



The Independent Commission on Policing for Northern Ireland recognised that policing is a central issue to any society and to Northern Ireland in particular. Their excellent report entitled: *A New Beginning: Policing in Northern Ireland*, included 175 recommendations that afforded Northern Ireland the opportunity to take the best policing practices from elsewhere and to lead the way in overcoming some of the toughest challenges in modern policing.

After exhaustive research the Independent Commission reached a unanimous consensus upon the changes that would be required for a new beginning in the policing of Northern Ireland. However, the Commission saw a need for an oversight or monitoring procedure to assure the community that all aspects of its report would be implemented and be seen to be implemented. The Commission recommended the appointment of an Oversight Commissioner with the responsibility for supervising the implementation of all of its recommendations. The Oversight Commissioner is required to report publicly three times per year on the progress achieved and on the extent to which any failures or delays are the responsibility of the policing institutions themselves, or are due to matters beyond their control. The changes and reforms which are being monitored are required by the Independent Commission's 175 recommendations, as well as the Government's August 2001 Implementation Plan and subsequent legislation.

This report is the second official report of the Oversight Commissioner for calendar year 2003 and the eighth in the series of official oversight reports. Since the implementation of the Office of the Oversight Commissioner, over 1,000 pages of detailed and comprehensive analysis of the pace of progress in the changes to policing in Northern Ireland have been produced by the Oversight Commissioner and his team.

The official reports of the Oversight Commissioner are researched and prepared within the context of two important parameters. The first is that the programme of reforms resulting from the recommendations of the Independent Commission are the most comprehensive ever attempted in modern day policing. The second is the responsibility delegated to the Oversight Commissioner by the Independent Commission. The Independent Commission described the oversight role as being more than just a stocktaking function. It was the Independent Commission's opinion that the oversight review process would provide an important impetus to the process of transformation.

The mandate to monitor a programme of such complexity and scope in policing reform in Northern Ireland has had an impact on the responsibility of the oversight process. The end result has been a need to develop an evaluation and monitoring programme which is valid, credible and commensurate in size and scope with the size and scope of the change programme. Appropriate resources have been provided by Government as required and the Office of the Oversight Commissioner efficiently monitors and evaluates this entire change project with a small complement of policing experts and administrative staff.

The critical element in ensuring that the oversight reports are valid and have integrity is the rigorous research by the oversight team in developing the 772 performance indicators. The names and backgrounds of the policing experts recruited to assist with the oversight responsibility are set out in previous reports and on our website at: [www.oversightcommissioner.org](http://www.oversightcommissioner.org)



The oversight team analysed the 175 recommendations in the context of best policing practices. This required an analysis of model policing protocols, existing monitoring programmes and intensive peer group review to validate the 772 performance indicators. The performance indicators transform the 175 recommendations from abstract objectives to concrete measures, which in the opinion of the oversight team are indicative of “best practices” in policing. The 772 performance indicators are critical to the oversight process because they are the measurement system for determining whether progress has been achieved on each of the recommendations.

Once the performance indicators were established, they have been monitored through the use of a three-stage process: administrative compliance, evaluation and ultimately verification in the field.

- **Administrative Compliance:** virtually all of the 175 recommendations require some type of legislation, planning report, policy paper, directive or general order before the reform process can even begin to be implemented. This has resulted in the submission of over 5,000 documents to the oversight team. Each of these 5,000 documents and reports must be thoroughly reviewed and analysed to determine if they meet the intent of the Independent Commission and best policing practices.
- **Evaluation:** if the policy papers, directives or general orders reach the threshold standard of a best practice, the evaluation process then moves to personal evaluation. At this stage, the oversight team interviews or meets with all of the key principals responsible for implementing their respective area of the change process. Since beginning the oversight programme in June of 2000, the Oversight Commissioner and his team have conducted over 500 such meetings in Northern Ireland with police officers of all ranks, police staff associations, senior government officials, the Policing Board, the Office of the Ombudsman, political leaders, members of the clergy, community and human rights groups, and members of the public.
- **Field Verification:** as the pace of change has progressed the oversight role has increasingly become involved in field visits to verify that the change is actually taking place in operational venues. Most often this means visits to police stations and community events throughout Northern Ireland, usually on weekends or late evenings. The Oversight Commissioner and his team have visited over 100 police stations in the furtherance of field verification. These visits included regional headquarters, District Command Units and police stations, as well as police Headquarters and training facilities. In each of the visits, the oversight team reviews pertinent records and interviews key personnel. The Oversight Commissioner has personally attended major policing efforts at parades and demonstrations to gain a better understanding of some of the unique policing problems of Northern Ireland.

In addition to the above-mentioned three-stage process, the Oversight Commissioner established a programme of conferring with other leading policing experts through the auspices of the International Association of Chiefs of Police. This further guarantees that the Oversight Commissioner’s reports reflect the best of global policing practices.

As a result of this extensive research process, the Oversight Commissioner has documented and evaluated the pace of progress in the implementation of the Independent Commission’s recommendations. It is the considered opinion of the Oversight Commissioner that in the overall view, the institutions responsible for fulfilling the recommendations of the Independent

Commission continue to make excellent progress in implementing the required changes. It is important to note that this excellent progress is occurring at a time when Northern Ireland's political environment remains unsettled.

The Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) in particular appropriately deserves credit for its professional approach to implementing the Independent Commission's recommendations. The changes and reforms that the PSNI has undergone in three years is unprecedented for a policing organisation, and has required an extraordinary commitment and application of talent and resources.

In the course of fulfilling our oversight mandate, we are in continuous contact with the Chief Constable, senior police command staff, District Commanders and the PSNI's Change Management Team. As a whole these individuals constitute a talented, professional and dedicated cadre of police leaders, and Northern Ireland is well served by the PSNI's leadership and demonstrated capacity to implement major change. Moreover, these individuals have been able to project and maintain a vision of a police service that will gain the confidence and respect of the entire community.

Special note is made of the efforts of the rank and file police officers of the Police Service of Northern Ireland. Law enforcement is an inherently dangerous occupation. It is one of the few professions where young men and women make a conscious decision to place themselves in harms way so that others may be safe. Tragically, far too many police officers in Northern Ireland and their families have paid a very high price as a result of their service. The scope and magnitude of the Independent Commission's recommendations have required an additional commitment on the part of rank and file police officers, who in the course of our oversight process have demonstrated a dedicated effort to be part of a police service that enjoys and encourages the support of the entire community. In order to reach the objectives and intent of the Independent Commission, it is incumbent upon the Government, political leaders and all of the citizens of Northern Ireland to provide the Police Service with the support that is required. Recent examples of police officers being attacked by violent mobs while protecting victims of crime, or in the performance of other duties, will always undermine and be detrimental to the concept of a policing with the community strategy.

In our previous reports, we have commented on the excellent performance of the new Policing Board. The concept of having the police held accountable to the entire community was a key element of the Report of the Independent Commission. They saw a Policing Board, vested with the appropriate power and responsibility, as an important institution which would command respect and credibility. The Board has clearly demonstrated a commitment to fulfilling the role identified for it by the Independent Commission. In order to fully reach the intended objective, the Board will need the support of the entire community, appropriate legal authority and the proper financial support.

The next important stage of the concept of accountability is the establishment across Northern Ireland of District Policing Partnerships. Although newly created, the District Policing Partnerships can become an integral part of the new policing arrangements, especially if they reach the standard of excellence demonstrated by the Policing Board. The role of the District Policing Partnerships in



reflecting local community concerns and priorities should be very helpful to District Commanders. The Oversight Commissioner has reported in a number of previous reports on the professionalism and commitment of the District Commanders. It is envisioned that these talented and dedicated local police commanders, working in concert with District Policing Partnerships, will have a major and positive impact on policing with the community. As in the case of the Policing Board, it is very important that District Policing Partnerships receive the support of the entire community, adequate financial backing and the full co-operation of the Police Service of Northern Ireland. However, those who serve on these important institutions should be recognised for their service to the community and should not be subject to threat or intimidation.

The Office of the Ombudsman is an equally important element of the accountability concept as envisioned by the Independent Commission. The Ombudsman has developed a very professional staff and since the inception of the office, has in large measure fulfilled the intent of the Independent Commission's Recommendations. As with other institutions designed to ensure a fully accountable policing service, it is important that the Ombudsman receive appropriate support and co-operation.

Even though the Oversight Commissioner recognises the excellent progress overall, it is important to note that there are still significant areas of concern that have not been addressed. The detail of these concerns are set out in the respective chapters of this report. Because many of these concerns have been reported on in at least one previous oversight report, they have become increasingly significant and require an expedited resolution. It is critical that these areas of concern not be viewed in isolation but in the context of the overall change process. In order to understand the implications contained in either the progress or accomplishments sections, it is necessary to read the in-depth discussion of the specific recommendation.

In the May of 2003 Oversight Report, the impact of organised and violent crime on the police change programme and the quality of life for the citizens of Northern Ireland was discussed in-depth. This issue is underscored by a report from released by Queens University, Belfast, in August of 2001 entitled: "They Shoot Children, Don't They." The fact that then, every three weeks, a child in Northern Ireland was being shot in a paramilitary punishment shooting is a graphic and tragic example of how lawlessness can prevail when there is a vacuum in duly constituted policing. The only viable solution to such violent attacks on children is a professional police service that is supported by and has the confidence of the entire.

As in the previous report, it is important to acknowledge the co-operation and assistance of the Secretary of State, the Northern Ireland Office, the Policing Board, the Police Service and the Police Ombudsman. Throughout the challenging programme of policing reform, all these institutions have been cooperative and have demonstrated a sincere commitment to fulfilling the objectives of the Independent Commission.

Thomas A. Constantine  
Oversight Commissioner

September 2003

ACC	Assistant Chief Constable
ACPO	Association of Chief Police Officers
ALR	Armoured Landrover
CPLC	Community Police Liaison Committee
DCU	District Command Unit
DPP	District Policing Partnership
FTR	Full Time Reserve
GB	Great Britain
HMIC	Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary
IACP	International Association of Chiefs of Police
IIB	Internal Investigations Branch
IT	Information Technology
NIHRC	Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission
NIM	National Intelligence Model
NPT	Neighbourhood Policing Team
PACE	Police and Criminal Evidence Act
PBR	Plastic Baton Round
PONI	Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland
PSNI	Police Service of Northern Ireland
PTR	Part Time Reserve
RIPA	Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act
SLA	Service Level Agreements
TED	Training, Education and Development
TNA	Training Needs Analysis
UK	United Kingdom
VSSU	Voluntary Severance Support Unit

▶▶ **commissioner's overview**



This report of the Oversight Commissioner is the eighth official report in a series that began in 2001. The report reflects the rigorous evaluation of the 175 recommendations proposed by the Independent Commission on Policing for Northern Ireland, and was conducted by the team of policing experts working with the Office of the Oversight Commissioner. The on-site visit by the oversight team in April and May of 2003, and subsequent analyses of requested documents and reports, form the basis for this official oversight report.

The report of the Independent Commission on Policing for Northern Ireland, entitled: *A New Beginning: Policing in Northern Ireland*, established 175 recommendations with the objective of developing a police service capable of attracting and sustaining support from all of the citizens of Northern Ireland. The Independent Commission was exhaustive in its research and consultation and produced an excellent report that reflects current best practices in policing.

It is important to recognise that the changes recommended by the Independent Commission are of a scope and magnitude that is unprecedented. The implementation of the changes embodied in these wide-ranging recommendations has created a challenge for the institutions responsible and required a commitment of significant resources, all of which are designed to produce an effective, world-class policing service accepted by the entire community of Northern Ireland.

Chapter 19 of the Independent Commission's report established the responsibility of the Office of the Oversight Commissioner as a way to monitor the progress required of those institutions involved in implementing the new policing arrangements. This was to assure the community that all aspects of the report were being implemented and could be seen to be implemented.

The Oversight Commissioner is required to conduct evaluative reviews three times per year in order to determine the progress that the Police Service, the Policing Board and District Policing Partnerships, the Police Ombudsman and Government are making towards creating a new beginning for policing. The Commissioner reports publicly after each review on the progress achieved, together with observations on the extent to which any failures or delays are the responsibility of the policing institutions themselves, or are due to matters beyond their control.

The Oversight Commissioner and his team are aware that their responsibilities are of necessity reflective of the enormity, scope and magnitude of the changes required by the Independent Commission's recommendations. In the course of their research, on-site evaluations and analysis, the oversight team has reviewed 5,000 critical documents and reports, and conducted over 500 meetings with the key principals responsible for implementing their respective areas of change. In addition, the Oversight Commissioner and his team have visited over 100 police stations in Northern Ireland, where they met with senior command officers, District Commanders, first line supervisors and rank and file police officers. The product of this research and evaluation is the foundation for this, the eighth official report of the Oversight Commissioner.

In the course of this extensive monitoring and evaluation process, the Oversight Commissioner has documented the pace of progress in the implementation of the recommendations of the Independent Commission. It is the considered opinion of the Oversight Commissioner that in the overall view, the institutions responsible for implementing the changes that are required are continuing to make excellent progress.

Although the official oversight reports continue to recognise the excellent progress that has been and continues to be made, there also exists a responsibility to report on any failures or delays.

Our evaluations are based on the 772 performance indicators that are used to measure progress on all of the 175 recommendations of the Independent Commission. The oversight evaluations are purposely rigorous and demanding to ensure that the public will have confidence that the changes are occurring as promised. Where the oversight process has identified significant issues that have not been properly addressed, these are spelled out in the section entitled "Areas of Concern," as well as being detailed in the respective chapters that follow. A number of these Areas of Concern have been reported on in at least one previous report, and as a result have become increasingly significant and require expedited resolution. This is particularly important given the Independent Commission's belief that all of the recommendations should be implemented both faithfully and comprehensively. It also advised in the strongest terms against "cherry-picking" from its report, or trying to implement some major elements of it in isolation from others.

