positively, and there is no end of proposals for future enhancements.

By early 2004 the Police Service recognised that it was unlikely to achieve a fully integrated system by the original target date. The Policing Board subsequently commissioned HMIC to review progress and present an assessment. The seventeen recommendations of HMIC's report, delivered in June and December of 2004, confirmed that while there were serious delays in the implementation of the original strategy, much progress had been made nonetheless. The report highlighted a number of areas which may still cause problems and recommended that the Board seek assurances that work was progressing as planned. The Policing Board accepted an updated Information System (IS) Strategy in December of 2004. Approximately 40 large-scale projects must be completed in order to deliver the vision outlined by the Independent Commission.

At the invitation of the Police Service, the PITO has assumed the role of Independent Validator, under an agreement formally entered into by the Police Service, the Policing Board and PITO. The revised IS Strategy was subsequently validated by PITO. The first review was conducted in January of 2005, and others are scheduled for May and October of 2005, with consequent reporting to the Policing Board. A commitment to key outcomes was published in the Policing Plan 2005-2008.

Remaining Issues

For a variety of reasons, a sound and comprehensive strategy to implement the central theme of this recommendation was not in place until December of 2004. With a stable plan now accepted, and a reliable validation process in place, implementation is proceeding notwithstanding critical concerns for funding. PITO officials, reporting to the Policing Board in March of 2005, observed some level of uncertainty on the guaranteed level of funding for the overall programme, and recommended that the NIO resolve the funding issue as soon as possible. With no resolution by the following month, PITO has noted an increased overall concern.



▶▶ structure of the police service

The revised strategic plan estimates the total cost of implementation at just under £65M spread over five years, including capital costs, the cost of client-side external resources and additional human resource costs. The Police Service submitted four major interdependent component business cases, which are seen as fundamental to the implementation of the IS strategy, to the Government in 2004. Without the estimated funding, the Police Service will be unable to implement the remainder of the related systems and move into the “forefront of law enforcement technology” as hoped. Government officials are sympathetic and supportive about conveying these cases towards approval by Treasury, but the sequencing of critical events is becoming time sensitive to the point where police managers fear that the momentum established in relation to other areas of risk may be impaired by further delay.

While there remains a requirement for Government to function within policy and legal guidelines, and within its own resource and financial priorities, we are nonetheless bound to observe that the information management strategy is vital to the long term and continuing success of the Independent Commission’s recommendations on IT. Implementing the Policing Plan, including policing with the community and crime suppression strategies, is critically dependent on timely, accurate and accessible information for front line officers, investigators, analysts, Commanders, the Chief Constable and the Policing Board. An integrated management information system is vital to the concept of devolved authority as well as the development of an informed policing culture aligned with community needs. In addition, the PSNI has a commitment to comply with national and local initiatives including the ongoing Criminal Justice Review’s Causeway Project, the EU Schengen Convention, PITO and ACPO. It is crucial that the existing uncertainty over funding be resolved as quickly as possible.



A. Chapter Summary

Background

The Independent Commission recommended restructuring to encourage and facilitate policing with the community, including de-layering of the operational command organisation and a slimmer structure for Headquarters. Recommendations also called for the significant delegation of authority to District Commanders, including control over a devolved budget and all police resources within their district. Particularly important was the proposal of an amalgamated command for Special Branch and Crime Branch, in order to improve the organisation's ability to deal with rising levels of violent and organised crime. Also recommended was a substantial reduction in the number of officers engaged in security work. Other recommendations proposed the phasing out of the Full Time Reserve and the concomitant enlargement of the Part Time Reserve.

B. Recommendation Summary

Recommendation 94: One DCU per District Council

Patten Recommendation:

94. There should be one district command for each District Council area.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

History

29 District Command Units (DCUs) were created on 1 April 2001, with boundaries coterminous to district council areas with the exception of Belfast, which was divided into four local district areas. Business managers and personnel managers were allocated to DCUs, with resources being shared in smaller DCUs for efficiency. The current Review of Public Administration will result in changes to the number of local councils. Government proposals are expected in 2005, with decisions to follow. This will be a key determinant influencing the Police Service's future organisational configuration (see also Recommendation 27.) Any plan for changing the DCU numbers will be examined closely to ensure the link with the District Policing Partnerships is not severed or diminished.

Recommendation 95: Rank and Resources of DUU Commanders

Patten Recommendation:

95. In general, each district command should be headed by a Superintendent and resourced sufficiently to be self-contained for day-to-day policing purposes and capable of marshalling strength to cope with most unexpected demands. However, in the districts with small populations the commander should be a Chief Inspector, and the districts should draw on assistance from larger neighbouring district commands for functions in which it is not feasible for a small command to be self-sufficient.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

History

District Command Units function under the supervision of a Superintendent or Chief Inspector as recommended, consistent with population size and other factors. Larger DCUs provide support and resources to smaller ones as appropriate. In the context of the Human Resources Planning Strategy 2005-2008, the Chief Constable is directing a progressive needs analysis of the rank establishment, and rationalising ranks as opportunities arise.

Recommendation 96: De-layering of Reporting Relationships

Patten Recommendation:

96. The divisional layer of management and the regional headquarters should be removed, and there should be a direct reporting line from each district commander to the appropriate Assistant Chief Constable at central police headquarters. District commanders in smaller council areas, whatever their rank, should have such a direct reporting line, reflecting the accountability arrangements we have recommended. There should be much greater delegation of decision-making authority to district commanders than is the case now with sub-divisional commanders, including control over a devolved budget and all police resources in their district.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

History

District Command Units are divided into two regions, Urban and Rural, each with an Assistant Chief Constable (ACC) in charge. The ACCs are located at Headquarters, however their function is dedicated to field operations. Each ACC carries additional responsibilities for deploying tactical resources and coordinating major activities with cross-jurisdictional impact. There is broad devolution of authority for allocation of police resources and financial management to DCU Commanders. Regional ACCs conduct twice-yearly accountability sessions with each DCU Commander on every aspect of performance (see also Recommendation 78).

Recommendation 97: Reorganisation of Police Headquarters

Patten Recommendation:

97. There should be a slimmer structure at police headquarters - one that reflects the shift of focus towards community policing and the delegation of responsibility to district commanders, and permits a more rigorous and strategic approach to management. There should be no more than one Deputy Chief Constable. The number of Assistant Chief Officers should be reduced to six from the present twelve. The position of 'Deputy Assistant Chief Constable' should be deleted forthwith. The rank of Chief Superintendent should be phased out.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Full compliance with this recommendation has not yet been achieved.



History

The intent of this recommendation was to shift police resources away from bureaucratic functions to community policing, and to reinforce the delegation of authority. The initial approach was to measure reductions to strength against a baseline figure. Early observable reductions attributable to severance and natural attrition were noted, however only a fraction of the total resulted in gains to front line policing. Complicating matters, changes aimed at improving organisational effectiveness have added positions to the Headquarters complement. Criminal Justice Branch has emerged as a major Headquarters area, and Criminal Operations has assumed responsibility for major crimes, leading to the re-allocation of detectives from DCUs back to Headquarters. These changes together with other regional adjustments make it difficult to measure progress against the original template.

However, other initiatives have emerged that may contribute to achieving the original intentions. The Police Service applied the HMIC thematic inspection “Modernising the Police Service” to benchmark support resources against front line numbers, and to assess future needs for supervisors and middle management positions. This is a useful measurement for evaluating efficiency, using comparators among other UK police services. In addition, the new Public Prosecution Service will take over many functions currently carried out by the Police Service, thereby releasing further police officers and support staff for re-deployment to other roles. The Causeway project will also be implemented, which should release staff from more paper-based administrative responsibilities. An ongoing Efficiency Review Programme is reported in the Human Resources Planning Strategy, with the intent to apply the process across all DCUs and Headquarters departments. These reviews will enable police managers to identify both cashable and non-cashable savings that can be used to meet the Gershon efficiency target of 7.5% savings over three years. An Anti-Bureaucracy User Group is monitoring the implementation of measures to identify further areas that need to be addressed.

The Human Resources Planning Strategy accepted by the Policing Board in December of 2004 provides for a reduction of established Headquarters strength to 1,886 regular officers by the third year of the plan. The Independent Observer continues his comprehensive evaluation of this dynamic process in detailed reports to the Board.

The complement of the Police Service now provides for one Deputy Chief Constable. Assistant Chief Constables and equivalents now total seven. Chief officer staffing decisions are determined by the Policing Board. The Secretary of State directed that the rank of Chief Superintendent should remain, consistent with a Home Office decision applying across England and Wales.

Remaining Issues

The Independent Commission recommended an approach in which policing with the community is the core function of the Police Service, and where decision making is devolved as far as possible to those responsible for delivering services to the community. It also noted that the organisation should reflect both the community policing role that the police were asked to perform as well as achieving management efficiency. The Police Service continues to pursue the objective of a slimmer Headquarters structure through a series of efficiency measures. The results of these various initiatives will not be evident for some time, although the impact of these efforts should maintain a focus on reducing overall administrative burdens at Headquarters. Oversight will continue to monitor to ensure officers are released to operational duties wherever possible.

Recommendation 98: Special Branch (Amalgamation)

Patten Recommendation:

98. Special Branch and Crime Branch should be brought together under the command of a single Assistant Chief Constable.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

History

The Independent Commission's recommendation to bring Crime Branch and Special Branch under the command of one Assistant Chief Constable was actioned on 1 April 2001. Subsequently, on 1 September 2002 both branches became part of Crime Department. After considerable delay, the Police Service put forward a responsive Implementation Plan and strategy, which was linked to the adoption of the UK-wide National Intelligence Model (NIM) in November of 2003. This followed reviews by HMIC, Lord Stevens and HMIC's Blakey. A further restructuring amalgamated Special Branch and Crime Branch into the Crime Operations Department. The transfer of responsibilities and staff to this single unified command, which included C-1 Organised Crime, C-2 Serious Crime, C-3 Intelligence, C-4 Crime Support, C-5 Analysis Centre, C-6 Scientific Support, and C-7 Serious Crime Review Team was implemented in June of 2004. In early 2005 an additional unit, C-8 Historical Review Team, was added to Crime Operations Department.

With 1,280 assigned members, the purpose of Crime Operations Department is to deliver an effective, professional approach in the management of intelligence and the investigation of serious, organised and terrorist crime. The Government has announced that the primary responsibility for national security will shift to the Security Service, or Security Service, in 2007. Formally under the control of the head of Special Branch, C-4 Crime Support now falls under the direction of the ACC Crime Operations, who establishes priorities for the tasking of technical and other support resources for the wider Police Service.

Recommendation 99: Special Branch (Reduction of Officers)

Patten Recommendation:

99. There should be a substantial reduction in the number of officers engaged in security work in the new, amalgamated command.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Full compliance with this recommendation has not yet been achieved.

History

As recommended by the Independent Commission, there has been a reduction in the number of officers engaged in security work in the amalgamated Crime Operations Department. Since 1999 the combined establishment number of police officers engaged in security work, which includes both C-3 Intelligence and C-4 Crime Support has decreased by approximately 25%. By March of



2005 there were 456 police officers and 130 civilians assigned to C-3 Intelligence. These numbers are expected to remain fairly constant for the immediate future.

Remaining Issues

The Independent Commission noted that Special Branch had played a crucial role in countering security threats over the years and preventing or intercepting attacks. Events continue to show that it will be a number of years before a confident judgment can be made as to whether the security threat in Northern Ireland is in long term decline. The recent announcement of the new role in Northern Ireland for the Security Service, in addressing national security intelligence work, may impact further the amount of related work undertaken by the Crime Operations Department. This change is intended to be fully operational during 2007.

Recommendation 100: Informing District Commanders about Security Operations

Patten Recommendation:

100. Security officers should be required to keep their district commanders well briefed on security activities in their districts, and district commanders should be fully consulted before security operations are undertaken in their district.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Full compliance with this recommendation has not yet been achieved.

History

The Implementation Plan adopted by the Police Service in November of 2003 includes specific policy statements requiring C-3 Intelligence briefings to the regional ACCs and DCU Commanders. The Plan directs intelligence officers to keep DCU commanders well briefed on security activities in their districts, and that DCU Commanders be fully consulted before security operations are undertaken in their districts. Likewise, Service Level Agreements describing the relationship between the C-3 Intelligence, C-4 Crime Support and the DCUs have been adopted. Some DCU Commanders, citing specific examples, verify that intelligence sharing is more formalised than in the past and that there has been an increase in both the quantity and quality of intelligence information shared. However, this view is not universal.

Remaining Issues

Although the Independent Commission did not consider it practical to give full management responsibility for security policing to DCU Commanders, it did recommend that security officers be required to keep Commanders well briefed on security activities in their DCU, and that Commanders be fully consulted before security operations are undertaken. The audit or evaluation of the performance of the new organisational changes has not taken place. In addition, the plan or audit of the performance of the new structure, especially the relationship between the DCU Commanders and the new Crime Operations Department, had not been provided as previously agreed. An audit of performance is considered essential to ensuring the intent of this recommendation is successfully met, and that Commanders are satisfactorily briefed on security activities in their respective DCUs.

Recommendation 101: Special Branch (Support Units)

Patten Recommendation:

101. The support units of Special Branch should be amalgamated into the wider police service.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

History

The Police Service has reported that 80 % of the work by C-4 Crime Support is devoted to serious and organised crime at the DCU level. The remaining 20 % is in support of national security or C-3 Intelligence. In addition, 67 % of the surveillance team time and 72 % of the Headquarters Mobile Support Unit's time was committed to serious and organised crime at the DCU level. If this trend of 80% in support of the DCUs continues, it will demonstrate a significant departure from past activities.

Recommendation 102: Police Postings in Security Work

Patten Recommendation:

102. Officers should not spend such long periods in security work as has been common in the past.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has not been achieved.

History

In October of 2003 the Policing Board approved the Police Service's draft tenure policy, which affects among others postings in security work. The draft policy categorises C-4 Crime Support positions as "Specialist Policing" posts and C-3 Intelligence as "Core Specialist" posts. Core Specialist posts will have flexible tenure policy applied. At the end of the fixed five-year tenure period, a chief officer or head of department may extend the period of tenure by a maximum of two years. Specialist Policing posts will have a fixed five-year tenure period. When a chief officer or department head believes that the post requires a longer period of fixed tenure, this may be agreed with the Director of Human Resources. The maximum fixed tenure in any post will be seven years.

Remaining Issues

The Independent Commission recommended that police officers should not spend long periods in security work and that a tenure policy be introduced. While a draft policy endorsed by HMIC and the Policing Board has been available since October of 2003, it has no force or effect until promulgated by the Police Service in the form of a General Order. As such, the policy does not address retrospective application, which means that the intent of this recommendation will not have any effect until 2006 for Specialist Policing positions, and 2008 for Core Specialist positions.



The Police Service previously advised that the implementation of this recommendation was linked to the Policing Board's ongoing review of the Human Resource Planning Strategy, and had therefore been delayed. This was approved by the Policing Board in December of 2004, so there is no reason this cannot be implemented and applied to police postings in security work. (see also Recommendation 83).

Recommendation 103: Phasing Out of Full Time Reserve
 Patten Recommendation:
 103. The future police service should not include a Full Time Reserve.
 Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has not been achieved.

History

The NIO and the Police Service have made moderate progress, including approval of short-range plans, in implementing the recommendation to phase out the Full Time Reserve (FTR). In 1999 the Independent Commission recommended a phase out by 2002/2003, or when the Police Service has achieved the goal of 7,500 regular police officers, with the latter occurring in 2004.

In November of 2002, the Policing Board and Police Service approved a Human Resource Planning Strategy which included retaining the FTR until April of 2005. The FTR programme was planned to be phased out over an 18-month period ending in the autumn of 2006, but would be subject to the security situation. The following chart illustrates the planned retention of the FTR over a period of several years:

December 2001	February 2005	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009
2,256	1,387	1,290	850	680	?

The reduction of 869 FTR members between 2001 and February of 2005 was accomplished using the severance scheme established for the reserve members and through normal attrition. In September of 2004 the Chief Constable announced a revised decision to retain the FTR, with the aim of steadily reducing its strength down to 680 members by the end of 2008. In 2007 this decision will be reevaluated.

New employment contracts would be issued starting in April of 2005. The 680 reserve members retained would be assigned to specific duties, with 430 performing static security assignments at police stations, 109 remaining with the Tactical Support Groups and the remaining 141 providing support to police officers performing patrol duties as directed by the Region ACCs. FTR members in excess of 680 will continue to be assigned to neighbourhood policing teams and routine patrol duties until their separations are complete. The Chief Constable advised that the decision to retain the FTR was based on the prevailing, though improving, security situation, as well as on the success of the police recruiting programme. The NIO has advised that new FTR members or reinstatements would not be allowed if one or more of the 680 FTRs are separated from the service before 2008.

Following extensive discussions the NIO and Police Federation agreed on retraining and severance arrangements for the remaining reserve members who were not eligible for early retirement packages. In September of 2004 the Secretary of State announced the final agreements with the Police Federation concerning a severance package for the remaining FTR members. The £100M severance package included compensation or severance pay, as well as a retraining programme.

Remaining Issues

The Independent Commission felt that the Full Time Reserve was a direct result of the security situation of the last thirty years, with reserve members being engaged on a contract basis to support their regular colleagues in security-related policing. In considering how the Police Service should be structured and resourced, the Independent Commission recommended that, in the event of a sustained improvement in the security situation, the Full Time Reserve should be disbanded.

The Police Service continues to retain a Full Time Reserve, and reserve members continue to be assigned to regular patrol and neighbourhood policing duties. This raises a concern regarding the operational gap at the DCU level that would occur before 2006, and again in 2008, when the FTR programme is reduced in size or dissolved and the enlargement of the Part Time Reserve has not been accomplished. Likewise, because the reductions in the size of the FTR did not begin until April of 2005, a number of reserve members will continue to be assigned to static security, regular patrol, and neighbourhood policing duties until 2008. Plans to provide employment counselling, assistance and entitlements similar to those of regular police officers also remain to be finalised. Finally, although discussions aimed at assisting FTR members to find employment with other police organisations continue, little in terms of concrete actions had been reported by the Police Service as at April of 2005.

Recommendation 104: Enlargement of the Part Time Reserve
 Patten Recommendation:
 104. There should be an enlarged Part Time Reserve of up to 2,500 officers, the additional recruits to come from those areas in which there are currently very few reservists or none at all.
 Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has not been achieved.

History

The Government's August 2001 Implementation Plan confirmed the objective to recruit Part Time Reserve (PTR) officers in under-represented areas. The Police Service began developing a project in early 2002 to recruit, train and employ 2,500 Part Time Reserve members to support the operational needs of DCUs. At this time there were 998 members of the existing PTR. In 2003 the Police Service presented a plan to the Policing Board to deploy 2,500 PTR members to all of the 29 DCUs. In January of the same year, the Consensia Partnership, a private recruiting firm, was awarded a contract to begin recruiting candidates for the new PTR programme, in four pilot DCUs. Consensia received approximately 2,400 applications in total, with 19% coming from the Catholic or Nationalist areas.



►► size of the police service

While the initial recruiting results obtained by Consensia could be considered a limited success, the four pilot projects selected by the Police Service did not satisfy the intent of this recommendation, particularly with respect to the need to recruit from under-represented areas, as three of the four DCUs selected were predominantly non-Catholic areas. The end result of this initial pilot was not particularly representative, as only 12 Catholics were among the 125 new PTR members selected for employment. Of the 321 candidates in the merit pool, only 35 identified themselves as Catholic, although the 50:50 hiring requirement does not apply with regard to the PTR.

In April of 2004 the Police Service advised that future recruitment efforts would adhere to the Independent Commission's principle of targeting areas from which there were few or no reserve members. New reserve members are also to be designated as Police Officer Part Time (POPT), with several Police Service documents noting the revised role profile and job description. A mandatory but flexible training programme is underway for the POPT, and current PTR members who are accepted into the new programme are required to complete a 40-hour conversion course plus their firearms qualifications.

The Police Service reached an agreement with the Policing Board to delay further recruitment, as the current plan would fail to achieve the goal to have the new POPT coming from areas that are currently under-represented. By February of 2005 there were 828 PTRs, as well as 173 POPT selected from the four initial pilot DCUs. As an alternative to the POPT project the Police Service currently considering adopting an unarmed community service officer programme, with duties quite different from the existing PTR or POPT programmes. The Policing Board is scheduled to receive a proposal or briefing from the Police Service about this new programme.

Remaining Issues

The Independent Commission recommended that the Part Time Reserve (PTR) programme be expanded to 2,500 members. It also recommended that the new PTR members be recruited from every neighbourhood in Northern Ireland, especially those areas from which there were few or no reserve members. This was intended to make the PTR programme more representative of the wider community. Previously, the Police Service had experienced low recruitment from majority Catholic.

It is disappointing that after five years more significant results have not been achieved. While this can in part be attributed to a lack of full political and community support for the Police Service, with many potential recruits fearful of intimidation on themselves or family members if they express an interest in joining, there remains an onus on the Police Service and the Policing Board to pursue the aims of this recommendation regardless.

A Community Service Officer programme may well be a viable alternative, however should not be seen as a reason for delaying the full implementation of the existing commitment to augmenting the PTR or POPT programmes. It will be equally important that community and political support follows, and that they do not continue to act as barriers to further progress.

Finally, evidence of a plan to achieve 2,500 PTRs, or POPT, has not yet been received, nor a copy of the evaluation of the pilot recruitment project conducted by the Policing Board, which included recommendations for improvement.



A. Chapter Summary

Background

The Independent Commission compared the strength of Northern Ireland's Police Service with those of police services in the rest of the United Kingdom and Ireland, and recommended that if the security situation did not significantly deteriorate the Police Service be reduced in size over the succeeding 10 years. The model proposed included an initial downsizing over three years through an early retirement or severance programme, and a phasing out of the Full Time Reserve.

B. Recommendation Summary

Recommendation 105: Future Size of the Police Service

Patten Recommendation:

105. Provided the peace process does not collapse and the security situation does not deteriorate significantly from the situation pertaining at present, the approximate size of the police service over the next ten years should be 7,500 full time officers.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

History

The Independent Commission projected that by 2007 the Police Service should achieve the goal of 7,500 regular police officers, starting from a 1999 base year with 8,457 regular police officers and 2,935 Full Time Reserve members. As reported by the Policing Board, the Police Service was able to achieve the goal of 7,500 regular police officers by March of 2004, five years ahead of schedule. A Human Resource Planning Strategy adopted by the Policing Board and the Police Service in 2002 gave direction for successfully implementing this recommendation. This included the appointment of an equal number of Catholic and other than Catholic recruits for each recruit class.

The recruiting effort, administered by Consensia Partnership, is considered very successful and exceeds the general expectations. The Planning Strategy also proposed increasing the number of police officers assigned to DCU duties by decreasing the number assigned to Headquarters. In 2004 the Police Service submitted updated Human Resources Planning Strategy, covering the period 2005-2008, to the Policing Board for approval. This revised Strategy was agreed by the Board in December of 2004.

Recommendations 106 and 107: Severance Arrangements

Patten Recommendations:

106. The early retirement or severance package offered to regular officers and full time reservists aged 50 or above should include a generous lump sum payment according to length of service, pension commutation up to five years, early payment of pension commutation entitlement and payment in lieu of pension until pensionable age is reached. Full time reservists should be treated as far as possible in the same way as regular officers.

107. Regular officers with more than five years service and all full time reservists, leaving the police service before the age of 50, should receive a substantial lump sum payment.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with these recommendations has been achieved.

History

The NIO and Police Service successfully implemented the Independent Commission's recommendations with regard to offering voluntary early retirement or severance to eligible regular police officers and reserve members. The severance scheme was intended to accomplish two objectives: reduce the size of the Police Service and address the balance of its composition. Both objectives have been accomplished.

By April of 2005 some 1,890 regular and 280 reserve officers, a total of 2,170, had left the Police Service under the voluntary severance scheme. Both regular officers and reserve members have been treated equally under the severance scheme. The NIO has agreed to extend the severance programme until 2010 unless its objectives are met before that date. It also reports that the severance scheme is under judicial review due to an allegation of age discrimination.

Due to an increase in staff shortages, especially experienced officers at all ranks, the Policing Board has on at least one occasion suspended or deferred the severance programme for a year in order to retain certain skills and ease shortages. The Police Service has modified the programme to deter severance under certain circumstances and to reduce disruptions, and will "red circle" critical positions to ensure they are not left vacant.

	Year 1 (2001)	Year 2 (2002)	Year 3 (2003)	Year 4 (2004)	Year 5 (2005)	Year 6 (2006)	Year 7 (2007)
Regular Police Officers	469	663	414	53	292	300 est.	300 est.
Full Time Reserve	14	134	97	2	33		
Total	483	797	511	55	325		

The Voluntary Service Support Unit administers the severance scheme effectively and makes excellent documents and booklets available to those officers considering accepting a severance package. In late 2004 the Secretary of State announced the final agreement with the Police Federation concerning a severance package for the remaining reserve members who are not eligible for a regular severance package due to age or length of service. This £100M severance package includes compensation or severance pay and a retraining component.



Recommendation 108: Retraining Programme for Police Officers

Patten Recommendation:

108. The Training and Employment Agency should develop measures for police officers (and civilians) seeking other employment, in consultation with police management and the staff associations. The Police Retraining and Rehabilitation Trust should have a role in this programme, and should have enhanced staffing and funding to enable it to deal with a substantially larger workload.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Full compliance with this recommendation has not yet been achieved.

History

The NIO and Police Service have successfully implemented a comprehensive outplacement programme to provide retraining for police officers and reserve members seeking other employment. The Voluntary Severance Support Unit (VSSU) was assigned the responsibility for administering the programme. The retraining programme is described in policies and booklets that are made available to regular and reserve officers deemed eligible. The VSSU also provides outplacement services that include pension advice, independent financial advice, career counselling, job opportunities and assistance with related matters.

Approximately 239 officers have participated in one or more programmes developed by the Police Retraining and Rehabilitation Trust (PRRT), while 1174 had taken part in an external training course.

Remaining Issues

Although the Police Service agreed to increase the role and usage of the PRRT to provide support and training, the oversight team has not received evidence suggesting such an arrangement has been implemented. The last reported estimated usage of PRRT was approximately 5%. As noted, no similar programme for civilians has been developed.

Recommendation 109: Opportunities in GB Police Forces for Reservists

Patten Recommendation:

109. Police recruiting agencies in Great Britain should take full account of the policing experience of former RUC reservists in considering applications for employment in police services in Great Britain.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has not been achieved.

History

As a result of the Chief Constable's September of 2004 decision to continue the Full Time Reserve, with the objective of steadily reducing its strength to 680 members by the end of 2008, there has been only moderate progress by the NIO and Police Service in implementing this

recommendation. The Police Service has made enquiries about career opportunities for reserve members in Great Britain, with responses from 37 different forces including the Atomic Energy Police. This agency is currently conducting road shows to recruit 30 to 40 police officers per year. The NIO has also contacted the Association of Chief Police Officers in an attempt to solicit interest among associated police services. A questionnaire has been circulated to all reserve members to determine levels of interest in joining other police services. A total of 25% of those surveyed expressed an interest. The Police Retraining and Rehabilitation Trust will advise all officers of career fairs to give details of potential opportunities.

Remaining Issues

Even though there has been a decision to retain 680 reserve members until 2008, a large number of them will be separated before the autumn of 2006. These reserve members should have the opportunity to seek employment with other forces before their current employment contracts expire. Evidence of a programme, detailed plan and time lines, and an evaluation of results, remain to be provided.

Recommendation 110: Opportunities with the UN for Reservists

Patten Recommendation:

110. The British government should offer former reservists the opportunity to participate in British policing contingents in United Nations peacekeeping operations.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has not been achieved.