#### **Progress and Accomplishments**

The Police Service has adopted a plan for integrating human rights into all aspects of police activity. The Policing Board has approved the human rights plan and it will be published when the newly appointed Policing Board Human Rights Advisor completes his review. The new Code of Ethics adopted by the Police Service of Northern Ireland and by the Policing Board integrates European human rights conventions and other international human rights guidelines. The new Police Oath recommended by the Independent Commission is included in the Code of Ethics. As of 15 May 2003 almost all of the uniform and civilian members of the Police Service signed a statement that they had received a copy of the Code of Ethics, which as noted includes the new Police Oath. The instruction on both the Code of Ethics and Police Oath in the "Course for All," along with an attestation, represent significant progress on these recommendations. In April of 2003 the Police Service implemented a new system for annual appraisals of the performance of individuals which incorporates the required human rights components.

The Independent Commission reviewed the need for the Police Service to be accountable to the citizens for Northern Ireland and decided that accountability was an essential principle for the new Police Service. The Policing Board was seen to be a very important institution to support the concept of accountability. Since its inception in 2001, the Policing Board has demonstrated a commitment to integrity and professionalism, and has furthered the objective of a Police Service that enjoys the confidence and support of the entire community. The Policing Board continues to monitor the performance of the Police Service against the goals and objectives of its Policing Plan. Although the Board has had considerable success already, it is critical to the long term safety and security of the citizens of Northern Ireland that the Board continues to receive the support of the entire community.

The District Policing Partnerships (DPPs) became operational in April of 2003 and by 15 May 2003, 25 of the 26 DPPs had already been established. Initial information indicates that membership of the DPPs is in accord with the recommendations of the Independent Commission, and all members received two days of preliminary training. It is premature to assess the effectiveness of the District Policing Partnerships at this early stage, but anecdotal comments from PSNI District Commanders have generally been quite positive. As in the case of the Policing Board, the long term success of the DPPs in making the citizens of Northern Ireland safer requires the co-operation of all of the people in Northern Ireland. It will be important that those who





those who chose to serve in these District Policing Partnerships are encouraged and are able to participate free from any intimidation.

The Office of the Ombudsman continues to demonstrate the professionalism and integrity required to meet the goal of a fully independent body and as an important and effective mechanism for holding the police accountable to the law, and by ably doing so, ensures that the Police Service is providing an effective policing service for all the citizens of Northern Ireland.

The Police Service of Northern Ireland continues to make excellent progress in implementing a well thought out Policing with the Community strategy. Preliminary field evaluations by the oversight team show that District Commanders are using a number of different strategies to meet their respective Policing with the Community goals. A key factor in the success of these different initiatives will be a cooperative and productive relationship between District Commanders and the District Policing Partnerships.

The Police Service of Northern Ireland, in concert with Grafton Recruitment, has demonstrated progress in staffing the public reception offices in each police station with civilian enquiry assistants. This civilianisation effort is very important as it has the potential to release almost immediately up to 260 police officers from administrative tasks, and focus their efforts on front line duties instead. At a time when ordinary citizens are registering increasing concerns about the climate of violence and need for more patrol officers, the increase of 260 experienced police officers could have an immediate and visible impact.

It is encouraging to note that many different communities and organisations have managed to reduce the demand for the deployment of valuable community policing resources to public order duties. Nevertheless, group attacks on police and other emergency response personnel, in carrying out their critical public duties, remain a worrying development.

The Chief Constable, senior leadership of the PSNI, and the Change Management Team in particular, continue to fulfil the objectives of the Independent Commission by implementing its recommendations. It should be noted that the Police Service of Northern Ireland as a whole has implemented a change programme that is unprecedented in scope and magnitude. The organisation's progress to date in carrying out such a complex and difficult undertaking has been impressive.

A programme of accountability reviews to monitor the performance of District Commanders was commenced in late 2002. The initial response to these accountability reviews indicates that more work needs to be done to ensure consistency of content and format. The District Commanders will need a clearer policy on devolved authority along with sufficient resources if they are to be held fully responsible. It is also encouraging to note that the number of sick days per officer has begun to show some moderate improvement. However, there still is an extensive sick leave problem, which has a major adverse impact on officers available for front line policing duties.

The PSNI has continued to bring much needed technology and information systems infrastructure into the operational segments of the organisation. The Data Communications Network provides secure data communications which connect all PSNI location across Northern Ireland. The Police Service's official intranet and PoliceNet were in place by March of 2003. However, there is some indication that the overall IT strategy may be facing some difficulty, something which is discussed further in the "Areas of Concern" below.

The Police Service and the Policing Board have instituted a Human Resource Planning Strategy which, when completed, will serve to implement many of the Independent Commission's recommendations. The primary objective of the Planning Strategy is to return as many police officers as possible to front line duties. In order to ensure that the Human Resource Planning Strategy is fully implemented, the PSNI has contracted a former HMIC Inspector to monitor progress. The Police Service has also made progress on implementing the recruitment of 2,500 Part Time Reserve members, and the Police Service has contracted a private recruitment firm to begin the recruiting process.

The Police Service has been successful in fulfilling the objective of the recommendation that, over a ten-year period the Police Service should have a complement of 7,500 regular police officers. By March of 2003 the Police Service had a total complement of 8,985 police officers, of which 7,178 were regular police officers and 1,807 were members of the Full Time Reserve.

As previously reported, the Police Service of Northern Ireland and the Consensia Partnership continue to produce excellent results in the recruitment of future police officers. The recruiting programme has been successful in attracting significant numbers of Catholic and female applicants, at approximately 36% and 37% respectively. The applicant base in competitions four and five may in fact produce more than the 240 recruits that the Police Service is prepared to accept from the merit pool into training.

The civilian recruiting programme is being conducted in partnership with Grafton Recruitment. Although this programme is a more recent initiative, it is a well-designed and innovative programme, and meets contemporary policing and human resource standards. One significant accomplishment is a competition that is directed at hiring 260 station receptionists to replace police officers at enquiry desks.

A new Director of Training, with a doctorate and an excellent academic and practical background in police education and police training, has been appointed to implement the Independent Commission's recommendations dealing with training. These are critical and underpin the entire success of the overall change programme. The PSNI submitted a costed training plan to the Policing Board in March of 2003. For the first time, the plan provides a fiscally responsible assessment of the Police Service's training needs. In addition, the University of Ulster completed a twenty-one week assessment of the recruit training programme.

The Tutor Officer Programme developed by the Police Service of Northern Ireland is excellent and the tutor officers interviewed are dedicated and professional. In the course of the evaluation completed in May of 2003, a number of probationary constables in the tutor programme were interviewed and were found to exhibit a sincere sense of motivation and dedication to the new policing strategies.

As of 15 May 2003 the Course for All had been delivered to over 8,300 PSNI employees, with plans to ensure delivery of this course to remaining employees by October of 2003. The Policing Board is also focussing increasingly on the implementation of the Police Service's other training programmes. The Policing Board has now also established an advisory position to assist in the monitoring of PSNI training, education and development.



The Northern Ireland Office, in conjunction with the Policing Board and the Police Service, have fulfilled virtually all of the Independent Commission's recommendations that relate to culture, ethos and symbols.

#### **Areas of Concern**

The issue of human rights training for serving police officers and civilians remains a concern. Requests for documents to support the fact that human rights-based training is now integrated into all training modules for serving officers have not been met, despite repeated requests since September of 2001. Further, the specifications of the differences in human rights training between new and old programmes, for recruits, civilians and serving police officers have also not been provided.

It is vital to the success of the Policing with the Community strategy that the training needs of first- and second-line supervisors are addressed. It is these supervisors at the District Command level who will in large part be required to take the strategy from a concept and make it into an operational reality. However, there are still no Service Level Agreements between District Commands Units and Training Branch that address this critical need.

At present, probationary constables are assigned to tutors operating in a neighbourhood policing role. However, oversight visits to a sample of DCUs found some probationers being reassigned to response duties. This was also confirmed during a PSNI internal audit carried out in April of 2003. The audit report notes the importance of balancing issues of policing service demands with those of probationer development, which is currently the subject of an ongoing management review. The Police Service of Northern Ireland will need to determine the appropriate way to balance the requirement for probationary constable's to spend the operational phase of probationary training in Neighbourhood Policing Teams, while recognising the benefits of a wide range of operational experience.

The Independent Commission recommended that police stations be accessible to the public and less fortress-like in appearance. Equally important was that they provide a safe and healthy place for employees of the PSNI to work. Unfortunately, despite repeated requests for evidence of a fully-funded plan that addresses this important need, there has been little or no progress. As of 15 May 2003 the Police Service had not submitted a comprehensive business case, and as a consequence the Police Service and Policing Board have not been able to secure approved funding for this initiative. Officers and employees of the Police Service of Northern Ireland have made substantial progress on many of the recommendations of the Independent Commission, and it seems only proper that they be provided with modern police facilities that are safe and clean places in which to work, while at the same time being accessible and welcoming to the public. The urgent need to renovate or modify the appearance of police stations across Northern Ireland has been reported on previously, and if not addressed in an expeditious manner may be an example of the "cherry picking" from recommendations that the Independent Commission warned so strongly against in its report.

We have noted that the Police Service, in conjunction with Grafton Recruiting, has developed a very professional recruiting programme for civilian employees. The recruiting of civilians for enquiry assistants at police stations is one of the most important aspects of this civilian recruiting programme, as it is intended to provide for the release of up to 260 police officers to front line

policing. However, there is no clear organisational policy that the newly hired enquiry assistants will actually replace police officers.

One of the major themes of the Independent Commission was the need for decentralising the Police Service, along with a devolution of authority to the district command level. In the course of its evaluations, the oversight team has visited all of the 29 policing districts and met with most if not all of the District Commanders. The Commanders are a very talented and dedicated cadre of law enforcement leaders, who have already made excellent progress in meeting the high standards envisioned by the Independent Commission in 1999. However, the issues relating to what and how much authority has been devolved to the district level is still unclear. One of the principle tenets of leadership is that when an individual is held accountable for a section or command unit, he or she must be provided with the commensurate authority and resources to accomplish the tasks set out. As of 15 May 2003 some two years after District Command Units were established, only 14 of the 29 districts have been staffed with Business Managers. The lack of properly skilled and trained Business Managers makes it difficult to effectively manage the financial authorities that have recently been devolved to the district level. Similar issues arise in personnel support, in that a significant number of District Command Units still lack Personnel Officers and training staff.

The Government and the Police Service have published three reports on research relating to alternatives to the use of plastic baton rounds. The reports are well-considered and very professional. However, it must be noted that there still has not been a definitive conclusion as to whether there is a viable alternative, and if so what steps are being taken to implement the alternative.

In previous oversight reports it was noted that the Police Service of Northern Ireland had made little progress in the use of trend identification systems for the tracking of public complaints and other internal personnel indicators. These systems are designed to permit District Commanders and other supervisors to intervene, where necessary, at an early stage if an employee requires guidance or support. We have determined that the Ombudsman has for some time been providing adequate information to the Police Service to implement a trend identification or "early warning" system. The responsibility for addressing this delay in fulfilling this recommendation on trend identification now rests with the Police Service.

The independent validator for information technology has reported that the plans for a fully integrated system, mobile data transfer and the selection of appropriate mobile terminals has not progressed as intended. The Police Service advised the Policing Board on 2 May 2003 that the concerns noted in the Independent Validator's report were accepted and that the Police Service would address all of them by September of 2003.

The very important issue of restructuring Special Branch to ensure that it becomes effectively amalgamated with Crime Branch remained unresolved as of 15 May 2003. The Oversight Commissioner has previously reported on the seriousness of this prolonged delay in fulfilling the intent of the Independent Commission regarding Special Branch. The Oversight Commissioner is confident that the Chief Constable, senior leadership of the Police Service of Northern Ireland and the Policing Board recognise the need to restructure Special Branch, and are acting in good faith to develop the proper plan. It is also recognised that the Police Service needs to maintain a Counter Terrorism Unit that is properly staffed, trained and equipped.



The numerous studies, evaluations and reports concerning Special Branch have contributed to the delay. However, the well thought out reports of the Independent Commission, HMIC (Crompton and Blakey) and Stevens overlap to a large degree in their findings with respect to Special Branch, and the Police Service of Northern Ireland should by now have been able to provide a detailed plan that addresses the issues which have been consistently identified as areas in need of correction. For over three years there have been numerous reports about the serious and growing problem of organised crime, narcotics trafficking and extortion. These make the Independent Commission's recommendations for amalgamating Special Branch and Crime Branch more valid with each passing day. While a new organisational structure was publicly announced in July of 2003, as of the publication of this report the Oversight Commissioner had not been provided with any final, approved plan.

There is also a need to provide better services and attention to members of the Full Time Reserve (FTR). The Independent Commission understood that the decision to phase out the FTR, which the Police Service and Policing Board have decided to do over an 18-month period beginning in April of 2005, would have very serious implications for the men and women serving in the FTR. Several of its recommendations therefore focussed on future employment, retraining programmes and benefits for reserve members. Within the limits of subsequent legislation, everything possible should be done to address these areas and mitigate the impact the upcoming phase out will have on individuals.

The recommendation regarding the need to achieve a civilian work force that is balanced and representative of the community remains largely unfulfilled. The Government's August 2001 Implementation Plan committed to the development of a "package of measures" the cumulative effect of which would be to develop a more representative work force. As of 15 May 2003 the Oversight Commissioner had yet to receive a formalised plan or strategy that addresses this recommendation. This is further evidenced by the fact that there has only been a minimal increase in the proportion of Catholic employees of the PSNI's direct recruit segment of the civilian workforce.

The Independent Commission was very clear in its discussion on recruiting issues to specifically identify the responsibility of all political party leaders, local councillors, bishops and priests, school teachers, and sports authorities to actively encourage young people to apply to join the Police Service. They further stated that these leaders should take steps to remove all discouragements to members of the community applying to join the Police Service, in fact that community leaders should make it a priority to encourage young people to apply.

Although many leaders have sincerely put forth an effort to support the Independent Commission's recruiting objectives, there are still some who are not actively supporting the efforts to improve the Catholic representation in the Police Service. Despite this lack of complete support, the recruiting programme has been a success. It could be even more successful in ensuring the long term representation of Catholics in the Police Service, if all of the leaders adhered to the guidance of the Independent Commission. The importance of fulfilling this recommendation, in terms of building confidence in and support for the Police Service, cannot be overstated.