History

In December of 2003 the NIO advised the oversight team that former reserve members were able to apply for positions in British policing contingents of UN peacekeeping operations.

Remaining Issues

No evidence or documentation has been provided indicating that this recommendation has been implemented or that former reserve members have in fact participated in UN operations. The Police Service reported that implementing this recommendation was contingent on the decision to retain or disband the Full Time Reserve. This decision has since been taken (see also Recommendations 103 and 109).

▶▶ **composition of the police service**



A. Chapter Summary

Background

The Independent Commission envisaged a Police Service that is representative of and supported by the community it serves. A key component of achieving a representative Police Service is a sound and successful recruitment programme that reaches, attracts and is supported by all segments of the population, especially those segments that are under-represented. Several recommendations address the various components of a sound recruitment programme that will attract, fairly test, objectively vet, and select applicants in a way that results in a diversified Police Service that is representative of, and can be supported by, the community.

B. Recommendation Summary

Recommendation 111: Transfer of Police Civilian Staff

Patten Recommendation:

111. The Northern Ireland Civil Service management should facilitate transfers of civilian members of the police service to other Northern Ireland departments and should co-operate with the Policing Board and the Chief Constable in achieving a balanced and representative civilian workforce.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has not been achieved.

History

The Government noted in its August 2001 Implementation Plan that while it supported the principle of fair participation in the civilian workforce, it would not be practicable to transfer and absorb civil service employees working within the Police Service workforce back into other Departments. Instead, the government elected to develop a "package of measures" that would result in a more representative and integrated workforce.

The Police Service moved ahead with implementation of the prescribed measures, but did so without a formalised plan or strategy and without establishing goals and time lines to accomplish this objective. First, the Police Service required civil service staff, that accept a promotion within the Police Service, to give up their civil service status and be classified as direct recruits. This resulted in a 30% increase in the number of civilian staff classified as direct recruits from 791 in 1999, or 23.3% of the civilian workforce, to a total of 1,739, or 53% of the civilian workforce, in March of 2005. At the same time the percentage of Catholics represented within the direct recruit classification increased from 11.6% in 1999 to 17.6% by March of 2005. However, when both civil service and direct recruit populations are blended together, Catholic representation is reduced to 14.5% of the civilian workforce.

In June of 2002 the Police Service engaged the services of Grafton Recruitment to act as independent agent for the recruitment of civilian support staff. Grafton conducts the recruitment process and provides the Police Service with merit pools of qualified applications from which it must appoint an equal number of Catholics and those other than Catholic when there are six or

more posts at the same level. Grafton also conducts competition for civilian staff in instances where there are less than six posts, and which therefore to do fall under the 50:50 requirement. As at April of 2005 Grafton had conducted 14 competitions for civilian staff under the 50:50 requirement, and provided an adequate merit pool in each case. Two more competitions are presently ongoing. Grafton has also conducted 86 civilian staff competitions involving less than six posts.

When looking at community representation among all civilian staff, in other words the representativeness of both civil servants and direct recruits together, the percentage of Catholic civilian support staff has increased by only 2.2%, from 12.3% in 1999 to 14.5% as at March of 2005. This does not compare favourably with the nearly 42% found within the larger Northern Ireland public sector workforce, as reported in November of 2004 by the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland.

In August of 2004 the Police Service received funding approval to establish an additional 300 civilian posts over three years, which represents another opportunity to address the imbalance in community representation among civilian staff. The Police Service also contracted Deloitte MCS Limited to conduct a Support Staff Pay and Grading Scoping Study, which was completed in April of 2004. The study made several recommendations that could serve to progress the civilianisation of the Police Service further, as well as helping to develop a more diversified and integrated workforce.

Remaining Issues

The Independent Commission noted that it was important that the same principle of a balanced and representative workforce applied to police officers should also apply to the civilian staff, and that it was illogical to argue for diversity among officers while leaving the civilian component unchanged, especially if many jobs held by officers were to be progressively civilianised. It considered the Chief Constable to be responsible for achieving a balanced and representative civilian workforce. Unfortunately, the percentage of total Catholic civilian staff has not increased appreciably between 1999 and the present, and the Police Service has been slow to implement this recommendation, as well as to civilianise posts that do not require police officers (see also HMIC's Baseline Review of the PSNI published in August of 2004).

The Police Service has not prepared a formalised plan or strategy, or established goals and time lines, to implement the package of measures adopted to increase the percentage of Catholics within the Police Service civilian support staff. However, the failure to more fully achieve the objectives of this recommendation as represented in the Government's August 2001 Implementation Plan does not rest exclusively with the Police Service. For example, in December of 2004 the Policing Board accepted the PSNI's Human Resource Planning Strategy, which sought among other things to address the issue of Catholic representation among civilian staff. Among its stated aims were the reduction of the Police Service's reliance on the Northern Ireland Civil Service and the "development and delivery of a management-led programme to change the religious composition of the support staff". Yet no specific time lines were established.

Neither has the Government taken firm action to assist with the implementation of this recommendation, but instead has allowed any momentum that might have developed to lapse,



thereby precluding the adoption of more progressive personnel policies. For example, the Police Service has identified that a large percentage of its typist positions no longer serve a required function at this time, however the Government will neither allow the Police Service to transfer them to other assignments within the Civil Service, nor these positions to be replaced by more operationally required civilian positions. These issues, combined with the lack of open positions similar to those that resulted from the aggressive police officer severance programme, limit the Police Service's ability to advance the implementation of this recommendation, despite the opportunities it had.

Recommendation 112: Staff of Policing Board, NIO and Police Ombudsman

Patten Recommendation:

112. Every effort should be made to ensure that the composition of the staff of the Policing Board, the NIO Police Division (or any successor body), and the office of the Police Ombudsman should be broadly reflective of the population of Northern Ireland as a whole, particularly in terms of political/religious tradition and gender.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has not been achieved.

History

The NIO, Policing Board and Police Ombudsman have each established plans and objectives to ensure their respective staffs are diversified to the degree possible, consistent with applicable legislation. The Ombudsman's office has achieved their goals, the Policing Board has made good progress. The NIO Policing Division has achieved gender equality, however their religious composition has not substantially changed.

Remaining Issues

Although the required documentation has been provided by all of the agencies, and plans put in place, the Independent Commission's intent was to ensure representative staffs within all components of Northern Ireland's policing accountability structure; this includes the NIO Policing Division. It will be important for the NIO to model the results that it expects from the Police Service and other agencies and meet its commitments detailed in the August of 2001 implementation plan.

Recommendation 113: Support from Community Leaders

Patten Recommendation:

113. All community leaders, including political party leaders and local councillors, bishops and priests, school teachers and sports authorities, should take steps to remove all discouragements to members of their communities applying to join the police, and make it a priority to encourage them to apply.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Full compliance with this recommendation has not yet been achieved.

History

Catholic and other church leaders, as well as many leading public officials, have publicly expressed continued support and encouragement for young people to join the Police Service. This has contributed significantly to the success of the police officer recruitment programme, and also the level of community representation among uniformed officers. Recruitment drives consistently attract approximately 36% Catholic applicants. Unfortunately, it remains the case that some young people who express an interest in a policing career continue to be openly discouraged or intimidated away from joining or remaining with the Police Service. Intimidation and fear of attack on themselves and relatives continue to be given as the main reasons by young Catholics for not joining the Police Service.

However, it is significant and encouraging that the institution of policing itself is no longer seen as the primary discouragement, and there is no clearer indication of this than the over 15,000 applications that have been received from Catholic men and women since the new recruitment programme was launched.

Remaining Issues

All segments of the community and political leadership have not removed discouragements nor actively encouraged members of their community to join the Police Service. While there are many reasons for the success of the Police Service's recruitment programme, continuing success, particularly with regard to the recruitment of a representative civilian staff, will increasingly depend on the broader-based support of the entire community, and the important support of all of its community and political leaders.

Recommendation 114: Gaelic Athletic Association

Patten Recommendation:

114. The Gaelic Athletic Association should repeal its rule 21, which prohibits members of the police in Northern Ireland from being members of the Association.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

History

On 17 November 2001 the Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA) repealed its Rule 21, which prohibited members of the Police Service from becoming members of the GAA.



Recommendation 115: Liaison with Schools

Patten Recommendation:

115. Liaison should be established between all schools and universities and the police service in Northern Ireland immediately, and work experience attachments and familiarisation days should be organised with active support and encouragement from community leaders and teachers.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has not been achieved.

History

The Police Service conducted several initiatives in order to establish links with schools, colleges and universities. For example, the Police Service initiated the development of a Citizen and Safety Education (CASE) Programme, which included representatives from several sectors of education, conducted career conventions, career talks, and distributed literature at several schools.

Between September of 2000 and June of 2003 the Police Service took the work experience programme to a number of Protestant, Catholic, and non-designated schools. However, in January of 2003 existing Career Advisors (police officers) were transferred to operational duties as part of the overall Human Resource Planning Strategy. The Police Service then suspended the work experience programme until September of 2003, anticipating that the schools contact programme would become a key community involvement activity in all DCUs. This has not occurred however, in part due to the absence of a defined policy on the issue of work experience.

The Police Service does visit schools throughout Northern Ireland in order to generate interest in the police and provide information to students. Throughout 2004, the Police Service had 1,548 school requests for the CASE programme and was able to fulfil 1,051 requests, 313 in Urban Region and 738 in Rural Region. In addition, the recruiting firms contracted to conduct police and support staff recruitment competitions, Grafton Recruitment and the Consensia Partnership, periodically attend career fairs at schools and colleges across Northern Ireland.

The impact on police recruitment is minimised by two factors: first, the recruitment of police officers on a 50:50 basis has been a success from its commencement in 2001 despite the lack of support from all segments of the community envisioned in this recommendation. At the present time the recruitment competitions are resulting in more qualified applicants, both Catholic and other than Catholic, than the Police Service is able to accept into training. Second, it has been determined that the average recruit ages are 28 for females and 29 for males. This results in an approximate ten-year span between participation in a work experience programme and appointment to the Police Service. Nonetheless, while the direct value of these programmes as they relate to recruitment is minimal at this time, the significance and importance of police officers moving freely among students from all communities, and discussing issues of mutual concern, cannot be overstated.

Remaining Issues

Only minimal progress has been reported due to the resistance to allowing police officers to visit some schools, the need for the Police Service to assign officers to front line duties, and the

current success of the recruiting programme. The full implementation of this recommendation has been affected both by resource shortages and by difficulty in gaining access to schools in locations where full community support for the police is lacking.

Recommendation 116: Pilot Police Cadet Schemes

Patten Recommendation:

116. Provided there is active support and encouragement from local political and community leaders, pilot police cadet schemes should be set up.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has not been achieved.

History

When recommending the establishment of a Cadet Scheme the Independent Commission acknowledged that it could only be successful if there was active and widespread community support and encouragement. Initially, the Police Service represented that it would not explore the development of a Cadet Scheme until 2005. In the interim, the recruitment on police officers has produced an over-supply of qualified recruits hired under the 50:50 requirements, with 28.5 the average age at the time of appointment. The Police Service therefore sees no justification in supplementing the recruitment programme with a Cadet Scheme. The Police Service reports that it will review this position in 2008.

Remaining Issues

At present the Police Service sees no need to augment the recruitment programme through a Cadet Scheme. It is worth noting however, that initiatives such as cadet schemes support more than future recruitment, and the Police Service may have overlooked the value of community engagement and representation, as well as the need to maintain or increase its physical profile in all the communities of Northern Ireland.

Recommendation 117: Recruitment Agency, Lay Involvement in Recruitment

Patten Recommendation:

117. The police should contract out the recruitment of both police officers and civilians into the police service. There should be lay involvement, including community representatives, on recruitment panels.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.



History

In January of 2001 the Police Service contracted the Consensia Partnership to recruit police officers. Consensia, working with the Police Service, developed a comprehensive recruitment and selection programme which includes lay involvement, in the form of observers, and community representatives trained as assessors fully participate on panels during the actual selection processes. Clearly, the participation of lay observers and assessors has contributed to the quality and credibility to the selection programme.

Consensia has conducted eight recruitment competitions since 2001. These have attracted over 77,000 requests for applicant information packs and over 43,000 actual applications. The most recent competition received approximately 5,690 applications. Approximately 36% have been from Catholics and just over 36% from females (see also Recommendations 118 and 119). At the present rate recruitment projections indicate that there will be a greater number of qualified recruits than the Police Service is able to accept into training, thereby providing the Police Service with an opportunity to select only the most highly qualified recruits. This is an enviable position for any police organisation in today's competitive labour market.

The Police Service contracted with Grafton Recruitment in late 2002 to conduct a similar programme for the recruitment of civilian staff. Consistent with the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000, when recruiting for six or more civilian posts at the same level, an equal number of Catholics and those other than Catholic must be appointed. When recruiting for less than six posts at the same time, the 50:50 recruiting requirement does not apply.

Grafton Recruitment has completed 14 competitions for civilian support staff under the 50:50 requirements, in addition to those initially conducted by the Police Service. The most significant competition was for 60 of the anticipated 260 Station Enquiry Assistants, envisaged by the Independent Commission to replace police officers at enquiry desks (see also Recommendation 53). Grafton provided the Police Service with a merit pool of 236, of which 58 were appointed on a 50:50 basis. Competitions for other civilian positions also produced sufficient applicants and merit pools from which appointments could be made consistent with the 50:50 requirements. Grafton has conducted 86 additional competitions for positions where 50:50 is not applicable.

Recommendations 118 and 119: Functions of New Recruitment Agency

Patten Recommendations:

- 118. The recruitment agency should advertise imaginatively and persistently, particularly in places likely to reach groups who are under-represented in the police.
- 119. The agency should advertise beyond Northern Ireland, in the rest of the United Kingdom and in the Republic of Ireland.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with these recommendations has been achieved.