The recommendation relating to the registration of interests and associations made by the Independent Commission in September of 1999, and accepted by the Government in the August 2001 Implementation Plan, was not fulfilled as of 15 May 2003. This is a relatively straight forward recommendation that should have been implemented earlier. While it was publicly announced in August of 2003 that the applicable policy had been developed, the Oversight Commissioner had not received any details, as of publication, upon which to base an evaluation.

Unfortunately, it is necessary once more to report on the lack of substantial progress in providing a state of the art training facility for the Police Service of Northern Ireland. It is clearly unfair to ask the Police Service to develop and deliver long overdue professional training programmes, and not be willing to provide it with a training college similar to those used by other police organisations throughout the world. The fact that four years have now passed since the release of the report of the Independent Commission, and there is still no property acquired, architectural plans developed or shovel full of dirt turned, is a classic example of "cherry picking" from the recommendations. Much has been asked of the PSNI during the required but nonetheless massive change programme, and the least that can be done for the men and women of the Police Service is to provide them with proper facilities to accomplish their mission.

Finally, the Police Service has made little or no progress on the Independent Commission's recommendation regarding the development of Service Level Agreements between Training Branch and District Command Units and Headquarters Departments. The concept of decentralisation and community involvement depends greatly on the ability of District Command Units to access staff and other resource assets of the PSNI. The leadership at the district level has and will continue to identify training needs that are unique to their sphere of responsibility. In order to meet the demands placed upon them, they need the commensurate authority and ability to provide training at the same level. In the course of the oversight team's field visits there is also a consistent concern raised about the need to provide much more training for first- and second-line supervisors serving in District Commands Units.

▶▶ **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 Commission recommended that the police 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.

### Progress and Accomplishments

A plan for integrating human rights into all aspects of police activity has been adopted by the PSNI and approved by the Police Board after extensive consultation, however will not be published until reviewed by the newly appointed Policing Board Human Rights Advisor. The Code of Ethics was published in February of 2003, and explicitly acknowledges connections to the European Human Rights Conventions and other international human rights guidelines. As of 15 May 2003 over 8,300 serving personnel had signed a statement that they received a copy of the Code of Ethics. Article 1.3 of the Code is the new Police Oath, and the instruction received through the Course for All, as well as participants signing against receiving a copy of the Code, represents significant progress on this recommendation. Evaluation of whether the new Oath is understood, particularly among serving police officers, will be subject to verification. Police recruits have been attesting to the new Oath since the beginning of the new recruit programme in September of 2001.

On 1 April 2003 the Police Service implemented a new system for annual evaluations of the performance of individuals that includes a human rights component. All of these efforts have involved consultation with the Police Service’s human rights lawyer, appointed in 2001. She is also regularly consulted about the human rights implications of operational activities, as these arise.

### Areas of Concern

In September of 1999 the Independent Commission noted that one of the fundamental purposes of policing should be the protection and vindication of the human rights of all, and that there should be no conflict between human rights and policing. The Commission’s consultations clearly



showed that people across Northern Ireland wanted the police to protect their human rights from infringement by others, and to respect their human rights in the exercise of that duty. The Independent Commission recognised that training was as one of the keys to instilling a human rights-based approach into both new recruits and experienced police personnel, and recommended that all police officers, and police civilians, be trained and updated as required in the fundamental principles and standards of human rights and the practical implications for policing.

Since September of 2001 we have requested evidence of the integration of human rights training into all training modules, particularly those aimed at serving police officers. In addition, we have requested evidence of the differences between old and new human rights training programmes for recruit officers, civilian staff and serving police officers. As of 15 May 2003 this had not been provided. Without such evidence there is no way for the oversight team to evaluate the degree of progress the Police Service has made with respect to human rights training, particularly for serving officers. Also not provided was an implementation plan which clearly details required staff, budgets and implementation schedules for human rights training, nor changes to programmes with a view to modifying the culture of the training institution. However, the Police Service has provided an overall Training Business Plan covering other aspects of PSNI training including budgets and timelines. Finally, the Policing Board has not yet approved the Police Service's Human Rights Plan, nor established a human rights monitoring mechanism. While the human rights monitoring plan is in the formal consultation stage, it will be at least September of 2003 before the Policing Board considers the Human Rights Plan.

#### Future Directions

Oversight will focus on determining whether the new Oath, and the need to carry out policing duties in accordance with it, is understood by serving police officers. Oversight will also review the content and nature of human rights training being delivered, as well as the human rights component of the new appraisal system. Finally, oversight will look for progress on the development of the Policing Board's human rights monitoring programme.

## 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: Chief Constable/Policing Board**

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has not been completed. The human rights plan has been approved by the PSNI and by the Policing Board after broad consultation. It was widely circulated among organisations within the community. Because the Policing Board's newly hired human rights advisor, Mr. Keir Starmer, QC, had not had an opportunity to review and comment on it, the plan was not been finalised as of 15 May 2003.



### **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: Chief Constable/Policing Board**

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has been completed. All recruits are required to attest to the Oath upon graduation from the police college. Serving police officers and civilian employees have been given a copy of the new Code of Ethics, where the Oath appears as Article 1.3. As of 15 May 2003 over 8,300 serving personnel had signed statements that they received and understood the Code of Ethics. This will be verified in discussions with employees during upcoming oversight evaluations.

### **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: Chief Constable/Policing Board/NIO**

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved. The Code of Ethics covers a broad range of police activity, as the Independent Commission had recommended. Specifically, it deals with professional duty, police investigations, privacy and confidentiality, use of force, detained persons, equality, integrity, property, fitness for duty, and duty of supervisors. Of particular note is Article 10 of the Code, which may be unique in that it creates a positive duty on managers to provide proper supervision

The Code of Ethics cites international human rights conventions and guidelines with which it is in conformity, most importantly the European Convention on Human Rights. Although the Code does not explicitly incorporate principles concerning covert policing that conform to the European Convention on Human Rights, this is accomplished through another mechanism: in the United Kingdom, statutory authority is embodied in the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA), which was made compliant with the Human Rights Act 1998. The Human Rights Act 1998 in turn incorporates the European Convention on Human Rights into UK law.

In preparing the Code of Ethics, the PSNI drew on the experience of police services in the UK, Canada, and the United States. It also consulted extensively with outside groups such as the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission, the Committee on the Administration of Justice and the Equality Commission. The Code of Ethics becomes the disciplinary code of the PSNI. Unlike the old disciplinary code, the new Code of Ethics is a public document.

#### **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: Chief Constable/Policing Board**

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has not been completed. The Police Service has made significant progress on incorporating human rights into the training programme for recruit officers. Similar progress has not been made with respect to serving officers and civilian employees, and the Police Service has not provided specifications of the differences in human rights training between old and new programmes. The Police Service also did not provide a detailed human rights implementation plan with staff, budget and time schedules. Without such evidence there is no way for the oversight team to evaluate the degree of progress the Police Service has made with respect to human rights training, particularly for serving police officers.

The Police Service did provide an overall Training Business Plan, with timelines and a budget for 2003/2004 which covers all aspects of PSNI training. However, this was not specific enough to permit a detailed evaluation of human rights training. Evidence of the integration of human rights into all training modules was not provided. We were also not provided with evidence of changes made to functional modules, programmes for modifying the culture of the training institution, material about the content of such training, nor a plan for selecting, training, and supervising the teachers of the human rights component. Finally, there is no evidence of a method to evaluate human rights training or learning outcomes, nor the way in which the impact of human rights training on behaviour is to be measured.

We therefore do not possess enough information upon which to evaluate changes to the Police Service's human rights training, particularly for serving police officers. However, certain organisations, including the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission (NIHRC) and Mediation Northern Ireland, have observed some training sessions. The University of Ulster evaluates recruit training materials as part of its programme of accreditation, and Training Branch is open to inspection by bodies like the NIHRC, which commissioned a detailed study of recruit human rights instruction.

#### **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: Chief Constable/Policing Board**

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has been completed. The PSNI's new performance appraisal system came into effect on 1 April 2003 (see also Recommendation 77).



Among other criteria, this system requires assessment of an individual's human rights performance according to the provisions of a detailed protocol. Evaluations under the new system have now commenced.

#### **Recommendation 6: Appointment of Lawyer with Human Rights Expertise**

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: Chief Constable**

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

#### **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: Policing Board/Chief Constable**

The Policing Board appointed an advisor, Mr. Keir Starmer, QC, to have responsibility for developing a programme to monitor the human rights performance of the Police Service. Guidelines for this process have been established and published. However, the programme has not been approved and is unlikely to be finalised before September of 2003. Therefore, assessing the programme for specificity, range, access and methodology, among others, and analysing the degree of PSNI compliance with the ACPO Compliance Plan for the 1998 Human Rights Act, must await upcoming oversight visits.

▶▶ **accountability**



## A. Chapter Summary

### Background

The Independent Commission on Policing for Northern Ireland 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 creation of a Policing Board, District Policing Partnerships, a Police Ombudsman, a commissioner and complaints tribunal for covert law enforcement operations, and the strengthening of financial accountability.

### Progress and Accomplishments

The Policing Board continues to function with a high degree of foresight and professionalism. The Policing Board has published its Policing Plan 2003-2006, and continues to monitor performance of the Police Service against the targets and performance indicators specified in the Policing Plan. The Office of the Police Ombudsman also continues to perform its role with diligence and openness. The final element in the accountability structure that remained to be created was the District Policing Partnerships (DPPs). These were launched in April of 2003, with the appointment of independent members. As of 15 May 2003, 25 of 26 possible DPPs had been established. Membership is in accord with the Independent Commission's recommendations. All members received two days of initial training in March and April of 2003. The DPPs have begun to hold public as well as private meetings.

With respect to other consultative forums the PSNI reports that 548 have been created, which involve 690 Community Beat Officers and 105 Neighbourhood Policing Teams. There are also 142 Community Police Liaison Committees. In addition, the NIO had launched eight Community Safety Partnerships, with Community Safety Co-ordinators in place, by May of 2003. Community Safety Partnerships also participate in crime-prevention programmes between Government, the police and local organisations such as Housing Executives.

After extensive consultations with the Policing Board and non-governmental organisations, the PSNI developed and adopted a transparency policy setting forth the principles that govern the release of information to the public. The policy explicitly refers to criteria suggested by the Independent Commission.

### Areas of Concern

Fundamental to the success of the Policing Board, and particularly the District Policing Partnerships throughout Northern Ireland, is the involvement of dedicated and right-minded citizens who volunteer their time for the greater good. By doing so they improve both policing services and their own communities. Without the devotion and efforts of such individuals it is unlikely that the new beginning envisioned by the Independent Commission would ever come into being, and it is critical that the Independent Commission's recommendations are supported and carried out in their entirety. Of paramount importance however, is that the people who have demonstrated the courage and foresight to involve themselves in their own policing arrangements not suffer threats and intimidation, but are encouraged and supported by everyone.

### Future Directions

Because the District Policing Partnerships are central to the Independent Commission's vision of police effectiveness and accountability, oversight will pay particular attention to the DPP's ongoing evolution and functions. Oversight will also monitor the coordination of crime-prevention initiatives between the Police Service and the many community organisations now in existence. In addition, oversight will verify the implementation of the Police Service's transparency policy.

### B. Recommendation Summary

#### Recommendations 8 and 9: Creation and Responsibilities of the Policing Board

Patten Recommendations:

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

Compliance with these recommendations has been achieved. The Policing Board has been created and is functioning as called for by the Independent Commission.

#### Recommendation 10, 11 and 12: Police Planning Process, the Annual Policing Plan and the Annual Policing Budget

Patten Recommendations:

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.
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.
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: Policing Board/Chief Constable/NIO**

Compliance with these recommendations has been achieved. The Policing Board has developed a planning process that fulfils the intention of the Independent Commission. Policing Plans, which specify policing budgets, have now been published for 2002-2005 and 2003-2006.



### **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: Policing Board/Police Ombudsman**

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved. Performance targets have been set in the Policing Plans for 2002-2005 and 2003-2006. The Chief Constable reports to the Policing Board quarterly on progress toward the targets laid out in the Policing Plans. The initial appraisal against targets was contained in the Policing Board's first annual report released in September of 2002.

### **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**

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved. The Policing Board has appointed senior officers of the PSNI, including the Chief Constable.



**Recommendation 15, 16, 17, 18 and 19: Co-ordination with Other Agencies, Composition of the Policing Board, Background of Board Members, Appointment of Independent Members, Appointment of the Chairman of the Policing Board**

Patten Recommendations:

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.
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.
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.
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.
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: NIO**

Compliance with these recommendations has been achieved. The required number of political and independent members has been appointed, and independent members represent the diversity called for by the Independent Commission. A chairman has also been chosen in the appropriate manner.



### **Recommendations 20 and 21: Devolution of Responsibility for Policing**

Patten Recommendations:

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

Administrative compliance for these recommendations has not been completed. Responsibility for policing rests with the Policing Board and the Government, as represented by the Secretary of State. Devolving responsibility for policing to the Northern Ireland Executive is linked to implementing the broader Criminal Justice Review for Northern Ireland, and political developments.

### **Recommendation 22: Simplification of Roles in Tripartite Arrangement**

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: NIO**

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved. Tripartite arrangements have been simplified as called for by the Independent Commission.

### **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: NIO**

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

### **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: NIO**

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has not been completed. As noted in our Report No. 7, released in May of 2003, for the Chief Constable to be properly held to account for the manner in which he exercised his responsibilities, the Policing Board and the Police Service need to develop a joint policy which establishes a clear framework for operational responsibility. The Policing Board and the Police Service have determined that they will not develop such a policy at this time, although both acknowledge its importance.

**Recommendations 25 and 26: Powers of Policing Board to Require Reports, Powers of Policing Board to Inquire**

Patten Recommendations:

- 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.
- 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: Policing Board/Chief Constable/NIO**

Administrative compliance for these recommendations has been completed, subject to periodic review of practice. To date the Policing Board has received all necessary co-operation from the Police Service, and has not had to invoke the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000 in order to receive reports from the police or conduct inquiries. 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, and the Board has clearly been able to conduct professional and incisive studies without thus far requiring recourse to legislative authority.