History

Consensia's advertising programme for the recruitment of police officers has been both imaginative and assiduous. It has varied between competitions, but has included press, television, billboard, cinema and online advertising, all designed to reach groups currently under-represented in the Police Service. Beginning with Competition Seven, the added feature of receiving applications online was initiated. The advertising programme covers Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland and the United Kingdom.

The responses from all communities have been positive (see also Recommendations 117 and 121) and the results have exceeded expectations. Therefore, in an effort to adapt the volume of applicants to the number of recruits that can actually be appointed to training, television advertising has now been eliminated, and the number of press insertions reduced for competitions seven, eight and nine. Nevertheless, nearly 5,000 applications were received for Competition Seven which produced a merit pool of nearly 900. Competition Eight resulted in approximately 5,700 applications, for a merit pool of 831. Approximately 7,200 applications were received for Competition Nine, which resulted in a merit pool of over 800 qualified applicants.

In addition to a large number of Northern Ireland applicants, Consensia has received applications from the Republic of Ireland and Great Britain, as well as from a number of other countries. Applicants range in age from 17 to 54, with the highest percentage being in age group 25-29. Nearly 25% of all applicants entering training have post-secondary degrees. Clearly, the recruitment programme is a success story, and this is in large part attributable to the collective cooperative effort of the Police Service and the Consensia Partnership.

In much the same fashion Grafton Recruitment has developed an innovative and imaginative advertising strategy for civilian posts, also designed to reach groups currently under-represented in the Police Service. The strategy includes online and press advertising in specifically designated professional publications related to the positions being advertised. The strategy primarily covers Northern Ireland, but also the Republic of Ireland. The 12 competitions conducted by Grafton under the 50:50 requirement to date have resulted in merit pools sufficient to allow for the appointment of applicants representative of the broader community. This is in large part attributable to the highly professional and effective advertising programme developed by Grafton. Advertising strategies are continually evaluated and adjusted as required (see also Recommendations 127 and 128).

Recommendations 120 and 121: Selection of Recruits

Patten Recommendations:

- 120. All candidates for the police service should continue to be required to reach a specified standard of merit in the selection procedure. Candidates reaching this standard should then enter a pool from which the required number of recruits can be drawn.
- 121. An equal number of Protestants and Catholics should be drawn from the pool of qualified candidates.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with these recommendations has been achieved.



History

The Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000 provides legislative authority for the recruitment of qualified applicants on a ratio of 50:50 Catholic and those other than Catholic. The Consensia Partnership, working in cooperation with the Police Service, has developed a comprehensive job-related selection process, which requires recruits to reach an established standard of merit after which they are entered into a merit pool. The Police Service then appoints recruits to enter police training from the merit pool on a 50:50 basis. Consensia continually evaluates the selection process and makes adjustments with a view to strengthening it.

Since engaging into contract with the Police Service in 2001, Consensia has conducted eight full recruitment competitions from which they have established merit pools sufficient to meet the requirements of the Police Service to appoint on a 50:50 basis. The ninth competition commenced in March of 2005. Except for fulfilling the training requirements, all recruits are considered fully capable and qualified to perform the duties of a police officer. As previously noted, the success of the recruitment programme is a credit both to the professional abilities of the Consensia Partnership and to the high level of professional support provided by the Police Service.

The Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000 also requires that where there is a recruitment competition for six or more vacant civilian staff posts at the same level, an equal number of Catholics and those other than Catholic should be appointed from the merit pool of qualified candidates. The Police Service contracted with Grafton Recruitment for the selection of civilian support staff. Grafton has designed and requires applicants for civilian support staff positions to meet an established set of job-related competencies.

Since engaging into contract with the Police Service in 2002, Grafton has completed 12 competitions for six or more posts at the same level. In each case a merit pool was established sufficient to provide for the appointment of an equal number of Catholic and other than Catholic civilian staff. Grafton has also conducted 88 competitions for positions where there are less than six posts available. However, while the recruitments conducted by Grafton for six or more civilian staff positions have produced merit pools sufficient to fill vacancies, the percentage of Catholics in the civilian workforce has only marginally increased since 1999 (see also Recommendation 111).

Recommendation 122: Opportunities for Part Time Working and Job Sharing

Patten Recommendation:

122. Priority should be given to creating opportunities for part time working and job-sharing, both for police officers and police service civilians, and career breaks should be introduced.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has not been achieved.

History

The Police Service has a long established policy allowing for part time work and job sharing for its civilian support staff. In addition, though not common, police officers may apply with their local supervisors and be authorised to work reduced hours or job share in accordance with the

provisions of General Order 37/2003. It is anticipated that the number of police officers working reduced hours may increase as the number of female officers increases. Presently, the Police Service has 38 regular police officers and 425 civilians on part-time work status. Police officers are allowed to take unpaid leave if they wish to have a break in their career.

Remaining Issues

The Independent Commission recommended the introduction of career breaks as part of its proposals for more flexible working arrangements. These were aimed at women officers in particular, as among other things it would allow for easier child raising. The Police Service has not made provisions for career breaks as intended. It has noted that when it reached its full establishment of 7,500 regular officers and following appropriate research, it would develop and introduce a policy authorising career breaks for police officers consistent with the intent of this recommendation. Although the full establishment level of 7,500 police officers has now been achieved, the Police Service has provided no evidence indicating progress with implementation of this recommendation.

Recommendation 123: Child Care Arrangements

Patten Recommendation:

123. Childcare facilities should be introduced where applicable, or child care vouchers and flexible shift arrangements offered.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has not been achieved.

History

The Police Service has reported research on childcare initiatives since 1999 when it completed a preliminary research paper on childcare initiatives that explored various options and costs. The Police Service then reported that, as part of an overall diversity project, it was undertaking further detailed research to justify the significant potential costs. Also, the Police Service reported in May 2002 that it was undertaking new research to determine the extent of the demand for childcare in light of the recruitment climate, wherein approximately 38% of new recruits were female. In December of 2003 the Police Service reported that more research was underway into a childcare voucher programme. The results of these several research projects have not been provided to the oversight team.

Remaining Issues

Only minimal progress has been made, apart from continuing research. Late in 2004 the Police Service developed a detailed and thorough Gender Action Plan aimed at improving the recruitment, retention and progression of female police officers and civilian staff. An Implementation Plan with target dates, clear lines of responsibility and resource implications accompanied the Plan. The Gender Action Plan notes the difficulty of balancing child care and work commitments, particularly in cases where both parents are police officers. It also recognises



that increasing the number of female officers, a long-established objective of the Police Service, will only increase the demand for more flexible work and childcare arrangements. Although the Gender Action Plan is a good initial step, which is aimed at facilitating the re-integration of new mothers into the Police Service through such things as part-time work, modified deployments and restricted duties, it does not specifically address the issue of child care arrangements. As at April of 2005, the Police Service finds no basis upon which to construct a business case to progress childcare arrangements.

Recommendation 124: Length of Recruitment Process

Patten Recommendation:

124. The recruitment process should be reduced to no more than six months.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

History

The Consensia Partnership has successfully conducted its portion of the recruitment process for police officers within six months, and in addition maintains contact with applicants throughout the process. However, the process has recently become more complicated due to the provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act, which require medical hearings and appeals that may well prolong the process. The specific impact on the length of the recruitment process is not presently known. Grafton conducts its portion of the recruitment process for civilian staff well within the six months term.

Recommendation 125: Disqualification from Entry into the Police Service

Patten Recommendation:

125. Young people should not be automatically disqualified from entry into the police service for relatively minor criminal offences, particularly if they have since had a number of years without further transgressions. The criteria on this aspect of eligibility should be the same as those in the rest of the United Kingdom. There should be a procedure for appeal to the Police Ombudsman against disqualification of candidates.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

History

The Secretary of State appointed an Independent Assessor in May of 2001 to validate decisions on disqualifications where candidates disagree with the decision. The Police Service periodically provides the oversight team with data describing the number of applicants disqualified during each competition, and the reasons why. These reports indicate that no predisposition to disqualify applicants on the basis of community background exists.

Recommendation 126: Registration of Interests

Patten Recommendation:

126. All officers - those now in service as well as all future recruits - should be obligated to register their interests and associations. The register should be held both by the police service and by the Police Ombudsman.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has not been achieved.

History

In September of 1999 the Independent Commission recommended the registration of interests and associations consistent with the position of transparency and openness it had advocated throughout its report. The Government accepted this recommendation in its August 2001 Implementation Plan and included the authority to implement this recommendation in section 51 of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000. Following several delays, it was not until April of 2004 that the Police Service issued General Order 17/2004, including the resolution of legal issues and a requirement to prepare guidance books. This order, subsequently reviewed and confirmed for compliance with law, required police officers to register their memberships in seven specified organisations, and in any other organisation "proclaiming/holding views on race, ethnicity or national identity which may be perceived to be in conflict with section 32 of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000 and section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998". The order also prohibited the disclosure of registration information except for specific official reasons.

Officers began returning completed forms in sealed envelopes in April of 2004. However, after receiving over 4,500 registration forms by June of 2004, the registration process was suspended because two officers were granted leave for a judicial review of the process. The judicial review was scheduled for November of 2004, but at that time was withdrawn. The Police Service obtained further legal advice, to the effect that the underlying legislation was outside what is legally permissible. At that time the Police Service withdrew the Notes for Guidance and terminated the Registration of Notifiable Membership process.

The Police Service has identified a lack of clear authority in section 51 of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000 to enforce the objective registration requirement contained in General Order 17/2004. Accordingly, in November of 2004 the Chief Constable requested that the Secretary of State seek corrective legislation. The Northern Ireland Office indicated in its response in March of 2005 that it was presently unable to amend the legislation to address this deficiency.

Consequently, the Police Service is proceeding with the implementation of the registration process using as its authority amended guidance, which reflects a more subjective test as described in section 51(5) of the Police Act (Northern Ireland) 2000. This requires police officers to register memberships in organisations that they individually believe may affect their ability to discharge their duties effectively and impartially.



Remaining Issues

It has been determined through police legal advice that the legislation provides insufficient authority to implement this recommendation as intended. It remains disappointing that almost six years after the release of the Independent Commission's recommendations this particular instance of openness and transparency has not achieved intended results. It is now incumbent upon the Government to review and enact appropriate legislation that will give effect to the independent Commission's intent in this regard, and permit the Police Service to meet its obligations.

Recommendation 127: Identify and Recruit Northern Ireland Catholic Officers

Patten Recommendation:

127. The recruitment agency should seek to identify Northern Ireland Catholic officers in other police services, including the Garda Síochána, contact them and encourage them - particularly those in more senior ranks - to apply for positions in the Northern Ireland police.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Full compliance with this recommendation has not yet been achieved.

History

Section 45 of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000 provides legislative authority for the Policing Board in respect to senior officers, and the Chief Constable in respect to other ranks, to seek applicants from other police services including the Garda Síochána. The Police Service reports that it has and continues to make efforts to identify Northern Ireland Catholic officers in other police services, however there is little evidence of results. The actions required by other recommendations relating to a slimmer police headquarters, severance, and the size of the Police Service have significantly changed the makeup of senior staff, and there is no progress reported with regard to an increase in the number of Catholics in the senior ranks (see also Recommendations 97, 105 and 106).

Remaining Issues

The Independent Commission recommended infusing the Police Service with experienced Catholic officers from outside Northern Ireland. While it is a challenging task for a variety of reasons, this should not prevent the Policing Board and Police Service from proactively pursuing the intent of this recommendation.

Recommendation 128: Lateral Entry of Experience Officers

Patten Recommendation:

128. Lateral entry of experienced officers from other police services, and secondments or recruitments from non-police organisations should be actively encouraged.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Full compliance with this recommendation has not yet been achieved.

History

The Independent Commission also recognised that the Police Service could benefit from an infusion of diverse talent and experience from outside Northern Ireland and recommended, regardless of religion, the encouragement of lateral entry and secondments from non-police agencies. The Government has introduced new regulations to facilitate the entry of serving police officers at the rank of constable into the Police Service without having to undergo recruit training. There has been some policy progress on secondments between the Police Service and the Garda Síochána. In February of 2005 the Chief Constable and the Commissioner of the Garda Síochána signed a protocol setting forth procedures for the secondment of police officers between the two agencies (see also Recommendations 159 and 160) however, no actual police officer exchanges have occurred.

Remaining Issues

The notion of lateral entries has not been a priority within the Police Service and therefore the procedures and authority to do so have not been acquired in a timely manner (see also Recommendation 127). Greater links with other policing institutions can only be of long term benefit.

▶▶ **training, education and development**



A. Chapter Summary

Background

The Independent Commission addressed the subject of training, education and development and focussed on the restructuring of this critical area as being pivotal for a successful transformation of the Police Service. The Independent Commission recommended the development of a Training, Education and Development (TED) Strategy for both the recruit and in-service training programmes. The TED Strategy was to clearly demonstrate the inter-connection between the overall aims of the recommendations, and the objectives and priorities set out in the future policing plans of the Police Service and the Policing Board. The Independent Commission also emphasised the importance of a new state of the art Police College as critical to the long term success of the training programme and the transformation of Northern Ireland's Police Service. The new Police College was seen as the cornerstone to providing the recruit officer as well as seasoned police and civilian personnel with the environment conducive to modern learning and development techniques.

B. Recommendation Summary

Recommendation 129: Training, Education and Development Strategy

Patten Recommendation:

129. A training, education and development strategy should be put in place, both for recruit training and for in-service training, which is linked to the aims of this report and to the objectives and priorities set out in the policing plans. These plans should incorporate training and development requirements.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Full compliance with this recommendation has not yet been achieved.

History

PSNI training has undergone a significant number of positive and progressive changes since the Independent Commission released its report. The Training, Education and Development Primary Reference Document (PRD) came into force in January of 2001, and forms the basis for the development of the PSNI's entire training and development enterprise. The PRD has been complemented by subsequent training business plans for 2003/2004 and 2004/2005, as well as a 2004/2005 Course Prospectus, all of which ensure a wider dissemination of the Police Service's training strategy.