**Recommendation 27: Creation of District Policing 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: NIO/Policing Board/District Councils**



As of 15 May 2003 District Policing Partnerships (DPPs) had been formed in 25 out of 26 council districts. A comprehensive Code of Practice for DPPs has been developed, although public meeting requirements are not strictly in accordance with the Independent Commission's recommendations (see also Recommendations 29 and 36). DPP members were given two days of induction training in March and April of 2003, and the Policing Board is in the process of hiring four regional DPP co-ordinators. As noted above, it is imperative that the courageous individuals who have chosen to play a positive role in their policing services be supported by their communities, and not suffer harassment and threats. Administrative compliance for this recommendation has not been fully completed.

#### **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: Policing Board/Belfast District Policing Partnership/Chief Constable**

District Policing Partnerships are in the initial stages of operation and will continue to be monitored. The Belfast DPP is comprised of four sub-groups representing North, South, East and West Belfast. As called for by section 21 of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000, the Belfast District Council has established a sub-group of its District Policing Partnership for each of Belfast's four police districts (i.e., North, South, East and West). Each DPP sub-group consists of 5 political and 4 independent members.

#### **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: Policing Board**

Administrative compliance for these recommendations has not been completed. The current Code of Practice for DPPs does not require a monthly meeting between the DCU Commander and the local DPP, as originally recommended by the Independent Commission. Due to the fact that DPPs only recently came into being, an assessment of functions through interviews with DPP members, and discussions with DCU Commanders, among other things, and evidence of standardised annual DPP reports, must await upcoming oversight visits.

**Recommendation 30 and 31: Annual Report of District Police Partnerships, Administration Costs of District Police Partnerships**

Patten Recommendations:

- 30. The DPP should submit an annual report to the District Council and publish it.
- 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: Policing Board/District Councils**

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has been completed. The adoption of the Code of Practice for DPPs by the Policing Board, and the submission of a Revised Business Case: District Police Partnerships - Funding Requirements, 2003/04 - 2005/06, to the NIO mark progress. Negotiations are ongoing regarding the means of achieving the 75/25% funding split required by the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000.

**Recommendation 32: Expenditures by District 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: NIO/Executive Committee**

This recommendation was not adopted, 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: Policing Board/DPPs/Chief Constable**

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has not been completed. According to the Police Service, 548 Consultative Forums have been formed, involving 690 Community Beat Officers and 105 Neighbourhood Policing Teams. Evidence of police policy and direction, including police plans for monitoring the achievements of the Forums, have not been supplied.

**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: Policing Board/DPPs**



Administrative compliance for this recommendation has been completed. The Policing Board has issued a Code of Practice for DPPs. Adherence to these guidelines will be monitored.

#### **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: Policing Board/Chief Constable**

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has been completed. The Policing Board has approved its Standing Orders, which are periodically updated. A schedule for public meetings of the Policing Board is published, as are the minutes of all public meetings.

#### **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: Policing Board/DPPs/NIO**

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has been completed. However, meetings do not conform to the Independent Commission's recommendation, which was that DPPs meet monthly in public. The Policing Board's Code of Practice for DPPs stipulates only six public meetings a year. However, DPPs may meet in private as often as required.

#### **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: Chief Constable/Policing Board**

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has been completed. A PSNI Transparency Policy which sets forth guidelines for the release of information to the public was approved on 11 April 2003. The Policing Board was consulted extensively by the PSNI in the policy's preparation. The Transparency Policy explicitly refers to elements of the Independent Commission's recommendations.

### **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: Police Ombudsman**

The intentions of the Independent Commission with respect to the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland are being achieved. Full co-operation with the oversight process has been provided, and there is a professional working relationship between the Ombudsman and the Police Service and Policing Board. Data on patterns of complaints against police officers are sent to the PSNI on a monthly and quarterly basis by computer disk and by hard copy. This process and data has been confirmed as adequate to allow the police to act on trend identification information.

### **Recommendations 39, 40, and 41: Covert Law Enforcement**

Patten Recommendations:

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

As noted in our Report No. 7, administrative compliance with these recommendations has been completed. The Code of Practice for the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act has been published, as well as the Surveillance Commissioners Annual Report. The remaining evaluation and verification steps relate to an examination of Police Service policy relating to covert law enforcement. This is being made available.



#### **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: NIO/Policing Board/Chief Constable**

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has not yet been completed. However, a costed Policing Plan has been published for fiscal year 2003/2004. Further work on a comprehensive activity-based costing system, to work in tandem with devolved budgets, is proceeding with Policing Board involvement. In line with UK-wide Government guidelines, both the PSNI's and the Policing Board's internal audit functions are in the process of being contracted out. Appropriate expertise is in place at the PSNI and Policing Board, and performance is being appropriately measured. In addition, Management Letters and Conditions of Grant were issued in January of 2003.

Evidence was provided of work on the integration of financial planning with business and operational strategies. However, evidence of implementation will have to be evaluated in conjunction with devolved DCU budgets, and the integration of the DPP's respective policing plans. Best value or other evaluations by the National Audit Office or HMIC have not yet occurred, although the Police Service has conducted five best value reviews. The Management and Condition of Grant authorities satisfy the financial accountability expectation of the Policing Board for police holdings.

#### **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: NIO**

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has been completed. The Chief Constable has not yet been required to appear before the Public Accounts Committee. Evidence of process compliance, and audit control and review by the Police Service and Policing Board, will occur during upcoming evaluation visits, and once the systems in place have an opportunity to function.



▶▶ **policing with the community**



## A Chapter Summary

### Background

The Independent Commission on Policing for Northern Ireland recommended that policing with the community should 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 is 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.

### Progress and Accomplishments

The basic organisational structures recommended by the Independent Commission, in order to establish policing with the community as a core function of the Police Service, are in place. In the areas visited by the oversight team the Police Service had committed a considerable number of patrol hours to walking beats, and station duty rosters reviewed showed a good balance between policing resources assigned to Neighbourhood Policing Teams and those assigned to “response to call” teams. In the stations visited standards of duty roster record keeping were good and are considered adequate for the purposes of evaluation and validation. The final implementation of the Independent Commission’s intent for policing with the community must await an evaluation of the full impact of the recently established District Policing Partnerships. While the small sample of stations visited does not yet allow us to extrapolate similar circumstances across the Police Service, it illustrates a very positive beginning.

All of the Neighbourhood Policing Team officers interviewed had attended the Course for All and had received training in human rights, community policing and problem solving. At the DCUs visited, officers assigned to Neighbourhood Policing Teams evidenced a variety of problem-solving projects.

The Police Service has made progress in developing and launching a first-class crime analyst system. This success is attributable to leadership, quality recruiting and a professional training and development programme. Crime analysis is seen as fundamental to problem identification and solving, and civilian crime analysts are increasingly recognised as being vital to the success of policing operations.

The Change Management Team audited 11 DCUs in February and March of 2003 regarding the service delivery element of community policing. The audit report included observations for sharing good practices on matters of accessibility, visibility and community engagement, and also recommended improvements to probationary officer assignments and also improved crime recording. The Police Service presented a policing with the community marketing update to the Policing Board in April of 2003, which listed an extensive number of initiatives.

### Areas of Concern

The absence of Service Level Agreements (SLAs) with Training Branch in support of policing with the community is a concern. SLAs were recommended by the Independent Commission in September of 1999 as a critical device in the delivery of training to DCUs. As of 15 May 2003 they had not been established. District Command Units have been in place for over two years

and the continued absence of definitive SLAs hampers the ability of DCU Commanders to meet their policing and community service responsibilities. A further concern is that the specialised training needs of supervisors and first-level managers involved in policing with the community have not been met.

Common to all organisations with devolved decision making, local Commanders and immediate supervisors are pivotal figures in determining tone, style and performance within their respective areas. Recording performance is an important aspect not only for internal accountability, but explaining to local DPPs the various activities undertaken by the PSNI to meet local policing objectives. While the basic elements of record keeping are sound at the DCU level, there was evidence in some locations that managers and supervisors were not scrupulous in maintaining data trails and activity logs to a standard that enables the monitoring of internal accountability by the Police Service. A PSNI internal audit found that some probationers were being reassigned from a neighbourhood policing role to response duties. The audit report notes the importance of balancing issues of policing service demands with those of probationer development, which is currently the subject of ongoing management review. At present, probationary constables are assigned to tutors operating in a neighbourhood policing role. The Police Service will need to determine the appropriate way to balance the requirement for probationary constable's to spend the operational phase of probationary training in Neighbourhood Policing Teams, while recognising the benefits of a wide range of operational experience.

A related concern is the ongoing lack of proper information technology (IT) for the routine recording of events, the maintenance of problem solving logs and crime reporting. Proper IT is fundamental to achieving a broad range of policing goals, and uniformed police officers, supervisors and CID investigators remain hampered by its absence. Until police officers are given the tools essential to a modern policing service, it will be difficult to hold them to a high standard of expectation.

In addition, new policy on the wearing of name and location badges creates uncertainty about compliance with the original recommendations of the Independent Commission. Although the badges were issued in April and May of 2003, police officers need not wear them when carrying out duties not related to their neighbourhood policing roles, or if they wish to be exempted on security grounds. Only practical experience and ongoing oversight will determine whether the Police Service's approach is consistent with the Independent Commission's intentions.

#### **Future Directions**

Increasing the number of stations visited will allow for a more comprehensive evaluation process. Oversight will continue to examine neighbourhood patrol operations and relationships with the community. Oversight will also track developments regarding community policing forums and particularly the evolution of the relationship between the Police Service and local District Policing Partnerships. Application of policy on name and locality badges will also be examined, together with patrol practices of selected neighborhood policing teams.



## 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: Chief Constable/Policing Board**

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has been completed. District Command Units and District Policing Partnerships have recently published local policing priorities, in accordance with the Police Service and Policing Board Policing Plan for fiscal year 2003/2004. In the DCUs visited a sampling of records established that local problem solving processes are following the model proposed in the Policing with the Community Implementation Plan. Management reports listed 639 active problem solving projects across the Police Service for the previous quarter.

There is wide variation in reports from DCUs, influenced by local priorities, variance in management decision making and the willingness of the community to participate in problem solving partnerships. Most of the folders examined demonstrated good practice, while some lacked annotated logs documenting actions taken. The management and tracking of these processes were not always consistent. The information technology intended to support folder management is not yet in place, however the Change Management Team is pursuing the development of a standardised system of electronic problem solving folders.

By early May of 2003 all of the Community Beat Officers interviewed by the oversight team had attended the Course for All, which included a problem solving module. Training Branch records indicate that approximately 85% of Police Service personnel attended the Course for All. The sample problem solving files produced by the Police Service between September of 2002 and May of 2003 provided evidence of community consultation in those areas visited. An audit of 11 DCUs by the Change Management Team reported successful efforts by some of the DCUs to include positive information on neighbourhood policing in local newspapers, including the names and photographs of individual police officers. Further oversight will determine the ongoing quality of consultation taking place, as well as the degree of transparency afforded to the community by the Police Service.

### 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: Chief Constable/District Commanders**

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has not been completed. In September of 2002 the Police Service reported that work had begun with Training Branch to establish Service Level Agreements (SLAs) with DCU Commanders for neighbourhood policing training, however by early May of 2003 these were still not in place. This is an ongoing concern which we have

noted on numerous occasions. SLAs are important as they set out what Training Branch is expected to deliver to districts in support of policing with the community and problem solving (see also Recommendation 132). However, some training has been delivered, with nine Community Beat Officer courses and 194 police officers completing the training by May of 2003 (see also Recommendation 146).

Further to the Policing with the Community Implementation Plan released in December of 2002, PSNI documents list a total of 105 Neighbourhood Policing Teams, employing a total of 690 Community Beat Officers among the 29 DCUs. Duty rosters examined during sampling visits to some DCUs verified the figures provided by the Police Service. However, the reassignment of Community Beat Officers to public order and prisoner escort duties remains prevalent, an issue which was noted in an audit of 11 DCUs carried out by the Change Management Team. Site visits to selected DCUs confirmed that beat patrols are fielded and recorded by duty roster. One rural DCU listed almost 800 hours dedicated to walking beats, which represents approximately 47% of total patrol hours for that DCU.

By April of 2003 most District Policing Partnerships (DPPs) had been appointed and several inaugural public meetings had taken place. Future evaluations will focus among other things on the evolving relationships between the Police Service and the newly formed DPPs (see also Recommendation 33). In those DCUs visited, there is evidence that the policing with the community plan is being implemented as intended. Police visibility in the areas visited has been enhanced by walking beat assignments, and work has begun on addressing community crime and disorder concerns through systemic problem solving and community partnerships. District-level management reports examined are suitable for evaluating patrol performance and management problem solving.

#### **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: Chief Constable**

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has been completed. The Policing with the Community Implementation Plan refers to the Tenure Policy originally approved by the Police Service, however this tenure policy is currently under review by the Policing Board as part of a broader review of PSNI human resources. The Implementation Plan states that members of policing teams should serve for at least three, and preferably five, years in the same neighbourhood. Senior Constables predominated in the Neighbourhood Policing Teams reviewed during the most recent oversight visit. Each DCU maintains records to enable the monitoring of tenure and also the reassignment of Community Beat Officers to other duties. The DCUs visited in April and May of 2003 listed minimum tenure periods on Neighbourhood Policing Teams in their application criteria for vacancies.



The Police Service issued General Order 13/2003, PSNI Uniform, Wearing of Name Badges, in April of 2003. This stipulated that name badges be worn by police officers, up to and including the rank of inspector, engaged in neighbourhood policing as their core function. Although under certain circumstances name badges may be removed, for example if there are valid security concerns, police officers of Chief Inspector rank and above do not have this option and will wear badges showing name, rank and DCU or Department. This General Order can be amended on the basis of a revised threat assessment.