Training Branch constitutes a significant component of the Police Service, with a total staff complement of over 350 persons and an operating budget of £21M. Training is composed of four divisions, with three levels of subject matter content: core, generic and general learning areas. In addition, Training Branch has established an external Learning Advisory Council of over 28 members from outside the Police Service, which provides independent advice and consultation on training initiatives. Overall, the Police Service offers 259 programmes and courses of study, from Foundation Training for police cadets to in-service skills development courses for operational

police officers. The primary training site is Garnerville Police College, with four satellite sites delivering training and development at various locations throughout Northern Ireland.

In its report, the Independent Commission also noted the need for police accountability. The Policing Board has the primary responsibility to monitor the design, delivery and effectiveness of the training, education and development being delivered by Training Branch. The Policing Board has developed a Training, Education and Development Monitoring Framework along with Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) intended to produce verifiable evidence that training needs and organisational development goals are being met. The ultimate aim of the Monitoring Framework, which is still in the initial phase of implementation, is to keep the Policing Board informed about the effectiveness and efficiency of training.

Remaining Issues

One of the Policing Board's major responsibilities is to monitor the design, delivery and effectiveness of the PSNI's training and development programme. In order to ensure that the Police Service is meeting the objectives set out by the Independent Commission, the Policing Board has agreed with the Police Service on a number of KPIs that will monitor progress in an analytical and methodical manner. The KPIs are intended to both monitor the design and delivery of training and evaluate outcomes in the short, medium and longer terms. They also assess the training programme's management, efficiency and effectiveness. The Policing Board's monitoring strategy should ensure that the principles of the TED Strategy are being adhered to, however it is too early in the process to have had sight of an annual report of results, and the oversight team will await the outcome of the Board's evaluation.

Recommendation 130: Training, Education and Development Budget

Patten Recommendation:

130. A total training and development budget should be established, covering all aspects of training, and this should be safeguarded against transfers to other sub-heads.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

History

The Police Service has not formally recognised the safeguarding of the annual training, education and development's annual budget as intended by the Independent Commission. The need to protect, or 'ring-fence' training resources from transfer to other areas was recommended as this would send a strong signal throughout the Police Service that training and its strong influence on organisational change were to be given priority. The acquisition of financial software was intended to allow for the better tracking of key resource data, however implementation has met with developmental delays. The budgetary process for 2004/2005 was completed without the benefit of financial software, and training budgets for 2002/2003 and 2004/2005 were accepted with minor changes. Consequently, the ability to identify variances and to make appropriate adjustments for greater budgetary analysis and control remain absent until the system becomes fully operational.



Fiscal year financial reporting continues to be a resource-intensive effort. It is expected that the software will increase costing and forecasting accuracy in preparation for the next fiscal year budget exercise. The information has been reviewed by the appropriate internal stakeholders, particularly the Policing Board, which monitors this area closely. It is encouraging to note that increasing importance is being placed on the budgetary needs of the Police Service's training endeavour. In spite of the delays described above, the oversight team is satisfied that the Independent Commission's intent has been achieved.

Recommendation 131: New Police College

Patten Recommendation:

131. The Northern Ireland police should have a new purpose-built police college and the funding for it should be found in the next public spending round.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has not been achieved.

History

The Police Service, Policing Board and Northern Ireland Office participate on a tri-partite project board which supervises the implementation of this recommendation. The project board conducted a comprehensive review of the scope of the new college, and is revising its original business case to secure funding. The new business case will be submitted to Treasury in late June of 2005. Among other things, the revised business case will ensure that projected costs for appropriate security measures are addressed.

The Policing Board approved the procurement of a 210 acre site at Desertcreat, near Cookstown Co.Tyrone, in early February of 2004. Construction plans and time lines for the completion of the new police college have been provided. A Police College Business Plan detailing the projected costs for the new college as of September of 2004 was also provided. The tentative completion date for the new college is in the autumn of 2007. It is expected that a private/public partnership will facilitate the funding of this sizeable project.

Remaining Issues

In its 1999 report the Independent Commission noted the inadequacy of the Police Service's training facilities. This assessment has been confirmed during subsequent oversight evaluations. Adequate and modern training and development facilities are an absolute requirement for a modern police organisation, particularly if it faces the dual challenges of organisational change and an evolving operational environment. Due to the critical importance of this recommendation, the oversight team will continue to closely monitor ongoing progress. It will be important to ensure that adequate funding, focus and effort continues to keep this already delayed schedule on track.

Recommendation 132: Service Level Agreements

Patten Recommendation:

132. There should be service level agreements between police districts/departments and the police Training Branch setting out what the Branch is expected to deliver to the district or department concerned.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Full compliance with this recommendation has not yet been achieved.

History

The Independent Commission encouraged the introduction of a mechanism to ensure the provision of effective, targeted training services to DCUs and Headquarters departments, particularly those tailored towards any unique requirements. It recommended the development of Service Level Agreements (SLAs) that would commit both parties to cooperate in the provision of any required training, while allowing Training Branch to ensure a minimum level of training standards. SLAs would also allow Training Branch to identify types of training services which would meet a stated need, but might also support a larger organisational objective.

Since the Independent Commission published its report in 1999 there were several iterations of SLAs in draft form. A pilot project covering four SLAs was conducted and has now been concluded. General Order 13/2005, District Training, was finally ratified by the Police Service in April of 2005, and came into force on 17 May 2005. The General Order covers SLAs for all 29 Districts. The SLAs have been signed off by the Police College, and have now gone to DCU Commanders for their signature.

Remaining Issues

Evidence of a quality assurance process to evaluate the effectiveness of the SLAs, particularly upon the termination or completion of an SLA, remains to be provided. This is understandable since they have just recently been finalised, therefore oversight will continue to monitor their implementation and review process to determine the results. This will be included in the December of 2005 training thematic update.

Recommendation 133: Civilian Input into Recruit Training

Patten Recommendation:

133. There should be a high degree of civilian input into the recruit training programme. The director of the training centre (and the new college when this is opened) should have both academic qualifications and management expertise. Civilian instructors should be employed, or brought in as necessary to conduct as many elements of the training programme as possible. Some modules of recruit training should be contracted out to universities and delivered on university premises, ideally together with non-police students.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Full compliance with this recommendation has not yet been achieved.



History

The Independent Commission noted that it was vital for police recruits to continue to consider themselves, and the Police Service as a whole, as an integral part of the community. It was felt that a move away from an exclusively in-house approach to police training would be facilitated by increasing police collaboration and cooperation with existing private and public learning institutions. Although the Independent Commission recognised that much of what police recruits need to learn needs to be taught by fellow police officers, there were more and more subjects that could be more effectively taught by outside experts.

Since launching its revised training programme the Police Service has markedly enhanced its relationships with learning institutions such as Queens University Belfast, the University of Ulster, the Open University and the Association of Northern Ireland Colleges. This represents one of the more positive moves towards achieving the goal of creating real partnerships between the Police Service and the community. Notwithstanding positive outcomes in this initial phase, it is unclear whether developing such relationships will become an established practice.

The Police Service has introduced a number of modules into the recruit training programme that are taught by civilian staff. These include trainers from both the private and academic sectors. An early initiative to promote existing civilian staff into training positions was not followed up, and although there is a proposal for hiring up to twenty civilians in the future, the actual hiring of civilians on a permanent basis has not progressed.

Training Branch has initiated a secondment-based model for its training staff, to ensure that highly qualified and skilled trainers are available to deliver the training curriculum, although the oversight team has yet to assess the impact of this initiative. The Policing Board has indicated its support for the development of balanced practices regarding tenure in Training Branch, and has indicated its intention to monitor this issue.

Remaining Issues

The majority of performance indicators have now been met, however the Police Service has yet to put forward a plan that clearly articulates its intention to hire civilians as full time institutional staff, and there is no indication that this will be accomplished in the near future. The Policing Board is aware of the importance of including civilian input into training and is expected to monitor the ratio of civilian and police instructors over the next several years, and whether or not progress is being made. The Police Service has not provided a proposal, including actual numbers required, for including civilians among institutional staff. Evidence of a proposal to contract out modules of training to universities, or to deliver training on university premises, along with projected time lines, associated financial impacts as well as the universities being considered, has also not been provided.

Recommendation 134: Training of Civilian Recruits

Patten Recommendation:

134. Civilian recruits to the police service should also attend the police college, and do some of their training together with police officer recruits.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

History

The integration of civilian support staff within the recruit training programme has been piloted in a number of areas. This initiative is considered important as it serves to familiarise police and civilian staff with each others' respective roles and challenges. The Police Service has developed a draft policy which awaits approval. The Policing Board continues to monitor this process to ensure compliance. The recruit training programme has piloted a 6-day training module dedicated to new civilian staff that is integrated with a number of sessions with police recruits. This includes integrated training in areas such as data protection, health and safety, and courses on human rights, history, culture and politics. With the recruitment of an additional 300 new civilian personnel, it will remain important to maintain this integration.

Recommendation 135: Achievement of Academic Qualifications By Recruits

Patten Recommendation:

135. Recruits who do not already have degrees should be encouraged to acquire appropriate academic qualifications during the first two years of their career. Encouragement should be given to those officers who wish to go on to study further relevant qualifications.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

History

Upon graduation from the recruit training programme, new constables receive a Certificate in Police Studies from the University of Ulster. This programme has been in place since November of 2001. They are then encouraged to continue their academic studies during their first two years of probationary service, towards earning a University of Ulster Diploma in Police Studies. Unfortunately, recent statistics indicate a sharp drop in the number of participants. Among the reasons given by probationers for not participating are a lack of free time to devote to after-duty studies, heavy operational workloads and the twelve-hour shift schedule. Training Branch is aware of this development and is preparing to revisit the issue in order to address the Independent Commission's intent of having the Police Service see itself as an organisation that values education and academic advancement. Although this recommendation is deemed to have been achieved, the results of the Police Service review will be monitored closely to ensure this excellent programme achieves the outcomes intended.

Recommendation 136: Timing of Attestations as a Constable

Patten Recommendation:

136. Attestation as a police officer should take place only upon successful completion of the recruit training course. A sufficiently rigorous standard should be required for success in that course; and completion of the course should be marked by a graduation ceremony.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.



History

The Independent Commission recommended that police recruits be attested as Constables at the completion of their training rather than at the beginning, to ensure that attestation marked a meaningful achievement rather than a given. The Foundation Training programme is a twenty-one week intensive learning programme that develops the skills and judgment of police recruits. The objective of the programme, as stated in the Police College's 2004/2005 Prospectus, is to prepare students to demonstrate the competencies, values, attitudes and behaviours required of police officers in Northern Ireland in an operational environment.

Achieving success within the programme also results in the award of a University of Ulster Certificate in Police Studies. The Course Document Assessment Strategy provided a definition of the "sufficiently rigorous standard" that is being applied. The assessment of academic and testing standards used in recruit training were developed in conjunction with the University of Ulster's standard practices. Policy on the separation from service, based on physical fitness and firearms qualifications, is contained in the Police Service's Student Regulations.

Recommendations 137, 138 and 139: Contents of Recruit Training Programme

Patten Recommendations:

- 137. The hours spent on drill should be considerably reduced.
- 138. Problem-solving and partnership approaches should be central to the recruit training course, and scenario exercises should be further developed as training tools.
- 139. Community awareness training for police recruits should be developed to include representatives of all the main political and religious traditions in Northern Ireland. Community awareness should not be seen as a stand-alone element of recruit training; it should be integrated into all aspects of training.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with these recommendations has been achieved.

History

Shortly after the release of the Independent Commission's report the Police Service reduced the time allotted to military drill within the recruit training programme. It also introduced a problem solving model which encouraged student officers to embrace problem solving and partnership approaches to front line policing. In addition, the adoption and incorporation of scenario-based training has made training and learning more realistic, and thereby prepares police recruits better for the challenges and rigours of operational policing.

In addition to community awareness sessions, Training Branch established a Learning Advisory Council (LAC) in October of 2002, with the aim among other things of bringing outside expertise to bear on learning programmes, materials and delivery methods. The LAC comprises public, private and academic partners, as well as PSNI managers from DCUs and Headquarters, and its involvement has enhanced the overall training programme through the participation of dedicated individuals from outside the Police Service. In view of recent management changes at the Police College, it will be important to determine if the Learning Advisory Council maintains both its present composition and its momentum towards a more active role.

Recommendation 140: Tutor Officer Scheme

Patten Recommendation:

- 140. The Northern Ireland police should introduce a comprehensive tutor officer scheme. Tutor officers should be carefully selected, according to their commitment and adaptability to the new style of policing, and trained.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

History

The tutor officer scheme was created by General Order 3/2002, Tutor Constable Scheme, released in February of 2003. As noted in previous oversight reports, this scheme has proven to be an extremely useful and rewarding programme for both probationers and tutors. The oversight team is satisfied that the Independent Commission's intent has been achieved. Nonetheless, tutor workloads have increased significantly since the programme's inception and as the programme is now in its third year, it would in all probability benefit from a review to ensure progress and longer term sustainability.

Recommendation 141: Course on Constitutional Arrangements

Patten Recommendation:

- 141. Every member of the police service should have, as soon as possible, a course on the impact on policing of the new constitutional arrangements for Northern Ireland, the new policing arrangements set out in this report, and the reforms of the criminal justice system.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

History

Following a lengthy period of preparation and a concerted effort, the Police Service delivered its Course for All to over 12,000 police and civilian staff by December of 2003, a figure well over established targets. The course included material dealing with new constitutional arrangements, new policing arrangements, other criminal justice reforms and the evolving impact of human rights legislation. The Police Service deserves credit for this significant effort, nevertheless certain shortcomings were identified. The aims of the course were extremely ambitious, and past oversight reports have noted that it required participants to assimilate a lot of material in a relatively short period. The Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission has also published an assessment of the Course for All which noted similar concerns. Nonetheless, the oversight team considers the intent of the recommendation to have been met, in part through the Course for All and in part because most people are now well aware of the constitutional arrangements.



Recommendation 142: Course on Human Rights Acts

Patten Recommendation:

142. As a matter of priority, all members of the police service should be instructed in the implications for policing of the Human Rights Act 1998, and the wider context of the European Convention on Human Rights and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

History

As noted in Recommendation 141 above, the Course for All addressed human rights issues as well as related legislation like the Human Rights Act 1998, the European Convention on Human Rights and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. A more recent report, released by the Policing Board's human rights advisors in March of 2005, also touches on the impact of the Course for All. The report notes that the Police Service has no plans to run a similar course or one specifically focussed on human rights (see also Recommendation 7) since human rights training is embedded in existing course curricula. Within the context of this recommendation and the Course for All, the oversight team considers the Independent Commission's intent to have been achieved.

Recommendation 143: Management Training

Patten Recommendation:

143. All police managers should have management training, as appropriate, and every manager should at some stage of his/her career do a management course in a non-police environment, such as a business school or university. Use should be made of management workshops, so that managers can discuss and develop with each other how best to reshape the police organisation.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Full compliance with this recommendation has not yet been achieved.

History

The Independent Commission envisaged the evolution of a different management style within the Police Service which encompassed devolved budgets, authority and decision making. One response to this requirement was the development of a Centre for Leadership, designed to provide an understanding of leadership perspectives, promote empowerment and encourage an ethos of performance management. The Centre for Leadership also built on a number of existing developmental courses aimed at Superintendents, Chief Superintendents and ACCs, as well as their civilian equivalents. Programmes include a Certificate in Police Leadership Skills, a Professional Certificate in Management, a Professional Diploma in Management and a Masters in Business and Public Administration. The Finance Department had done an exemplary in-house job, via workshops, training and coaching, in providing field managers with the financial and business knowledge (see recommendation 76).

The Police Service also introduced the Leadership Grid Module, which enables participants to develop skills in leadership, personnel management, problem solving and team effectiveness. Progress to date has been enhanced by the establishment of the Learning Advisory Council, which among other things promotes the participation of a broad spectrum of community leaders in the PSNI's training programmes. Participants are in turn familiarised with the Police Service's budgetary systems, procedures and accounting practices.

Remaining Issues

Evidence of a career and development training programme for all levels of management, which provides for business or university training in a non-police environment (or alternative means of accomplishing the recommendation) remains to be provided. This should include the number of employees enrolled, selection processes and courses in which they are enrolled. In addition, the Policing Board is in the process of finalising an evaluation of various training initiatives (see also Recommendation 129).

Recommendation 144: IT Training

Patten Recommendation:

144. Every officer and civilian in the service should undergo adequate training in information technology.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Full compliance with this recommendation has not yet been achieved.

History

The Police Operational Development Faculty is developing a Communications Training Plan aimed at providing police officers with more effective information and communications technology skills. The training is delivered by the Communication Training Unit, which is accredited through the Institute of Information Technology. Training Branch has also developed an Information Technology Strategic Plan, which is an ambitious attempt to bring the Police Service to the cutting edge of modern police information technology as intended by the Independent Commission. A large-scale training programme, linked to the rollout of common terminals and other office automation, has been contracted outside the Police Service.

Remaining Issues

The capacity of Training Branch to meet the increased demands of the rapid rollout of information technology is a concern, and it will be difficult to simultaneously introduce increasingly complex systems while providing appropriate and timely training. For example, the Police Service has had to revise its targets around the integrated Information and Communication Services Strategy Implementation Plan for a number of reasons. However, HMIC has conducted a programme review, and the Police Information Technology Organisation (PITO) will continue to ensure a proper validation process (see also Recommendation 93). Given the resource implications typically associated with projects of this type and importance, the Policing Board is closely monitoring progress and is addressing any perceived weaknesses.



Recommendation 145: Joint Training with Civilian Analysts

Patten Recommendation:

145. Opportunities should be taken for joint training with civilian analysts, and members of other police services.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

History

The programme for joint training with civilian analysts and police personnel is well established. The integration of civilian analysts and police personnel is occurring in two areas in particular, serious crime and crime reduction. Joint training with the Jill Dando Institute of Crime Science in London was also undertaken. In addition, analysts have trained with other police services in the United States and Canada. There is a Memorandum of Understanding with the Scottish Police Crime Patterns Analysis and Serious Crime Investigators that covers shared training.

Recommendation 146: Neighbourhood Policing Training Programme

Patten Recommendation:

146. The Northern Ireland police should draw on the success of neighbourhood policing in such places as the Markets area of Belfast in developing a neighbourhood policing training programme for all members of the police service. Standard training for neighbourhood officers should include modules on such community problems as domestic violence, child abuse, rape, drugs and youth issues and this training should be updated as necessary.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Full compliance with this recommendation has not yet been achieved.

History

The Independent Commission recommended that policing with the community be the core function of the Police Service and every police station. The implications were far reaching and included among other things the Police Service's structures, processes, management, culture and training. In response, the Police Service developed an impressive policing with the community strategy and implementation programme (see also Recommendation 44). The Police Service has also made progress providing the training necessary to support this evolving function, with training on community problem solving, domestic violence, child abuse, rape, drugs, hate crime and youth issues. Instruction on community safety, community justice, human rights, ethics and integrity is also provided.

Remaining Issues

Notwithstanding the development of the community policing programme, there remains a need to build momentum in the support of its overarching objectives. These requirements have significant implications for Training Branch. As noted in previous oversight reports, approximately 600

officers have completed the two modules of the Beat Officer's Course. However, evidence of a training evaluation which would permit the course to be updated as necessary has not been provided. This evaluation should emphasise both the methodology, impact and end results of the training.

Recommendation 147: Publication of Training Curricula

Patten Recommendation:

147. The training curricula for the police service should be publicly available, and easily accessible, e.g. on the Internet.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

History

The PSNI has assessed all course standards and has developed a good, all-inclusive prospectus describing in detail the programmes and courses being offered to both police and civilian staff. The course prospectus and training curriculum are available to the public in hard copy, as well as on the PSNI's website. Their public availability is a good example of the Police Service's increasing adoption of the organisational transparency requirements envisioned by the Independent Commission.

Recommendation 148: Public Attendance at Police Training Sessions

Patten Recommendation:

148. Some training sessions should be open to members of the public to attend, upon application, priority being given to members of the Policing Board or District Policing Partnership Boards, Lay Visitors, or other bodies, statutory or non-governmental, involved in working with the police.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has not been achieved.

History

Written policy for public attendance at training sessions is in place. There has been sporadic public attendance at workshops organised by the Community Safety Policy Unit. As well, members of the Policing Board and District Policing Partnerships have attended courses developed by Training Branch. It is acknowledged that the present security situation, and the Police Service's assessment of risk, provide a challenge for a greater atmosphere of openness.



▶▶ culture, ethos and symbols

Remaining Issues

Efforts to meet the requirements of this recommendation will continue to be monitored and evaluated.

Recommendation 149: Pilot Citizen's Course

Patten Recommendation:

149. The new police college should offer a pilot citizens course, to assess demand in Northern Ireland.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has not been achieved.

History

There is presently an Agreement in Principle for the introduction of a Pilot Citizens Course, however there are no plans to implement this recommendation in the near future. Preliminary efforts are ongoing, with models in Latvia and the United States being studied for best practices.

Remaining Issues

Priority on the Pilot Citizens Course is not expected to be given prior to September of 2005, and may only be initiated with the opening of the new Police College at Cookstown.



A. Chapter Summary

Background

The Independent Commission observed that the culture and ethos of an organisation include both the way in which it sees itself and manages itself internally, and the way in which it sees and interacts with its clients and others outside the organisation. Lead responsibility for the critical issues of name and symbols was assumed by the Northern Ireland Office, while the Police Service managed the detailed research and consultation challenges of designing and procuring new uniforms. The Police Service has responsibility for defining a neutral working environment, while the Policing Board has a critical role to play in interpreting community values and their expression in the change process.

B. Recommendation Summary

Recommendation 150: Name of the Police Service

Patten Recommendation:

150. While the Royal Ulster Constabulary should not be disbanded, it should henceforth be named the Northern Ireland Police Service.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

History

The change of name to the Police Service of Northern Ireland became effective on 4 November 2001. Following a brief transition period, changes were reflected in all identifying marks of the Police Service including correspondence, police vehicles and property.

Recommendation 151: New Police Badge

Patten Recommendation:

151. The Northern Ireland Police Service should adopt a new badge and symbols which are entirely free from any association with either the British or Irish States.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved

History

The new badge and symbols were approved by the Policing Board and the changes made official on 5 April 2002, by authority of the Police Emblems and Flags Regulations (NI) 2002. In reaching its decision, the Policing Board described its choice as reflecting the notion of inclusiveness and parity through the simple stylistic representation of a variety of symbols of diversity, hope and the desire to mutually respect and protect difference through policing. Symbols represented in the crest in equal prominence include scales of justice, a harp, a torch, an olive branch, a shamrock and

a crown. The centre-piece houses the Cross of Saint Patrick which places all six symbols in the context of Northern Ireland. The sunburst surrounding the roundel represents a new beginning or new dawn for the new Police Service. The rendering of these symbols in a neutral format of things that both unite and divide reflects an inclusive society where all values, common interests and differences are recognised, celebrated and protected.

Recommendation 152: Flying the Union Flag

Patten Recommendation:

152. The Union flag should no longer be flown from police buildings.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

History

The official flag of the Police Service of Northern Ireland was taken into use on 5 April 2002, by authority of the Police Emblems and Flags Regulations (NI) 2002. The Union Flag is displayed on a police building only during a visit by the UK head of state, for the duration of the visit.

Recommendation 153: Flying of PSNI Flag

Patten Recommendation:

153. On those occasions on which it is appropriate to fly a flag on police buildings, the flag shown should be that of the Northern Ireland Police Service and it, too, should be free from associations with the British or Irish States.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

History

General Order 25/2002, Flag, Crest, Uniform - PSNI Code Amendments, placed the Police Service in compliance with this recommendation, with the required variation embedded in the design of the police crest and flag.

Recommendation 154: Police Uniform

Patten Recommendation:

154. The colour of the current police uniform should be retained, but a new, more practical style of uniform should be provided to police officers.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved



▶▶ cooperation with other police services

History

A Police Service design for a new, more practical style of uniform was endorsed by the Policing Board and the conversion accomplished in a single day, 5 April 2002. The uniform features identifying numbers for officers as required by section 55 of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000. A style guide governs the proper wearing of the police uniform.

Recommendation 155: Police Memorials

Patten Recommendation:

155. Police memorials in police buildings should remain as they are and where they are.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

History

This recommendation is respectfully observed throughout PSNI establishments. A Garden of Remembrance was officially opened on the grounds of Police Headquarters on 2 September 2003. Funding for the construction of a police museum awaits completion of a feasibility study and business case.

Recommendation 156: Neutral Working Environment

Patten Recommendation:

156. The maintenance of a neutral working environment should become an assessed management responsibility at all levels of management.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved

History

General Order 7/2003, Neutral Working Environment, was issued on 3 April 2003. This Order formally mandates the maintenance of a neutral working environment. A comprehensive site inspection of the police estate was conducted in 2002. A follow up audit of 11 DCUs by the Change Management Team, during the first quarter of 2003, found police premises to be compliant, with two minor exceptions; these were immediately corrected. The oversight team has monitored compliance since 2003, and has not found any irregularities. Maintaining a neutral work environment is a command and supervisory responsibility throughout the Police Service, and the new appraisal system for police officers requires evaluation on the responsibility for maintaining this standard.



A. Chapter Summary

Background

The Independent Commission was asked to make proposals concerning the scope for structured cooperation with An Garda Síochána and other police forces. The Independent Commission's discussion in this area recognised the excellent operational cooperation between the (then) Royal Ulster Constabulary and other police agencies around the world. However, it noted that cooperation could be improved. The Independent Commission also noted that the globalisation of crime required police services around the world to collaborate with each other more effectively, and that the exchange of best practices and other cooperative measures between police services would ultimately increase the effectiveness of domestic police services.

B. Recommendation Summary

Recommendations 157: Written Protocols with Garda Síochána (Cooperation)

Patten Recommendation:

157. The Northern Ireland police and the Garda Síochána should have written protocols covering key aspects of cooperation.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

History

An inter-governmental agreement was signed by the British and Irish governments in April of 2002. This generated a need for primary legislation in each jurisdiction. Primary legislation was in place for Northern Ireland in May of 2003, and in the Republic of Ireland by September of 2004. Various protocols of operation and personnel exchanges between the two police services now exist, although police officers have not actually yet been exchanged.

Recommendations 158: Annual PSNI/Garda Síochána Conference

Patten Recommendation:

158. The present pattern of meetings between the police services in Northern Ireland and the Republic should be enhanced by an annual conference, designed to drive forward cooperation in areas of common concern.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

History

This is now a regularised and positive event. Conferences alternate each year between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. The first was held at the Garda training college in Templemore in April of 2002, and these have continued on a rotating basis ever since. The conferences have proven to be an effective medium for exchanges of information and the identification of common policing strategies.

Recommendation 159: Programme of Long Term Specialist Personnel Exchanges

Patten Recommendation:

159. There should be a programme of long-term personnel exchanges, such as fixed-term secondments, between the Northern Ireland police and the Garda, in specialist fields where cooperation between the two services is most needed, such as drugs, and in areas such as training.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Full compliance with this recommendation has not yet been achieved.

History

The Independent Commission's recommendation envisioned specialist police officers exchanging experiences and knowledge through personnel exchanges of longer duration. Particular areas of focus might include organised crime, drug enforcement and training. This was intended to enhance north-south cooperation, develop police personnel and assist in the exchange of information in key operational areas. Legal authorities are now in place to facilitate the envisaged exchanges. The secondment regulations were made in March of 2004, and a consultant began work on determining pension implications in November of 2004. The Chief Constable and the Garda Commissioner subsequently signed an agreement protocol in February of 2005.