#### **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: Chief Constable**

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has been completed. The Policing with the Community Implementation Plan stipulates that all probationers serve a significant part of their time on Neighbourhood Policing Teams. The Foundation Faculty Training Plan reinforces this position, focussing attention on pro-active work practices, including the SECAPRA problem solving technique. Student officers are assigned to tutors operating in a neighbourhood policing role, and monitored using a Tutor Assessment Book and a Professional Development Portfolio.

However, sample visits to DCUs found some probationers reassigned to response duties. The Change Management Team Audit Report, released in April of 2003, acknowledged the issue of balancing policing demands with issues of police probationary constable development, and this is currently the subject of a management review.

The Police Service identified 690 positions assigned to Neighbourhood Policing Teams in the 29 DCUs. In August of 2002 District Commanders were directed to post probationary officers to Neighbourhood Policing Teams and to maintain an accounting of the types of duties performed by individual probationers. Further evidence of compliance, including lists of assignments of probationary officers and tenure while on probation, is deferred until the upcoming oversight visit.

#### **Recommendation 48: Patrolling on Foot**

Patten Recommendation:

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

**Lead Responsibility: Chief Constable/District Commanders**

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has been completed. Direction to DCU Commanders was included in the December of 2002 Policing with the Community Implementation Plan. A selection of DCU visits in May of 2002 revealed that, for those DCUs sampled, foot patrolling was evident. Local duty rosters and attendance records are the sources for the accounting of time spent on foot patrol by Neighbourhood Policing Teams. Further evidence for the introduction of foot patrols is reflected in activity reports and problem solving folders, although these are not aggregated in most DCUs. The Policing with the Community

Implementation Plan provides DCU Commanders with guidance on the allocation of resources, and a small sample of site visits confirmed that an active resource management processes were in use.

#### **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: Chief Constable/District Commanders**

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has been completed. For the DCUs examined, Inspectors directing the activities of Neighbourhood Policing Teams demonstrated active commitment, with local priorities and goals prominently displayed. District Policing Partnerships had been established in most locations by April of 2003, however meaningful consultation had only begun to take place. While administrative compliance with the process of local goal setting is completed with the release of the Implementation Plan, evaluation and verification will not be possible until the District Policing Partnerships have been fully functioning for some time.

#### **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: Chief Constable/Policing Board**

A comprehensive training, education and development programme for crime analysts is in place, with a 5-year timeline for funding and continuing development. Training in the use of analytical products is included in the recruit training syllabus. 194 Community Beat Officers have been introduced to the analytical tools available, with a schedule to bring the total to 400 officers by the Summer of 2003. There are no existing Service Level Agreements between DCUs and Training Branch which would confirm a commitment to provide continuing training on analytical methods, although an introduction to the use of analysis for problem solving is included in the Course for All. Further, while the basic level of information may be sufficient for front line officers, supervisors and managers of community policing activities require more advanced training. Members of the new District Policing Partnerships will require special assistance during orientation as well.



An information programme which used bulletins and the Policing with the Community Strategic and Implementation Plans, and which was directed at all members of the Police Service, was developed by the Change Management Team. DCU Commanders are sharing crime analysis information with local consultative forums, and are presenting statistics on crime and disorder and other activity reports at inaugural public meetings of District Policing Partnerships.

The distribution of standardised computer-based analytical systems is virtually complete. New product assessments are ongoing. Basic and advanced analyst training is well established. The training of front line police officers is progressing in part through the Course for All. Orientation and training for managers is an ongoing activity and is increasingly specialised. The new Police Service Appraisal system launched in April of 2003 includes a performance factor for problem solving.

A standard format for presenting crime and police performance information to District Partnerships is now in place. Reports include policing plan crime targets with initiatives and impact statements together with a review of DCU priorities. The Policing Board is receiving progress reports. A reporting format for sharing crime pattern information is in place, however it is too early in the development of District Policing Partnerships to determine specific outcomes. While an evaluation process exists, Corporate Management has not yet audited the Analysis Centre. An electronic problem solving folder for use by DCUs is in the design phase. The ultimate success of analytical services for neighbourhood problem solving will be reflected in the results achieved by DCUs, and in the performance of the Police Service as a whole as measured against the Policing Board's goals.

#### **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: Chief Constable**

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has been completed. There are provisions for the inclusion of members of District Policing Partnerships in the Training, Education and Development strategy. Appointments to District Policing Partnerships are now complete in all but one district. The Policing Board is directing a programme to orient and inform appointed members and their local managers. Support for a conference and forum for DCU Commanders and DPP appointees is included in a list of commitments submitted to the Policing Board by the PSNI in March of 2003, and two have been held. Future oversight evaluations will determine whether the orientation and training schedule developed for DPP members is sufficient to allow them to effectively fulfil their roles. There may be a need in future for enhanced, joint training not only for members of the DPPs but for police personnel as well.



▶▶ **policing in a peaceful society**



## A. Chapter Summary

### Background

The Independent Commission on Policing for Northern Ireland 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.

### Progress and Accomplishments

Both the Police Service and Grafton Recruitment provided evidence of progress towards staffing the public reception offices in each police station with civilian Station Enquiry Assistants (SEAs). As of 15 May 2003 a total of 32 SEAs have been selected through an internal trawl process, with an additional 60 to be appointed after Grafton concludes the recruitment and selection initiative. There has been a reduction since January of 2003 in the number of army patrols sent out in support of the Police Service. Over the most recent evaluation period there has also been a notable increase in the reporting of police activity under the Terrorism Act 2000. This may not necessarily indicate an increase in stops and searches conducted by the Police Service, but rather an increase in the reporting of stops and searches by police personnel.

A modern 20-bed joint custody suite with modern equipment has been constructed at the Antrim DCU to hold terrorist suspects. The Policing Board successfully implemented a plan for inspecting all custody and interrogation suites, by assigning the responsibility to the current custody visitors. During the most recent evaluation period, the oversight team verified that custody visitors are fulfilling the intent of the Independent Commission's recommendations.

### Areas of Concern

The Independent Commission noted in September of 1999 that the police estate as a whole was in poor shape and that many of the police stations were visibly dilapidated. It recommended that police stations needed to be more accessible to the public and also needed to be made less fortress-like in appearance. In addition, many stations were found to be both unsafe and unhealthy places in which to work. The Independent Commission estimated that the maintenance backlog for Northern Ireland's police estate alone was equivalent to nearly a third of the total for the whole of England and Wales.

Our two previous reports highlighted the lack of progress in these areas. At present, some two years after it agreed to fully implement the Independent Commission's recommendations on the appearance of police stations, the Police Service has yet to submit a comprehensive business case which addresses all of the relevant issues. The Police Service and the Policing Board have consequently not yet secured approval and funding for this initiative from the Northern Ireland Office, nor is there any indication that funding is available.

There is an urgent need to renovate and update the current appearance of the majority of police stations across Northern Ireland. The schedule for remodelling reception and enquiry offices needs to be coordinated to ensure limited funds are used where needed most, and that efforts are consistent with approved business plans that cover new builds, closures and new custody suites. At the current pace it is unclear when a plan will be approved and implemented that ensures the coordination of new builds, renovations, closures, custody suites, and remodelling of reception offices.

The Independent Commission recommended in 1999 that police officers manning the enquiry office be replaced with civilian employees, and there is some concern over the lack of clear organisational guidelines to DCU Commanders as to how new station assistants will be utilised. In other words, the civilians who are hired as enquiry assistants actually need to replace the police officers that are now performing receptionist duties. During the most recent oversight visit, we were unable to identify clear, central direction issued to DCU Commanders as to how the new assistants would be utilised. Future oversight visits will determine whether station assistants are replacing police officers as intended, or whether they are merely supplementing police officers currently assigned to the enquiry office.

Devolved authority to DCU Commanders for decisions on how best to balance their resources in consultation with the community has not been fully implemented as of 15 May 2003. Such authority is one of several key management tools necessary to hold Commanders accountable for their districts and district performance, as outlined in the Policing Plan 2003-2006. In addition, the decision on the number of custody suites needed to support police operations is still pending. July of 2008 has been given as a date for the remaining custody suites to be equipped, which is some nine years after the Independent Commission first made its recommendations.

Finally, the Independent Commission recommended that the holding centres at Castlereagh, Gough Barracks and Strand Road should be closed forthwith. We had been informed by the Police Service, and subsequently confirmed through site visits, that the sites were no longer in use as holding centres. However, since our last report the Independent Commissioner for Detained Terrorist Suspects reported that Gough Barracks had been in use. Under the Terrorism Act 2000 the Secretary of State has the power to temporarily designate a place where persons may be detained under section 41 of the Terrorism Act. Gough was designated on 18 January 2003 and the designation revoked on 21 January 2003. We were advised by the Police Service and the NIO that this was due to a temporary lack of space and service at other sites. Future oversight evaluations will determine the degree to which this recommendation is being implemented consistently.

#### **Future Directions**

Oversight evaluations will assess the specific manner in which the Police Service is using the new civilian station assistants. Oversight will also look for progress on the continued devolution of decision-making authority to DCU Commanders.



## B. Recommendation Summary

### Recommendations 52 and 53: Appearance of Police Stations

Patten Recommendations:

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.
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: NIO/Policing Board/Chief Constable

Administrative compliance for these recommendations has not been fully completed. As a follow-up to the Estate Strategy Review prepared by the Police Service in November of 2001, the Estate Services Business Unit submitted a second business case to the Chief Constable in May of 2003 covering new builds, station renovations, enquiry office remodelling, perimeter fences, custody suites and CCTV systems for the custody suites. The deficiencies of the previous business case were noted in our last report. As of 15 May 2003 an approved business case had not been received by the NIO. As a result it may be many more years before significant results can be achieved and verified, assuming funding can be secured.

Although a comprehensive business case has not been approved, there has been some progress. Four major works projects or new builds have been constructed or approved for construction, and the new business case identifies five more new builds. The new buildings appear to satisfy all aspects of the impact resistant design standard. However, improvement in perimeter walls or fences is proposed in just two locations and does not appear to be part of the proposed business case.

As of 15 May 2003 only seven enquiry offices have been remodelled or modified. An additional six are to be remodelled by December of 2003. The modified enquiry offices reviewed to date are more welcoming and accessible to public callers, and meet or exceed the intent of the Independent Commission's recommendations. However, as noted in our Report No. 7, evaluation visits showed that some stations needing upgrades are not scheduled for modification or renovation, while other locations in relatively good condition are on the schedule. Additionally, the proposed business case does not include the specifics that would address other interior improvements which would make enquiry offices more congenial places in which to work, as intended by the Independent Commission. The only improvements being considered are re-painting of interiors, and then only when the DCU Commander specifically requests such improvements and has funding available.

The Estate Strategy Review recommended the closure of several police stations. To date only four stations have been closed, with the Policing Board currently examining the closure of 25 others. As of 15 May 2003 specifications or architectural designs for new build and renovated police

stations had not been received. The request for this information has remained unmet since September of 2001. The Police Service had also not developed a photographic inventory of the existing police estate, although it has advised that photographic surveys of certain stations are available.

The Police Service and Grafton Recruitment provided evidence of some progress towards staffing station reception areas with civilian Station Enquiry Assistants (SEAs). Through an internal trawl process, the Police Service has recruited and trained 32 current civilian employees as SEAs. Before assuming their duties new SEAs first complete a training programme. The oversight team verified that several new SEAs are now in an operational setting, and have replaced police officers previously assigned to the enquiry desk. Grafton Recruitment, working under a contract to recruit 60 additional SEAs, received 1,890 applications, with 23% of applications coming from Catholics. This external recruitment effort began in February of 2003, and it is expected to be completed by June of 2003. At that point Grafton will provide the Police Service with a merit pool of potential candidates.

Although this initiative has been progressed since our last report, evidence of a timetable to complete the replacement of all 260 positions identified by the Police Service has not been provided. A request for a verifiable timetable has been outstanding since September of 2001. The evaluation and verification phase will determine if the new SEAs actually replace, rather than merely supplement, police officers currently assigned to enquiry desks. Although Grafton Recruitment has advertised for 60 enquiry assistants, thereby ensuring 50:50 hiring as per legislation, this only begins the process.

#### **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: Chief Constable/District Commanders**

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has not been completed. As of 15 May 2003 the Police Service had not provided an agreed-upon definition of static and mobile patrols for the purposes of this recommendation. However, this has since been provided and will be evaluated during the upcoming oversight visit. Devolved decision making is one of the cornerstones of the change programme recommended by the Independent Commission. For devolution to work as intended clear authority to make decisions must be devolved, not simply the responsibility for outcomes. In addition, if district workloads increase as a result of devolution then so must staffing numbers in order to cope. As yet this has not been the case, with many DCUs still waiting for appropriate administrative staff. There is also no clear policy on the nature, parameters and extent of devolution in order to assist managers to deal with the new decision making structure. Finally, there remain no Service Level Agreements with Training Branch to ensure that the specific training needs of individual DCUs are identified and met (see also Recommendation 76).



The District Commands have been established, and General Order 13/2001, Transitional Arrangement for the Introduction of District Command Units, provides evidence of some progress towards the devolution of authority to District Commanders. Of the several Commanders interviewed, none had received specific authority to implement the discretion recommended by the Independent Commission. However, the oversight team observed DCU Commanders taking the initiative to consult with their local community nonetheless, for advice on how best to deploy police officers and patrols.

#### **Recommendations 55, 56 and 57: Police Vehicles**

Patten Recommendations:

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

#### **Lead Responsibility: Chief Constable/Policing Board**

Administrative compliance for Recommendation 57 has been completed. Administrative compliance for Recommendations 55 and 56 has not been fully completed. The Police Service noted that progress to substitute armoured Landrovers (ALRs) with regular patrol vehicles continues to be seriously hampered by the ongoing security and public order situations.

The Police Service has made some progress in other areas. As noted in previous oversight reports, the Police Service's General Order 58/2001, Issues of Strategic Reserve Armoured Landrovers, directs that ALRs be moved to five depots. The policy's interim target was to have 225 of a total of 450 ALRs, or 50%, in reserve depots by March of 2002. As of 15 May 2003 the Police Service had only placed 185 ALRs, or 41%, in reserve. These are stored in several locations rather than in the five designated depots. Of the remaining 265 ALRs, 113 are assigned to routine patrol and 152 to Tactical Support Groups for public order needs.

As of 15 May 2003 the Police Service had substituted 43 ALRs with regular patrol vehicles. In addition, the Police Service provided a three-year plan for the purchase of 100 regular patrol vehicles, at a cost of 4.9 million pounds, to replace an equal number of ALRs. The oversight team obtained preliminary verification that the word "POLICE" has been painted onto the sides of all ALRs, and that 440 ALRs have been re-painted from dark grey to white.

#### **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: NIO/Chief Constable/GOC**

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has been completed. As noted in previous oversight reports, the Police Service had provided a plan to reduce its dependence on military support, contingent on the security situation. Documentation was provided describing the areas and circumstances where the military provides support to the Police Service, the procedures used to acquire that support, and the extent of the support generally provided. In the recently released Policing Plan 2003-2006, the Policing Board and Police Service announced an objective to examine ways to reduce dependence on military support.

The number of military personnel in direct support varies according to day-to-day operational requirements. A review of statistical reports provided suggests that since 1 January 2003 there has been a significant reduction in the number of army patrols sent out in support of the Police Service. The reduction in military support was verified by the oversight team. This is an encouraging development, and supports the full implementation of this recommendation. The oversight process will now proceed to the evaluation and verification phases.

#### **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**

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has been completed. The Police Service provided its operational plan for dealing with public order situations, including circumstances that must be present and procedures to be followed when utilising military support. Evidence provided included extensive data on military assistance in public order incidents. The military has retained its capacity to provide support for the Police Service (see also Recommendation 66). Oversight will now proceed to the evaluation and verification phases.

#### **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: NIO/Home Office**

As noted in previous oversight reports administrative compliance for this recommendation has been completed. The Independent Commission recommended that, provided the threat of terrorism diminished to the point where no additional special powers were necessary to combat it, legislation against terrorism should be the same in Northern Ireland as in the rest of the United Kingdom. The Terrorism Act 2000 stipulates that, depending on the security situation, the Secretary of State can phase out special powers specific to Northern Ireland. As of 15 May 2003 this had not taken place. The oversight process will continue with the evaluation and verification phases.



### **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: Chief Constable/GOC**

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has not been fully completed. In 2001 the Police Service developed a comprehensive policy in the form of General Order 37/2001, The Terrorism Act 2000 – Human Rights and Monitoring Issues. This established new PACE forms and outlined the justification and procedure for all stops and searches in an emergency. Also established were reporting and review responsibilities for all stops and searches under the Terrorism Act. PSNI performance reports on the use of this authority for the period April to December of 2002 were provided. The reports contain data from 28 of the 29 DCUs, with Moyle DCU being the exception. When data from 2002 is compared with data from 2001, a notable increase in actual reporting of police activity under the Terrorism Act is evident. Increased activity is also reported in the NIO's Research and Statistical Bulletin from November of 2002. However, this may not necessarily indicate an increase in the number of stops and searches, but rather an increase in reporting by police personnel. The General Officer Commanding also provided a statistical report for the year 2001, detailing the military's use of stops, searches and arrests under the Terrorism Act.

Administrative compliance for this recommendation had not been fully completed. General Order 37/2001, The Terrorism Act 2000 – Human Rights and Monitoring Issues, has now been in effect for well over a year. Two separate and independent audits conducted by the Police Service's Change Management noted that, although progress had been accomplished in complying with the General Order, thereby increasing the incidence of reporting, there continued to be significant variance in compliance with the administrative procedures set forth in the Order. This was confirmed during subsequent oversight visits, as was the fact that not all DCU Commanders are proactively monitoring or reviewing the use of emergency powers as required, or taking follow-up or corrective measures where appropriate. Oversight will continue to monitor the application of the requirements outlined in PSNI policy.

### **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: NIO/Chief Constable**

After being informed by the Police Service that the three holding centres at Castlereagh, Gough Barracks and Strand Road had been closed as recommended by the Independent Commission, the closures were verified by the oversight team. However, in April of 2003 the Independent Commissioner for Detained Terrorist Suspects released his annual report which observed that



Gough Barracks had been temporarily designated as a custody suite and used to hold terrorist suspects. This was subsequently confirmed by the NIO. Under the Terrorism Act 2000 the Secretary of State has the power, at the request of the Police Service, to designate a place where persons may be detained under section 41 of the Terrorism Act. Gough was designated as such a place on 18 January 2003 and this designation was revoked on 21 January 2003. We were advised that this was due to a temporary lack of space and service at other sites. Future oversight visits will review and confirm whether Gough and any other sites will be used intermittently, and also whether this recommendation is being implemented consistently.

All prisoners arrested under section 41 of the Terrorism Act 2000 will now be held in the 20-bed joint custody facility located at Antrim DCU, which became operational on 11 April 2003. The Antrim custody suite incorporates special conditions and safeguards for detaining terrorist suspects. As of 1 May 2003 the temporary custody facility at Lisburn DCU is no longer designated as a place for detaining suspects charged under the Terrorism Act. The Police Service provided an inventory of the cells located at the various police stations, as well as the requested statistical reports on the number of persons detained.

In addition to the scoping study on detention space requirements for persons charged under the Terrorism Act, and the two consultant reports describing three different models for future custody suites, the Estate Services Business Unit, following consultations with DCU Commanders, prepared a revised proposal for the Chief Constable's approval. Proposed are four super custody suites at Antrim, Waterside, Musgrave and Craigavon, plus 14 smaller custody suites located throughout Northern Ireland. Costs are projected at 27 million pounds. The number of locations would be reduced to 18 separate custody suites from the current 22. Oversight will now proceed to the evaluation and verification phases.

#### **Recommendation 63: Video Recording in PACE Custody Suites**

**Patten Recommendation:**

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

**Lead Responsibility: NIO/Chief Constable**

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has not been completed. In 1999 the Independent Commission recommended that video recording should be introduced into the Police and Criminal Evidence (PACE) custody suites. The Government and the Police Service agreed to implement this recommendation, however as of 15 May 2003 this had not been completed. A business case dated 25 April 2003 was prepared by the Police Service and proposed the installation of CCTV video recording equipment in each of the current 22 custody suites. The projected cost for this initiative is ten million pounds. At the same time, another unit of the Police Service, the Estate Services Business Unit, recommended that the PSNI required only 18 custody suites for the detention of PACE suspects. These conflicting proposals indicate that considerable work and a comprehensive plan are required if this recommendation is to be implemented successfully (see also Recommendations 52, 53 and 62).

Video recording equipment has been installed in the custody suites located at Musgrave, Lisburn and Antrim DCUs. A plan from May of 2003, submitted by the Estate Services Business Unit,



recommends that over the next two years CCTV be installed in five additional custody suites: Coleraine, Enniskillen, Grosvenor Road, Antrim and Banbridge. The remaining custody suites are scheduled to be equipped by July of 2008. Based on the Musgrave video recording pilot project, a set of operating instructions for the use of CCTV has been adopted by the Police Service. Similar instructions have been prepared and adopted for the super custody suite recently opened at Antrim DCU.

#### **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: Policing Board/Chief Constable/NIO**

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has been completed. The Policing Board has extended the responsibility for inspecting all custody and interrogation suites to the current Custody Visiting Scheme. The Secretary of State has made the necessary designations to authorise lay visitors. The Policing Board has agreed that, with the consent of the detainee, the role of the custody visitors should be extended to observing interviews. The Board and the Police Service are developing a training programme to allow custody visitors to better understand the rules of sound interview practices.

The Policing Board requires monthly reports from custody visitors summarising their activities and ensuring that goals pertaining to detainees' complaints, as well as recommendations for physical improvements, are accomplished. During recent oversight visits Form CV2, completed by custody visitors at each custody suite, were inspected to verify that unannounced inspections occur routinely, and that conditions and criticisms identified by custody visitors are recorded. Oversight will now proceed to the evaluation and verification phases.

#### **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: NIO/Chief Constable**

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has been completed. The Chief Constable will review this recommendation twice yearly, on 1 April and 1 October, and issue a determination to the Oversight Commissioner regarding the security situation. The Chief Constable reported that, as of April 2003, the security situation has not yet reached the peaceful environment envisaged by the Independent Commission, which would permit the implementation of this recommendation.

▶▶ **public order policing**



## A. Chapter Summary

### Background

The Independent Commission on Policing for Northern Ireland recognised that the public order policing experience of the police in Northern Ireland differed significantly from that of any other police force. It therefore saw the need for research into alternative 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 to better deal with public order situations and other emergencies.

### Progress and Accomplishments

Based on the research conducted to identify alternatives to the plastic baton round (PBR), the Police Service has purchased six vehicle-mounted water cannon as one available alternative to the PBR. At least two water cannon are scheduled for delivery during the Summer of 2003.

### Areas of Concern

Notwithstanding a Government commitment for progress on research for alternatives to the Plastic Baton Round (PBR), it will be important to retain focus in the ongoing research. The research conducted to date on viable alternatives to the PBR has been rigorous and thorough, however requires a conclusive decision on this issue.

### Future Directions

Oversight will continue to monitor the levels and estimated cost of military assistance provided to the Police Service. Oversight will also examine progress on the development of a final decision on alternatives to the PBR.

## 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: NIO/Policing Board/Chief Constable**

Administrative compliance with this recommendation has not been completed. Documentation was received on the level of military support to DCUs for the period October of 2002 through March of 2003. A comprehensive plan provided by the Police Service and dated 7 June 2002 offers detailed guidance to be followed in public order emergencies. This plan outlined policies and procedures for police responses to potential public order problems associated with contentious parades and protests (see also Recommendation 59). The oversight team also requested evidence of PSNI cost estimates of assistance provided by the military. However, as of 15 May 2003 neither the Police Service nor the NIO had provided documentation.

### **Recommendations 67 and 68: Conditions for the Approval of Parades**

Patten Recommendations:

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.
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: NIO/Parades Commission**

Administrative compliance for these two recommendations has not been completed. A full review of the current parade arrangements has been published in a report entitled: "The Parades Commission and Public Processions – 2002". The report recommends the creation of two organisations, one specialising in mediation and the second deciding on disputed marches. The Government has sent the report out for consultation, including a review by the Police Service. The comment period concluded 30 April 2003, and the NIO advises that no action or changes in legislation will take place until 2005.

The Police Service has taken the initiative and amended two General Orders, 43/2000, Public Processions and the Parades Commission, and 44/2000, Human Rights Policy in Relation to Public Events, which require the recording of police efforts to work with parade organisers and/or representatives of the involved neighbourhoods during the parade planning process. The Police Service has also been encouraging organisations applying for permission to hold a parade to have trained marshals in attendance. With respect to the training of parade marshals, the documents provided by the NIO, the Parades Commission and Public Processions Report, does not completely address this issue, nor that of contentious parades requiring marshalling by qualified personnel. The 2002 report notes only that all marshals should have at least basic training. It does not address the specific needs or the subject areas to be covered during the training.

### **Recommendations 69 and 70: Public Order Equipment**

Patten Recommendations:

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).
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: NIO/Policing Board/Chief Constable**



In June of 2000, the Northern Ireland Office (NIO) formed a Steering Group to conduct research and identify a broader range of public order equipment. To date the Steering Group has prepared three separate in-depth research reports entitled: "A Research Programme into Alternative Policing Approaches towards the Management of Conflict". The first two reports are well-researched and detailed, and contain an examination of alternatives to the PBR. The third, or Phase 3, report conducts research along similar lines, as well as exploring issues related to conflict resolution. It remains important that Government and the Police Service work towards developing a concrete timeline for reaching a final decision on alternatives to the PBR.

The Police Service has purchased six vehicle-mounted water cannon based on this research. Once they have satisfactorily completed equipment testing, the first two water cannon will be available for deployment and use, subject also to a favourable medical statement from the Defence Scientific Advisory Council. The Police Service provided copies of quality control and system certification documents for the water cannon as prepared by the manufacturer.

The authority to deploy water cannon will be the same or similar to the guidelines for the deployment of baton guns. The NIO reports that with the availability of water cannon, the equipping of each police officer with CS spray, and the implementation of community-policing programmes, the need to deploy or discharge PBRs will be reduced. However, although it is important to retain focus on research and implementation of alternatives to the Plastic Baton Round, it is also important to reach a conclusion. Until such time the remaining performance indicators cannot be addressed.

While further research is ongoing, the way in which the Police Service has operationally addressed the deployment and use of baton rounds has improved considerably. The Police Service now has access to good baton gun training; this is demanding and requires 90% proficiency for successful completion, the highest in the UK. The numbers of police officers authorised to fire the baton gun has been restricted, and there are now sound protocols in place for the deployment and authorisation of the baton gun. Finally, supervisors have also received training on PBR use, and all use is reported to the Police Ombudsman, providing for both transparency and police accountability. Although administrative compliance for Recommendations 69 and 70 has not been fully completed, oversight has proceeded to the evaluation and verification phases. Measures to assure quality control, and comprehensive protocols defining the use of less than lethal force, as well as evidence of actual deployment of a range of less than lethal equipment, will be assessed during future oversight visits.

### Recommendations 71, 73 and 74: Police Performance in Public Order Situations

#### Patten Recommendations:

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.
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.
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: NIO/Policing Board/Chief Constable

The NIO, Policing Board and Police Service have made good progress in implementing the Independent Commission's recommendations in this area, which has resulted in improved police performance during public order situations. General Order 50/2002, Requirements for Early Reporting to the Policing Board, outlines in detail Police Service policy and mechanisms for providing early reports to the Policing Board on the discharge of all PBRs and/or incidents of public disorder. The Police Service has agreed to amend the Order to require DCU Commanders to include detailed circumstances and justifications in their reports as to the need to discharge baton rounds. The Policing Board is now receiving, along with the reports, the Commanders' justification supporting use of the PBR.

Documentation has been received demonstrating that the Policing Board fully and actively monitors police performance in public order situations and when it deemed necessary, has requested follow-up reports from the Chief Constable. Police Service policy requires that the Police Ombudsman be contacted immediately in all cases when baton rounds are discharged, and the Ombudsman receives written notification within 48 hours.