Remaining Issues

The achievement of actual exchanges would certainly constitute an important symbol for professional policing services in both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. After a lengthy period of development, the necessary legislative basis has now been put in place. The Garda staff associations in particular have not been supportive of this initiative, reportedly for reasons related to financial allowances.

It will also be necessary, when actual exchanges occur, to dispel erroneous public reporting that creates the impression of police services patrolling in each others' jurisdictions. The signed protocol is clear that this is not the case, as are the Independent Commission recommendations and intentions. The oversight team will continue to monitor this recommendation to ensure that all parties maintain implementation efforts.

Recommendation 160: Exchange of PSNI/Garda Liaison Officers

Patten Recommendation:

160. Consideration should be given to posting liaison officers from each service to the central headquarters and/or border area headquarters of the other.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Full compliance with this recommendation has not yet been achieved.



History

The Independent Commission envisaged liaison officers from each police service working at each police headquarters and in border areas. Liaison officers were not intended to substitute for other direct links and contacts, but would facilitate the development of functional relationships at management levels, as well as represent an important symbolic presence in the each others' headquarters. This recommendation is closely linked to Recommendation 159 above, however progress has been limited.

Remaining Issues

The placement of liaison officers has not yet occurred. Nonetheless, the cooperative operational relationship that already exists between the two police services is evidence of many strong and productive links, and there are no specific concerns. This recommendation will continue to be monitored for the remainder of the oversight mandate.

Recommendation 161: Structured PSNI/Garda Cooperation in Training

Patten Recommendation:

161. There should be structured cooperation between the two police services in training.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has not been achieved.

History

The Independent Commission noted that joint training opportunities would be valuable in building up a framework of cooperation between the PSNI and the Garda Siochana. It saw the development of working relationships, particularly in operations, the sharing of expertise and possible economies of scale in training as worthwhile objectives. In November of 2004 the Chief Constable and the Garda Commissioner announced a joint training effort in diversity training, which represents a good example of progress. There is also evidence of other, more informal links in training. While there have been a significant number of informal exchanges over the past several years, these have not yet evolved into the structured cooperation envisaged by the Independent Commission.

Remaining Issues

This recommendation will be monitored for progress on the establishment of more formal structured agreements in training. Training will also be the subject of a further thematic report, scheduled for release in December of 2005, where all recommendations related to training will be examined in greater depth.

Recommendation 162: Joint PSNI/Garda Disaster Planning

Patten Recommendation:

162. There should be joint disaster planning between the Northern Ireland police and the Garda Siochana and the plans should be tested by regular joint exercises.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

History

A joint disaster planning exercise was held at the Garda training college in Templemore in March of 2002, with prepared guidelines and a table-top exercise held in November of 2002. A live disaster planning exercise was held in a border area, involving police and emergency services from both sides of the border, in May of 2003.

Recommendation 163: Exchange of Officers During Mahor Cross-Border Incidents

Patten Recommendation:

163. Consideration should be given to establishing a provision for an immediate exchange of officers and pooling of investigative teams after major incidents with a substantial cross-border dimension, akin to the arrangements which exist between Kent and police services of France and Belgium.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

History

Since 2001 there have been numerous examples of Garda Siochana and PSNI cooperating and pooling resources on major cross-border operations. These include organised crime, murder, robberies, drugs and cross border smuggling. Although there is no single structured agreement, there is no concern with cross-border investigation of major incidents.

Recommendation 164: PSNI/Garda Radio/IT Links

Patten Recommendation:

164. Every effort should be made to ensure that fast, effective and reliable communications are established between the Garda and the Northern Ireland police both through improved radio links and through compatible IT systems.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

History

There has been an ongoing programme of improving communications equipment. The business case for a national scheme has been approved and procurement has commenced. The Police Service continues to work with the Garda to ensure interoperability between communications systems (see also Recommendation 93).



Recommendation 165: Joint Database Development with Garda Siochana

Patten Recommendation:

165. Joint database development should be pursued as a matter of priority in all the main areas of cross-border criminality, such as drugs, smuggling, vehicle theft and terrorism.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

History

The Independent Commission recommended a common PSNI/Garda data base to cover areas such as drugs, fuel and other smuggling, vehicle theft and terrorism. However, in the interim this recommendation has been largely overtaken by a wider EU initiative, the Schengen Information System now under development. This will place all EU law enforcement agencies on a shared data base. The PSNI and the Garda both participate in this initiative, with developmental work ongoing. There have not been any problems reported with respect to more routine exchanges of operational information and this recommendation is deemed to have been achieved.

Recommendation 166: Personnel Exchanges with GB Police Services

Patten Recommendation:

166. A determined effort should be made to develop exchanges, and long-term secondments, between the Northern Ireland police and police services in Great Britain.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

History

The Police Service continues to provide the requested exchange information, and there are normally some 20 PSNI officers on exchange with other police services, while several outside officers are currently seconded to the PSNI. Most of these work directly on operational matters. This numerical disparity into and out of the Police Service has been noted in the past as being to the detriment of the PSNI, however the oversight team is satisfied that the intent of this recommendation has been achieved. It will be to the long term benefit of the Police Service to attract more police officers from outside the PSNI.

Recommendation 167: Training Exchanges/Joint Training Between PSNI/Great Britain

Patten Recommendation:

167. There should be training exchanges and some joint training between the Northern Ireland police and police services in Great Britain.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has not been achieved.

History

The Independent Commission noted the wider organisational benefits of a strategic exchange approach to training, and also that it is senior officers who tend to be the most likely to benefit from outside training opportunities. Although ad hoc joint training does occur, this does not constitute the established training links envisaged by the Independent Commission.

Remaining Issues

Our previous reports have expressed the concern of missed opportunities in the absence of a strategy to both develop its own police officers, while also training other officers in the many emerging PSNI best practices. This and other training matters will be examined further in an updated thematic report on training, scheduled for release in December of 2005.

Recommendation 168: Links with Training Establishments in British Isles

Patten Recommendation:

168. Consideration should be given to structured links between the four principal police training establishments in the British Isles, namely Bramshill (England), Templemore (Republic of Ireland), Tulliallan (Scotland), and Garnerville or the proposed new police college in Northern Ireland.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has not been achieved.

History

A structured training link was created with the Garda training college in Templemore in January of 2005. This calls for the regular exchange of students, teachers and instructional material.

Remaining Issues

Contacts between police training establishments in the British Isles occur, but on an ad hoc basis. Evidence of secondments for courses, the sharing of resources or staff, or consultative meetings has not been provided. The results of the training link with the Garda will be examined in the December training thematic update.

Recommendation 169: International Training Exchanges

Patten Recommendation:

169. International training exchanges should be further developed, focusing in particular on matters where the police in Northern Ireland need overseas police cooperation and on best practice developments in policing worldwide. There should be cooperation with other police services in the field of research.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Full compliance with this recommendation has not yet been achieved.



History

The Police Service is collaborating with the Scottish Police College at Tulliallan, the FBI Academy at Quantico and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police in the development of a programme on police leadership in a counter-terrorism environment. Although a specific programme has not yet been developed, the Police Service has also signed an agreement with Georgian College, Ontario, Canada, for future collaboration. The Police Service has created a best practice data base with links to UK and international websites.

Remaining Issues

Although more structured training links are developing, with training in counter-terrorism being one example, these are relatively new and the approaches taken largely ad hoc. The lack of any strategy in these areas remain a concern, and will be further examined in the December of 2005 thematic training update.

Recommendation 170: Training Other Police Officers

Patten Recommendation:

170. The police should develop opportunities to provide more training for overseas police services in their areas of excellence.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Full compliance with this recommendation has not yet been achieved.

History

Training of overseas police personnel in Northern Ireland and abroad has been provided, by the Police Service's Crime Analysis Centre in particular. Crime analysts have engaged in professional exchanges with colleagues in Australia, Canada, Estonia and the United States. In addition, the PSNI's human rights lawyer has lectured in the newly independent Republic of Georgia. Training opportunities during other foreign missions also occur.

Remaining Issues

Evidence of a policy for identifying and delivering training for overseas police in areas of PSNI expertise, including the number and types of training, has not been provided.

Recommendation 171: UN Peacekeeping Participation

Patten Recommendation:

171. The Northern Ireland police should be ready to participate in future United Nations peacekeeping operations.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

History

As a matter of operational policy the Police Service has decided to scale back its participation in international policing missions. This was with the concurrence of the Policing Board with the intent of attending to domestic issues first. In November of 2002 the PSNI had 80 police officers serving with international missions in Bosnia, East Timor and Kosovo. It also sent several officers to the Centrex police training facility at Bramshill, UK. By April of 2005 the number of officers participating in international missions had fallen to eight, with five in Iraq, and one each Kenya, Bosnia and Israel. It will remain important for the Police Service and Policing Board to maintain a strategic view of the role and benefits to be achieved from international experience. This is to ensure that the sense of organisational 'entrenchment' that generated the recommendations of the Independent Commission does not reoccur.

▶▶ oversight commissioner



▶▶ appendix a recommendation progress tables

A. Chapter Summary

Background

It was the belief of the Independent Commission that an independent and eminent person, from outside the United Kingdom or Ireland, should be selected to oversee the implementation of its recommendations. The governments agreed and Mr. Tom Constantine was selected, accepted the duty and was appointed in May of 2000 for a three-year term. Statutory backing for the Oversight Commissioner is found in sections 67 and 68, and in Schedule 4, of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000. Mr. Constantine retired on 31 December 2003 and was replaced by Mr. Al Hutchinson. Mr. Hutchinson will be the Oversight Commissioner for the remainder of the oversight mandate which, following a second extension by the Government, is now scheduled to end on 31 May 2007.

B. Recommendation Summary

Recommendations 172, 173, 174 and 175: Oversight Commissioner

Patten Recommendations:

172. An eminent person, from a country other than the United Kingdom or Ireland, should be appointed as soon as possible as an oversight commissioner with responsibility for supervising the implementation of our recommendations.
173. The government, the police service, and the Policing Board (and DPPs) should provide the oversight commissioner with objectives (with timetables) covering their own responsibilities, and should report on the progress achieved at the periodic review meetings, and account for any failures to achieve objectives.
174. The oversight commissioner should in turn report publicly after each review meeting on the progress achieved, together with his or her observations on the extent to which any failures or delays are the responsibility of the policing institutions themselves or due to matters beyond their control.
175. The oversight commissioner should be appointed for a term of five years.

Lead Responsibility: Home Office/NIO

Recommendation Status

Compliance with these recommendations has been achieved.

History

Reports and documents are being provided by the different agencies in response to the Oversight Commissioner's requests. In turn, the Oversight Commissioner reports publicly three times per year. Early in 2003 the Oversight Commissioner's mandate was extended by the Government until May of 2005. This was subsequently extended once more, early in 2005, and the Oversight Commissioner's mandate will now run until 31 May 2007.



DEGREE OF PROGRESS	DEFINITIONS	EVALUATION STAGES
<p>Completed</p> <p>(Final results achieved)</p>	<p>Policies and directives that meet the intent of the Independent Commission Recommendation have been fully developed. The directives have been fully disseminated throughout the organisation. Field evaluations have determined that the directives are being adhered to as required. In the case of some of the completed recommendations, the appropriate Institution (PSNI, HMIC, Policing Board, Ombudsman) will in all probability audit compliance in the future.</p>	<p>All Stages Complete</p>
<p>Substantial Progress</p> <p>(Majority results achieved)</p>	<p>Policies or directives are developed, communicated and already into the implementation phases. Field visits and interviews demonstrate wide-spread understanding of changes spelled out in policies or directives. Analysis and evaluation confirm the effectiveness of policies or directives. Verification reveals preliminary adherence in a significant manner.</p>	<p>Evaluation & Verification</p>
<p>Moderate Progress</p> <p>(Some results achieved)</p>	<p>There has been significant progress on the development of policies or directives. The proposed policies generally meet the intent of the Independent Commission Recommendation. The policies and directives have reportedly been disseminated. Initial field evaluations demonstrate a limited level of knowledge, or required follow-up action.</p>	<p>Evaluation & Verification</p>
<p>Limited Progress</p> <p>(Results not achieved)</p>	<p>There has been some progress on the development of policies or directives. The proposed policy may partially meet the intent of the Independent Commission Recommendation, but is deficient in significant areas. Although the policies and directives have reportedly been disseminated, field evaluations reveal a lack of knowledge, or required follow-up accountability.</p>	<p>Administration & Evaluation</p>
<p>Minimal Progress</p> <p>(Results not achieved)</p>	<p>The development of the plans, policies or orders required to initiate the change process has not been completed. In some cases, the plans and policies have been developed but they do not fulfil the intent of the recommendation. There is little or no communication or dissemination of policies across the organisation and/or no obvious means or methods of implementing a policy or directive.</p>	<p>Administration</p>

Human Rights

Chapter & Recommendation	Implementation Status				
	Rec. Completed	Substantial Progress	Moderate Progress	Limited Progress	Minimal Progress
1. Human Rights Based Approach to Policing		✓			
2. New Police Oath	✓				
3. Code of Ethics	✓				
4. Human Rights Training		✓			
5. Appraisal of Human Rights Performance	✓				
6. Appointment of Lawyer with Human Rights Expertise	✓				
7. Monitoring Human Rights Performance	✓				