As of 15 May 2003 the Police Service had limited the number of officers authorised to fire the plastic baton gun to 359. Documents and several General Orders have been provided as evidence that comprehensive training components for the PBR have been established. An on-site review by the oversight team of the PBR training programme at the Sprucefield training site concluded that the training provided is in compliance with the intent of these recommendations. The qualification course has a human rights component, and a pass or fail test with multiple-choice questions. 70% of police officers selected to undergo the training eventually qualify.

The Police Service has provided reports and documents on the number of PBR incidents each year. It is reported that increased PBR use corresponds with increases in public order incidents; however this is an issue for the Policing Board to monitor. The Police Service will conduct an



internal post-utilisation review of each incident involving the use of baton rounds. After the Police Ombudsman releases a report on a PBR incident, and provided there are no criminal or disciplinary proceedings pending, four senior officers will review the findings contained in the report, as well as any internal police reports. The review will determine if there are any policy, discipline, human rights or training matters that should be addressed. The internal review panel has had one meeting and concluded there were no recommendations for changes. Administrative compliance for Recommendations 71, 73 and 74 has not been fully completed, however oversight for those areas where administrative compliance has been achieved will proceed to the evaluation and verification phases.

#### **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: Chief Constable**

As noted in our Report No. 7, evaluation and verification for this recommendation will be ongoing.



▶▶ **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.

### Progress and Accomplishments

The costed Policing Plan 2003-2004 is now in place, providing the foundation for a devolved system of resource management. Local Financial Management was introduced across the Police Service in early April of 2003. Devolved budget management now amounts to approximately 81% of the total DCU budget. This constitutes progress in this area. In the DCUs visited there were confirmed examples of Commanders exercising flexibility in budget management in order to improve efficiency in operations, notably with information management, transportation and support for community engagement through a budget for local initiatives. The new appraisal system was formally launched in April of 2003. Appraisals may now be used for selection and promotion, taking into consideration factors such as respect for human rights, openness to change and records of attendance.

Initial reports from the first cycle of accountability and appraisal sessions between Regional ACCs and DCU Commanders have been completed. Internal Investigations Branch has begun institutionalised random checks of officers' behaviour, using the ACPO recommended method of intelligence-led investigation. Endorsement by the major employee representative organisations illustrates their support for and commitment to both high standards of integrity and the PSNI approach to ensuring it. The Code of Ethics was issued to all Police Service employees in February of 2003, and represents progress in addressing the Independent Commission's concerns regarding proper conduct. All employees were required to acknowledge receipt of the Code of Ethics in writing.

### Areas of Concern

Relatively high sickness absence rates remain a concern, with staffing levels having the potential to adversely impact a number of community policing initiatives and patrol activities. Although a positive trend is beginning to emerge, with the average number of police officer work-days lost to sickness declining from 23.4 days for 2001/2002 to 20.14 for 2002/2003, this is above the Policing Board's target of 18.5 days per year for police officers. However, sickness rates among regular police officers only (i.e., not counting members of the Full Time Reserve) were 17.57 days per year, below the Policing Board's target. Sickness rates for civilian staff rose to 15.95 days per year for 2002/2003, from 15.8 for 2001/2002. The Board's target for civilians was 14 days per year.

Although Human Resources has overall responsibility for improving sickness absence rates, local Commanders and line supervisors have an increasing role to play as well. A key concern will be if responsibility is devolved to DCUs and line managers, without the appropriate supporting authority. In other words, has actual decision making authority been devolved along with

responsibility for outcomes? A related issue is the length of time required to the processing of medical discharges by the Policing Board, however this is the subject of ongoing discussions between the Board and the PSNI.

Our last report commented on the lack of progress in using trend information on public complaints and other indicators for police officers. These allow District Commanders and line supervisors to intervene at an early stage if they feel that an officer requires assistance or guidance. The Independent Commission saw this as part of managing internal accountability, and it is our view that all impediments to developing such a system have now been removed. In addition, nothing prevents the Police Service from using a manual system in the interim. We noted that the Ombudsman was providing adequate information to allow the PSNI to use such a process. While the Police Service accepts the need to proceed with developing a trend identification process, as of 15 May 2003 no such process, including an interim manual system, had been developed and put in use. It will be important for internal accountability to achieve early results in this area.

In September of 1999 the Independent Commission recommended a rigorous programme of civilianisation. The Human Resource Planning Strategy endorsed by the Policing Board in October of 2002 recommended that 650 positions be civilianised by April of 2005. The initial target for April of 2003 was 100 positions, with an additional 250 positions by April of 2004, and a further 300 by April of 2005. Grafton Recruiting was contracted by the Police Service to conduct the recruiting. The baseline figures originally established in 2001 were to be updated and the implementation plan redeveloped. As of 15 May 2003 the Police Service had not provided a detailed implementation plan with timelines. If implemented, this recommendation could result in up to 650 police officers being redeployed to operational duties (see also Recommendations 53 and 76).

#### **Future Directions**

Oversight will continue to monitor the key changes to the Police Service's programme of devolved authority and decision making, accountability, management of sickness absence, medical discharge processes, civilianisation and the development of a viable trend identification system. Oversight will monitor ongoing progress on a tenure system and will re-visit management of the new police funds as well as PSNI relationships with the Widows Association, in order to ensure that effective support mechanisms are in place.

## **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: Chief Constable/Policing Board**



The Policing Board continues to monitor the change management programme by receiving regular progress briefings from accountable PSNI managers. In addition, the Home Office has prescribed a method for evaluating the performance and development of Chief Police Officers with provision for the assessment of Deputy Chief Constables and Assistant Chief Constables. This is achieved through the establishment of personal objectives and a personal development plan, including an in-year review and a self-assessment process. ACPO Competencies include a factor addressing openness to change. However, the adoption of this process by the PSNI has not been fully confirmed.

#### **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: Chief Constable/District Commanders**

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has not been fully completed. The PSNI's Financial and Resource Management policy makes DCU Commanders responsible and accountable for their budgets, and documents provided record an extensive process of training continuing through May and June of 2003. Devolved budget management now amounts to approximately 81% of the total DCU budget. Among budgetary responsibilities devolved to Commanders are salaries, overtime, travel and subsistence, pensions and supplies. Documents also show that budget holders have the ability to transfer funds between budget categories in accordance with standard government accounting practices. Certain responsibilities remain with PSNI Headquarters including the allocation of resources to achieve a reasonable balance between commands, replacement of attrition and the allocation of new recruits. Documents provided indicate that Human Resources Branch will deal with resource imbalances.

While authorities were put in place on 1 April 2003, DCU Commanders remain disadvantaged due to un-staffed Business Manager and Personnel Officer positions. As of 15 May 2003 only 14 of 29 Business Manager positions had been filled. Budgets for those DCUs which do not have a Business Manager in place are being administered at the Regional level. In addition, as of 15 May 2003, 10 of 29 Personnel Officer positions had been filled. Those DCUs without Personnel Officers may have their ability to deal with recently devolved authorities for the management of sickness absence affected. As noted in our previous report, it is not consistent with the principles of leadership to hold DCU Commanders fully to account if they have neither the authority nor the human and technical support to fulfil their responsibilities. Finance Branch has also tasked Regional Business Managers to assist understaffed DCUs, and provided a Help Desk and also designated key contacts to assist individual DCUs to manage their financial and other resources. With respect to Sickness Absence, existing policy devolves local responsibility to DCU Commanders for day-to-day monitoring, follow-up, reporting of problems and requests for specialised assistance.

An audit process for DCU Commanders is in place, however as we have pointed out in the past this will be limited if District Commanders do not have all the necessary tools in place with which to perform their functions (see also Recommendation 78). Service Level Agreements (SLAs) are in place governing the relationship between and respective responsibilities of District Commanders and Headquarters Finance and other areas, however crucial SLAs between DCUs and Training Branch remain absent (see also Recommendation 132).

#### **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: Chief Constable**

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has been completed. Human Resources arranged for delivery of the prepared training package by district trainers in conjunction with other training needs from January to March of 2003. Trainers were provided with a distance-learning package. The Police Service published and distributed a comprehensive booklet explaining the purpose and application of the new system. The new appraisal process includes a factor for the evaluation of openness to change, and there will be a direct link with promotion and selection at the recommendation stage of job competitions, a linkage formalised in General Order 8/2003, Annual Performance Review. This General Order, effective 9 April 2003, introduced the new Annual Performance Review. Police officers from the rank of Constable up to and including Chief Superintendent will be appraised in April of each year on their performance over the preceding 12 months. Personnel Branch will be responsible for reviewing the system and making adjustments if necessary, prior to the next appraisal cycle. A review of the system is scheduled for September of 2003. Oversight will now proceed to the evaluation and verification phases.

#### **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: Chief Constable/District Commanders**

Interviews with District Commanders indicated a positive response to audit sessions, as these are also effective at identifying barriers to effectiveness. The ACC Corporate Development and Change Management is responsible for internal oversight of this process on behalf of the Chief Constable, as reflected in the Policing Plan 2003-2006. The ACC is aware of the need to harmonise features of the process, while acknowledging regional differences. In addition, as noted in previous oversight reports, for this system to be both effective and equitable, DCU



Commanders with require full authority over as well as responsibility for all those areas on which they are to held to account. Ultimately, authority must be commensurate with responsibility before decision maker can be held fully to account.

#### **Recommendations 79 and 80: Trend Information on Complaints**

Patten Recommendations:

79. An automated trend identification system for complaints should be introduced.
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: Police Ombudsman/Chief Constable/Policing Board**

Administrative compliance for these recommendations has not been completed. The Police Service has made little progress on developing and using a management system for trend identification based on public complaints and other indicators. The Independent Commission's intent regarding these recommendations was to underscore the Police Service's need for internal accountability mechanisms and sound management. As of 15 May 2003 no trend information system for internal accountability had been developed. We were informed that delays stemmed from differing perceptions on the part of the Police Service and the Ombudsman of what constituted adequate data. However, as noted in our Report No. 7 we were satisfied that the information provided by the Ombudsman was more than sufficient in detail to allow the Police Service to supplement other internal indicators, and establish an "early warning" or "officer performance" system. The Ombudsman provides reports on aggregate complaint trends organised by district, complaint type and disposition. These are provided monthly and quarterly. These reports include complaints data attributable to individual officers and are available to DCU Commanders.

Although no evidence of progress had been provided as of 15 May 2003 real progress towards a rudimentary manual system seems achievable in the short term. The Police Service's Professional Standards Committee, which includes representatives of the Ombudsman, has directed that Internal Investigations Branch proceed with the design and operation of a system. Evidence was provided of an operational requirement case and a budget for the development of a computerised management system. Results will be closely examined during our September evaluation period.

#### **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: Chief Constable/Police Ombudsman**

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has been completed. The Professional Standards Committee approved an Integrity and Professional Standards Strategy on 7 May 2002. It has been resolved that Internal Investigations Branch (IIB) is responsible for intelligence-led

integrity tests that would deal with suspected wrongdoing. The Professional Standards Committee, the Superintendents Association, the Police Federation and the Policing Board endorsed this approach. Quality service tests are the responsibility of Corporate Management. A PSNI directive describing random checks was distributed to all police officers.

Random checks have been conducted. Notice of random checks with an explanation of purpose is included in the curriculum of the Course for All and the Community Beat Officers Course. By May of 2003, 85% of PSNI employees had attended the Course for All. A joint conference was held between the Police Ombudsman and IIB to inform DCU Commanders of emergent integrity issues, and the respective roles of PONI and IIB. The conference was also addressed by the Chair of the Policing Board. The Policing Board carried out a Community Attitudes Survey in 2002, with another completed by 14 May 2003. Results were subsequently released to the public. These surveys will be a regular aspect of the Policing Board's functions.

IIB provided an information package to PSNI Training Branch requesting the design of an education programme for those officers particularly at risk, and provided information to the Executive Leadership Faculty for courses for newly promoted supervisors. Service Level Agreements between Training Branch and DCUs/Departments would assist in identifying training needs in this area. The requirements for a comprehensive automated reporting system for IIB activity are described in an operational requirements document currently under review by Information Services. In the interim, activity reports are submitted to the Professional Standards Committee. The Change Management Team is responsible for auditing IIB, however as of 15 May 2003 no audit of the Branch had taken place.

#### **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: Chief Constable/Policing Board**

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has been completed and evaluation and verification stages will follow. The Code of Ethics for the Police Service of Northern Ireland was issued to all employees in February of 2003. The Code establishes ethical expectations and will serve as the basis for internal discipline for the Police Service. Issues addressed in the Code include: professional duties, police investigations, privacy and confidentiality, police use of force, detained persons, equality, integrity, property, fitness for duty and duty of services.

The Independent Commission noted that to maintain high ethical standards, police officers who consistently fail to meet the standards and objectives of a police service should be brought before a fair administrative dismissal process. Provision for administrative dismissal is contained in the PSNI's Unsatisfactory Performance Regulations 2000. To date only one police officer has been administratively dismissed. Monitoring of this process will be ongoing.



### **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: Chief Constable/Policing Board**

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has not been completed. A comprehensive tenure of post plan was considered by the Policing Board in January of 2002, but deferred pending a comprehensive review of the broader issues of a Human Resource Planning Strategy. Management of human resources is now subject to bi-monthly reviews between the Police Service and the Board. The Police Service will submit a revised formula for managing tenure.

### **Recommendations 84, 85, and 86: Management of Sickness Absence**

Patten Recommendations:

84. Officers injured on duty should be treated as a separate category for sickness recording purposes.
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.
86. There should be a more detailed review of sickness absence, to establish underlying causes and to make recommendations to address them.