Accountability

Chapter & Recommendation	Implementation Status				
	Rec. Completed	Substantial Progress	Moderate Progress	Limited Progress	Minimal Progress
8. Creation of Policing Board	✓				
9. Policing Board to Hold Chief Constable Publicly to Account	✓				
10. Policing Board to Set Objectives and Priorities over a 3 to 5 Year Period	✓				
11. Policing Board to Adopt an Annual Policing Plan	✓				
12. Policing Board to negotiate Annual Policing Budget	✓				
13. Monitoring Police Performance	✓				
14. Policing Board Role in Police Appointments	✓				
15. Policing Board coordination with Other Agencies	✓				
16. Policing Board to have 19 Members, 10 of whom should be Assembly Members	✓				
17. The Nine Independent Members of the Board to be selected from a Range of Different Fields	✓				
18. Independent Members of the Board to be Appointed by Secretary of State, in Consultation with First and Deputy First Ministers	✓				
19. A Board Member to be Appointed by Secretary of State to be First Chairman of the Board	✓				
20. Devolution of Responsibility for Policing to Northern Ireland Executive					✓
21. Powers of the Policing Board to Continue					✓
22. Simplification of Roles in Tripartite Arrangement	✓				
23. Repeal of Power to Issue Guidance to the Police	✓				
24. Chief Constable deemed to have Operational Responsibility			✓		
25. Policing Board to have Power to Require Chief Constable to Report on any Issue	✓				
26. Policing Board to have Power to Initiate Inquiries	✓				
27. Creation of District Policing Partnerships (DPPs)	✓				
28. Arrangements for Belfast	✓				

Accountability

Chapter & Recommendation	Implementation Status				
	Rec. Completed	Substantial Progress	Moderate Progress	Limited Progress	Minimal Progress
29. Monthly meetings between DPPs and District Commanders	✓				
30. DPPs to submit an Annual Plan to District Councils	✓				
31. Administration Costs of DPPs	✓				
32. Expenditure by DPPs					✓
33. Consultative Forums at Local Level		✓			
34. Contacts Between Policing Board and DPPs		✓			
35. Meetings of the Policing Board	✓				
36. Meetings of the DPPs	✓				
37. Openness of the Police Service		✓			
38. Role of the Police Ombudsman	✓				
39. New Covert Policing Legislation Compliant with European Convention on Human Rights	✓				
40. Commissioner for Covert Law Enforcement	✓				
41. Complaints Tribunal for Cases Involving Covert Law Enforcement Operations	✓				
42. Strengthening of Financial Accountability	✓				
43. Designation of Chief Constable as Sub-Accounting Officer	✓				



Policing with the Community

Chapter & Recommendation	Implementation Status				
	Rec. Completed	Substantial Progress	Moderate Progress	Limited Progress	Minimal Progress
44. Community Policing as a Core Function		✓			
45. Dedicated Neighbourhood Policing Teams		✓			
46. Service in Neighbourhood Policing Teams	✓				
47. Police Probationary Training	✓				
48. Patrolling on Foot	✓				
49. Role of Neighbourhood Policing Teams		✓			
50. Crime and Complaint Pattern Analysis	✓				
51. Attendance at Police Training Courses	✓				

Policing in a Peaceful Society

Chapter & Recommendation	Implementation Status				
	Rec. Completed	Substantial Progress	Moderate Progress	Limited Progress	Minimal Progress
52. Appearance of New Police Stations	✓				
53. (a) Renovation of Police Station Reception Areas (b) Civilian Receptionists			✓	✓	
54. Devolved Authority of District Commanders		✓			
55. Replacement of Armoured Landrovers with Police Cars as Patrol Vehicles		✓			
56. Movement of Armoured Landrovers to Depots	✓				
57. "Police" to be Painted on the Side of all Landrovers	✓				
58. Army Support-Security Demands	✓				
59. Army Support-Public Order Demands	✓				
60. Emergency Legislation	✓				
61. Records on the Use of Emergency Powers	✓				
62. Holding Centres		✓			
63. Video Recording in PACE Custody Suites			✓		
64. Inspection of Custody and Interrogation Suites		✓			
65. Objective of an Unarmed Police Service	✓				



Public Order Policing

Chapter & Recommendation	Implementation Status				
	Rec. Completed	Substantial Progress	Moderate Progress	Limited Progress	Minimal Progress
66. Public Order Emergencies	✓				
67. Provision of Marshals by Organisers of Parades	✓				
68. Development of Marshal Training	✓				
69. Investment in Research into Alternatives to PBRs	✓				
70. Police to be Equipped with a Broader Range of Public Order Equipment		✓			
71. Use of PBRs	✓				
72. Police Officers' Identification Numbers	✓				
73. Monitoring of Police Performance in Public Order Situations by Policing Board and Police Ombudsman	✓				
74. Guidance Governing Deployment and Use of PBRs	✓				

Management & Personnel

Chapter & Recommendation	Implementation Status				
	Rec. Completed	Substantial Progress	Moderate Progress	Limited Progress	Minimal Progress
75. Police Management of Change	✓				
76. Devolved Authority of District Commanders		✓			
77. Police Appraisal System		✓			
78. Accountability of District Commanders	✓				
79. Automated Trend Identification for Complaints		✓			
80. Use of Trend Information	✓				
81. Random Checks on Officers' Behaviour	✓				
82. Ensuring High Ethical Standards	✓				
83. Tenure Policy on Police Postings		✓			
84. Officers Injured on Duty	✓				
85. Policy for Management of Long-Term Sickness Absence	✓				
86. Detailed Review of Sickness Absence	✓				
87. New Police Fund	✓				
88. Funding for Widows' Association	✓				
89. Replacement of Assistant Chief Constables	✓				
90. Rigorous Programme of Civilianisation				✓	
91. Review of Police Support Services	✓				
92. Comprehensive Audit of Police Estate			✓		



Information Technology

Chapter & Recommendation	Implementation Status				
	Rec. Completed	Substantial Progress	Moderate Progress	Limited Progress	Minimal Progress
93. Development of Police IT Strategy			✓		

Structure of the Police Service

Chapter & Recommendation	Implementation Status				
	Rec. Completed	Substantial Progress	Moderate Progress	Limited Progress	Minimal Progress
94. Creation New District Commands	✓				
95. Each District Command to be Headed by a Superintendent and Sufficiently Resourced	✓				
96. Removal of Divisional Layer of Management at HQ	✓				
97. Reorganisation of Police Headquarters			✓		
98. Amalgamation of Special Branch and Crime Branch	✓				
99. Reduction of Numbers Engaged in Security Work		✓			
100. Informing District Commanders about Security Operations		✓			
101. Amalgamation of Support Units of Special Branch	✓				
102. Police Postings in Security Work				✓	
103. Phasing Out of Full Time Reserve*			✓		
104. Enlargement of Part Time Reserve				✓	



Size of the Police Service

Chapter & Recommendation	Implementation Status				
	Rec. Completed	Substantial Progress	Moderate Progress	Limited Progress	Minimal Progress
105. Future Size of the Police Service	✓				
106. Severance Arrangements for Officers aged 50 or above	✓				
107. Severance Arrangements for Officers before the age of 50	✓				
108. (a) Develop Measures for Police Officers Seeking other employment (b) Civilians (c) PRRT Should Have a Role	✓		✓		✓
109. Opportunities in GB Police Forces for Reservists			✓		
110. Opportunities with UN for Reservists				✓	

Composition and Recruitment

Chapter & Recommendation	Implementation Status				
	Rec. Completed	Substantial Progress	Moderate Progress	Limited Progress	Minimal Progress
111. Transfer of Police Civilian Staff				✓	
112. Staff of Policing Board, NIO and Police Ombudsman			✓		
113. Support from Community Leaders		✓			
114. Gaelic Athletic Association	✓				
115. Liaison with Schools				✓	
116. Pilot Police Cadet Schemes					✓
117. Contracting Out Recruitment of Police Officers and Civilians	✓				
118. Recruitment Agency Advertising - in Under-represented Areas	✓				
119. Recruitment Agency Advertising - UK and Republic of Ireland	✓				
120. Police Officer and Civilian Candidates Required to Meet Specified Standard	✓				
121. Equal Number of Protestants & RC in Pool	✓				
122. (a) Opportunities for P/T & Job Sharing for Police Officers (b) Opportunities for P/T & Job Sharing for Civilians	✓		✓		
123. Child Care Arrangements					✓
124. Length of Recruitment Process	✓				
125. Disqualification from Entry into Police Service	✓				



Composition and Recruitment

Chapter & Recommendation	Implementation Status				
	Rec. Completed	Substantial Progress	Moderate Progress	Limited Progress	Minimal Progress
126.Registration of Interests					✓
127.Identification of Northern Ireland Officers in other Police Forces by Recruitment Agency					✓
128.Lateral Entry of Experienced Officers				✓	

Training, Education & Development

Chapter & Recommendation	Implementation Status				
	Rec. Completed	Substantial Progress	Moderate Progress	Limited Progress	Minimal Progress
129.TED Strategy		✓			
130.Training and Development Budget	✓				
131.New Police College		✓			
132.Service Level Agreements on Training			✓		
133.Civilian Input into Recruit Training			✓		
134.Training of Civilian Recruits	✓				
135.Achievement of Academic Qualifications by Recruits	✓				
136.Timing of Attestation as a Constable	✓				
137.Reduction of Hours Spent on Drill	✓				
138.Problem-Solving Should be Central to Recruit Training	✓				
139.Community Awareness Training for Police Recruits	✓				
140.Tutor Officer Scheme	✓				
141.Course on Impact of New Constitutional Arrangements, New Policing Arrangements and Criminal Justice Reforms	✓				
142.Instruction in Implications of Human Rights Act 1998 (a) Recruits (b) Police Officers	✓				
143.Management Training for Police Managers			✓		
144.Information Technology Training			✓		
145.Joint Training with Civilians	✓				
146.Neighbourhood Policing Training Programme			✓		
147.Publication of Training Curricula	✓				
148.Public Attendance at Police Training Sessions			✓		
149.Pilot Citizens Course					✓



Culture, Ethos and Symbols

Chapter & Recommendation	Implementation Status				
	Rec. Completed	Substantial Progress	Moderate Progress	Limited Progress	Minimal Progress
150. Name of the Police Service	✓				
151. New Police Badge	✓				
152. Flying of Union Flag	✓				
153. Flying of PSNI Flag	✓				
154. Police Uniform	✓				
155. Police Memorials	✓				
156. Neutral Working Environment	✓				

Cooperation with other Police Services

Chapter & Recommendation	Implementation Status				
	Rec. Completed	Substantial Progress	Moderate Progress	Limited Progress	Minimal Progress
157. Written Protocols Between Police Service and Garda Siochana	✓				
158. Annual Conference for Police Services in Northern Ireland and Republic	✓				
159. Personnel Exchanges			✓		
160. Liaison Officers at Headquarters and Border Areas			✓		
161. cooperation in Training			✓		
162. Joint Disaster Planning	✓				
163. Exchange of Officers and Pooling of Investigative Teams after Major Incidents	✓				
164. Establishment of Communications Between Garda and Northern Ireland Police	✓				
165. Joint Database Development with Garda	✓				
166. Development of Exchanges Between Northern Ireland Police and Police Services in GB	✓				
167. Training Exchanges and Joint Training Between Northern Ireland Police and Police Services in GB				✓	
168. Links Between Police Training Colleges				✓	
169. Further Development of International Training Exchanges				✓	
170. Development of More Training Opportunities for Overseas Police Services				✓	
171. United Nations Peacekeeping Operations	✓				



▶▶ appendix b
recommendations with remaining issues

Oversight Commissioner

Chapter & Recommendation	Implementation Status				
	Rec. Completed	Substantial Progress	Moderate Progress	Limited Progress	Minimal Progress
172.Appointment of Oversight Commissioner	✓				
173.Oversight Commissioner to be provided with objectives and report on progress	✓				
174.Oversight Commissioner to report publicly after each review	✓				
175.Oversight Commissioner appointment for five years	✓				



Recommmendations with Remaining Issues

1	Human Rights Based Approach to Policing	104	Enlargement of Part Time Reserve
4	Human Rights Training	108	(b) Develop Measures for Civilians Seeking other employment (c) PRRT Should Have a Role
20	Devolution of Responsibility for Policing to Northern Ireland Executive	109	Opportunities in GB Police Forces for Reservists
21	Powers of the Policing Board to Continue	110	Opportunities with UN for Reservists
24	Chief Constable deemed to have Operational Responsibility	111	Transfer of Police Civilian Staff
32	Expenditure by DPPs	112	Staff of Policing Board, NIO and Police Ombudsman
33	Consultative Forums at Local Level	113	Support from Community Leaders
34	Contacts Between Policing Board and DPPs	115	Liaison with Schools
37	Openness of the Police Service	116	Pilot Police Cadet Schemes
44	Community Policing as a Core Function	122	(a) Opportunities for P/T Job Sharing for Police Officers
45	Dedicated Neighbourhood Policing Teams	123	Child Care Arrangements
49	Role of Neighbourhood Policing Teams	126	Registration of Interests
53	(a) Renovation of Police Station Reception Areas (b) Civilian Receptionists	127	Identification of Northern Ireland Officers in other Police Forces by Recruitment Agency
54	Devolved Authority of District Commanders	128	Lateral Entry of Experienced Officers
55	Replacement of Armoured Landrovers with Police Cars as Patrol Vehicles	129	TED Strategy
62	Holding Centres	131	New Police College
63	Video Recording in PACE Custody Suites	132	Service Level Agreements on Training
64	Inspection of Custody and Interrogation Suites	133	Civilian Input into Recruit Training
70	Police to be Equipped with a Broader Range of Public Order Equipment	143	Management Training for Police Managers
76	Devolved Authority of District Commanders	144	Information Technology Training
77	Police Appraisal System	146	Neighbourhood Policing Training Programme
79	Automated Trend Identification for Complaints	148	Public Attendance at Police Training Sessions
83	Tenure Policy on Police Postings	149	Pilot Citizens Course
90	Rigorous Programme of Civilianisation	159	Personnel Exchanges
92	Comprehensive Audit of Police Estate	160	Liaison Officers at Headquarters and Border Areas
93	Development of Police IT Strategy	161	cooperation in Training
97	Reorganisation of Police Headquarters	167	Training Exchanges and Joint Training Between Northern Ireland Police and Police Services in GB
99	Reduction of Numbers Engaged in Security Work	168	Links Between Police Training Colleges
100	Informing District Commanders about Security Operations	169	Further Development of International Training Exchanges
102	Police Postings in Security Work	170	Development of More Training Opportunities for Overseas Police Services
103	Phasing Out of Full Time Reserve*		



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