**Lead Responsibility: Chief Constable/Policing Board**

Administrative compliance for these recommendations has been completed. The policies and procedures required to take action on this recommendation are in place, and a Managing Attendance Policy is to be issued by the Police Service in July of 2003. Monthly management reports are provided to DCU Commanders, and sickness absence records are a factor in the accountability and audit reviews carried out between Regional ACCs and DCU Commanders. However, if Commanders are responsible for attendance records they must also be given the authority to manage attendance in ways that suit their individual needs and circumstances. In addition, many DCUs are still waiting for their Personnel Officer positions to be staffed; this individual would likely play a key role in the management of sickness absence. Attendance is also a factor in the new personnel assessment process, and will be used for making selection and promotion decisions. The Policing Board's targets for the reduction of sick days, for fiscal year 2002/2003, were 18.5 days for police officers and 14 days for civilian employees. Neither target was met, with police officers averaging 20.14 days for 2002/2003, and civilians averaging 15.95 days. However, if regular police officers are counted separately (i.e., as distinct from members of the Full Time Reserve) sickness rates are 17.57 days per year, in other words below the Board's target.

A number of initiatives have been completed. In February of 2003 the Police Service held a conference dealing with sickness absence, which provided comprehensive information on sickness



absence to command staff. Posts for two Clinical Psychologists have been filled to help identify preventative interventions. The PSNI Health and Well Being Survey 2003 designed to investigate health behaviours and psychological and morale factors, was distributed and results are pending. The Police Service has identified to the Policing Board the issue of the length of time required to affect a medical discharge. This averages 158 days and has a direct bearing on performance against the Board's own targets. The Board is in the process of developing a policy that would satisfy UK legislation while also responding to the practical concerns of the PSNI regarding the timely processing of medical discharge cases.

A control system enabling all responsible levels of supervision and management to track and take action on both short and long term absence is in place, but an audit conducted by the Change Management Team in August of 2002 found that the directive was not being universally applied, and also revealed both ineffective case monitoring and record keeping by some DCUs. However, each DCU now has a specific multi-disciplinary team responsible for all aspects of healthcare including employee support. This team provides employees with a point of contact for advice or action on health care issues. A Health and Safety Help Desk is also well-established, and Health and Safety training for line managers is ongoing. An Accident Investigator commenced duties on 1 April 2003. Seven new policies regarding employee assistance and workplace health and safety programs were distributed throughout the organisation. Activity and trend reports on a full range of health and safety statistics are provided to the Chief Constable and the Policing Board on a quarterly basis.

#### **Recommendations 87 and 88: New Police Fund/Funding for Widows' Association**

Patten Recommendations:

- 87. A substantial fund should be set up to help injured police officers, injured retired officers and their families, as well as police widows.
- 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: NIO/Chief Constable**

Compliance for these recommendations has been achieved, however given the short term of experience and the difficulty of projecting activity, performance goals were not available during the early life of the programme. The Fund has now completed its first full year of operation and audited accounts were being prepared. Therefore an evaluation and monitoring for consistency will be carried out in September of 2003.

#### **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: Chief Constable/Policing Board**

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.



### **Recommendations 90, 91 and 92: Efficiency Initiatives**

Patten Recommendations:

90. There should be a rigorous program 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.
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.
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: Policing Board/Chief Constable**

Administrative compliance for these recommendations has not been completed. The Policing Plan 2003-2006 includes an extensive programme of civilianisation in the context of the Human Resource Planning Strategy. Among other observations and goals, the Strategy estimates the potential replacement of approximately 650 police officer positions with civilian positions before April of 2005. This will depend on identifying the necessary funding, achieving more efficiency using current staff and recruiting the required number of persons with the appropriate skills. The conversion of 350 police to civilian positions during 2003/2004, followed by another 300 conversions by 2005, is an ambitious target that will require all senior police officers and District Commanders to identify suitable non-operational police posts. However, as of 15 May 2003 only one police officer position had been converted to a civilian position.

The Police Service has engaged an independent consultant to monitor implementation of the Human Resource Planning Strategy. Certain aspects of Transportation within the PSNI were outsourced effective 14 April 2003, which released 32 police officers for operational duties. Agency staff were engaged as an interim solution. The Policing Board and the Police Service are pursuing a Best Value Review of civilianisation, with future initiatives to focus on Transport Services, Crime Recording, Publications and others areas. An updated list of posting opportunities for civilianisation and optimisation was produced by Human Resources in April of 2003.

▶▶ **information technology**



## A Chapter Summary

### Background

The Independent Commission recommended an urgent, independent and in-depth strategic review of the use of information technology (IT) 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.

### Progress and Accomplishments

The initial rollout of common terminals to Regions and DCUs was completed by December of 2002, with 1,000 units installed. Full deployment commenced in February of 2003. The data communications network upgrade was completed on time and within budget, providing a secure data communications infrastructure connecting all PSNI locations, including Limited Opening Stations. There are approximately 27,000 access points installed across the system. On 24 March 2003 an Initial Acceptance Agreement was signed with an outside consortium for acceptance of the Administrative Information System.

Office automation solutions were extended to all Regions late in April of 2003. A new e-mail system was also introduced. As each DCU receives its new terminals, personnel will have access to calendars and e-mail. The Police Service's official intranet, PoliceNet, was launched in March of 2003. This provides employees with online access to Service Manuals and Codes, local information specific to each DCU, Region and Headquarters departments and over 500 printable forms. All General Orders and Vacancy Bulletins are published on PoliceNet and new additions are displayed automatically when the site is opened. Also available is a self-service 'White Pages' internal telephone directory. The new internet web site is in final stages of development and was released in June of 2003. The Police Service has also created and staffed a civilian IT Manager position effective 1 April 2003.

### Areas of Concern

Following a briefing session with the Policing Board in December of 2002, the Independent Validator confirmed on 21 January 2003 that the plan to meet the Independent Commission's recommendations for a fully integrated system was not progressing as intended. The Validator observed that plans for mobile data transfer and the selection of appropriate mobile terminals had also not progressed. Further doubts were expressed about the data-carrying ability of the new radio network. The Validator reported that the overall planning of projects for implementing the IT strategy appears incomplete and poorly thought out. In addition, important connections and dependencies between different parts of projects are not identified.

The Police Service advised the Policing Board on 2 May 2003 that the Validator's assessments were accepted in their entirety, with a commitment to address all concerns by September of 2003, in order that the strategy may then be re-validated. The Police Service has committed to review and adjust management structures as needed to ensure that the programme proceeds as necessary. While the initial rollout of common terminals across the organisation has progressed, this has not occurred as quickly as originally intended. As a result, many front line police officers continue to spend valuable time hand writing entries into ledgers and operational reports.

### Future Directions

Oversight will monitor steps taken by the Police Service to correct the deficiencies in the systems architecture identified by the Independent Validator. Attention will also focus on completion of the full roll out of common terminals and on the critical factors of training and coaching on new systems, and of supervision. Progress regarding changes to local business processes, in order to confirm higher productivity, will also be evaluated.

### 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: NIO/Chief Constable/Policing Board

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has been completed. However, the Independent Validator notes that the Police Service is no longer in compliance with the Information Technology (IT) Strategic Plan, a position which he has communicated to the Policing Board in January of 2003. Among the Validator's concerns are that systems integration, and associated technical architecture, have not been taken seriously by the Police Service. As a result, there is no fundamentally different technical architecture now than what was in place before.

Only ongoing oversight and evaluation will ultimately determine whether the IT programme, and all of its critical impacts, is progressing as the Independent Commission had recommended. Lack of progress notwithstanding, the Police Service is an active participant in the Causeway Programme, a joint undertaking by the criminal justice organisations in Northern Ireland. While the original validated strategic plan included this specification, there are questions as to whether implementation is succeeding, and reviews by the Policing Board are taking place on a bi-monthly basis.

User needs surveys continue on a project by project basis, with the last review of DCU needs taking place in July of 2002. A major training programme has been contracted out by the Police Service to provide training on a 'Just in Time' basis, coordinated with the rollout of common terminals and other office automation. Information Services rather than Training Branch has taken responsibility for most IT-related training. This was negotiated inter-departmentally, however no Service Level Agreements currently exist which determine respective roles in introductory IT user training (see also Recommendation 132).

The NIO has confirmed approval of a 5-year budget for IT, however individual business cases are still required in order to access funds. The PSNI's Strategic Plan for IT broached this objective under the heading of Risk Management. This component of the Strategy is also monitored by the Independent Validator, whose current assessment of the risk factor is classified as 'high'. The Chief Constable and the Policing Board have endorsed the Strategic Plan, however the views expressed in the Validator's report of 21 January 2003 now call into question the ability of the Police Service to achieve the goals it has set for itself.

▶▶ **structure of the police service**



## 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.

### Progress and Accomplishments

The Policing Board recognised that the Police Service had a number of staffing issues that remained outstanding, and requested that the Chief Constable address these. In response, the Police Service developed its Human Resource Planning Strategy. This was noted in our previous report as an important change programme, ultimately affecting most areas within the Independent Commission's recommendations. The Chief Constable's retention of an external observer to monitor the Strategy's implementation, and his reports to date, reflect progress in providing effective monitoring for the Police Service and the Board.

The Policing Board and the Police Service have determined that the Full Time Reserve (FTR) will be retained until April of 2005, at which time it will be phased out over an 18-month period. However, the FTR has already been reduced by over 1,000 members since the Independent Commission made its recommendations in 1999. Negotiations have commenced with the Police Federation regarding an improved severance programme for all members of the FTR.

The Police Service has developed job descriptions and has contracted with a private recruitment firm to begin recruiting members for the Part Time Reserve (PTR). The recruitment of members of the PTR in four pilot sites commenced in January of 2003. As of 15 May 2003 the Police Service had received 2,400 applications for 171 available positions in the four areas. Of the applications received 45% were from females and 19% from the Catholic community. A comprehensive training programme has been developed for members of the PTR, and current members of the PTR are able to attend the revised training courses, after which training for the PTR will be evaluated.

### Areas of Concern

In our previous reports we highlighted the Independent Commission's intent with respect to the recommendations regarding Special Branch. The Independent Commission recognised the potential for a shift from paramilitary-related crime to increased organised crime activity. Consequently they focused their recommendations on having Special Branch utilise its considerable assets and experience to address the emerging threat of organised crime, and the violent criminal activity that invariably follows. We acknowledged the need to balance the dual objectives of combating crime and dealing with terrorism, where there is a need for a well-



resourced, well-trained and fully supported intelligence capacity to deal with terrorist and other threats to national security. While we are confident that the Chief Constable, the Police Service and the Policing Board are now committed to bringing about the changes recommended by the Independent Commission, there is a continued need to complete a concrete action plan of change.

The sequence of events leading to the present situation is that the oversight team first identified the need for a strategy, plans and policies that would be utilised to achieve the amalgamation of Special Branch and Crime Branch in September of 2001. The initial plans submitted in January of 2002 were limited and did not fulfil the Independent Commission's intent. Subsequent oversight requests for a modified plan were not met due to the Police Service's view that a number of other external reviews of Special Branch prevented the PSNI from preparing additional plans or making any fundamental changes. Some structural changes were put in place dealing with a single ACC Crime post in charge of both Crime and Special Branch, and greater reporting of intelligence to DCUs and criminal investigators. The Police Service's delay was supported by the Policing Board with the caveat that a modified plan be submitted by November of 2002.

The HMIC review of Special Branch, requested by the Board, was released in November of 2002 and was a well-researched, professional report. The Chief Constable and the Policing Board quickly endorsed it and work proceeded on developing a revised plan and implementation. In the Spring of 2003 two additional reports that impacted Special Branch and criminal investigations processes, known as the Stevens and Blakey reports, were issued. The Chief Constable requested, and the Board agreed, to a delay until 2 July 2003 to allow the Police Service to consider the three reports together, and then present a structural plan that best dealt with all recommendations and also any overlap between them.

Whilst we cannot change the progression of events to date, it is important to highlight the delays as a significant concern. Our current report is being released four years after the Independent Commissions recommendations, and the Special Branch recommendations are not yet completed. It will be critical that the Chief Constable and Policing Board provide and implement a specific plan of action.

The Independent Commission recommended that there should be much greater delegation of decision-making authority to District Commanders, including control over devolved budgets and police resources within their district. Despite progress towards the devolution of authority to DCU Commanders, much remains to be done beyond structural changes. Interim PSNI directives in place during the transitional phase have not been replaced with definitive new authorities for Regional ACCs and DCU Commanders. The full implementation of policing with the community will ultimately rely on achieving a structure where as many decisions as possible are made based on local conditions. This in turn implies a significant degree of local control over human resources and financial management, a degree of control which local decision makers do not as yet enjoy. Continued uncertainty can only serve to handicap this process. As of 15 May 2003 progress remained slow on staffing DCU Business Managers and Personnel Officers. In the absence of administrative specialists, some DCU Commanders have resorted to the temporary assignment of other staff to carry out some of the work. The Police Service's Finance Department has arranged for Regional Business Managers to support those DCUs that have not yet filled their own Business Manager positions.



While the Police Service's launch of a revised Part Time Reserve (PTR) programme is a good model it appears that the four pilot test sites selected by the Police Service do not entirely meet the Independent Commission's intent. This was to specifically target areas in Northern Ireland which remain under-represented in the PTR, however three of the four pilot sites are in predominantly non-Catholic areas. Acknowledging that the Police Service selected these sites to gauge their ability to attract and recruit PTR members in areas likely to succeed, it nevertheless appears that the four test sites do not meet the intent of targeting under-represented areas. In addition, none of the four test sites meet the criteria of being areas from which there are currently few existing PTR members. The Policing Board has been asked by the Police Service to contribute to the selection of the next four sites.

#### **Future Directions**

Oversight will also continue to review progress on the pace of the reorganisation of headquarters, as well as on the development of a revised plan with timelines to deal with recommendations on Special Branch. Oversight will also examine progress on the devolution of managerial authorities to DCU Commanders. Finally, ongoing efforts to establish a Part Time Reserve more reflective of the whole community will also be reviewed.

#### **Recommendations 94, 95 and 96: Creation of New District Commands**

Patten Recommendations:

94. There should be one district command for each District Council area.
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.
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: Chief Constable**

Administrative compliance with these recommendations has not been fully completed. Remaining issues outstanding are contingent on the full functioning of the District Policing Partnerships (DPPs) and appropriate resourcing. DCUs came into being on 1 April 2001. The staffing of Business Manager and Personal Officer positions is not yet complete, and there are no target dates for completing these staffing actions. By early May of 2003, 14 of 29 district Business Manager positions had been filled, while 10 of 29 Personnel Officer positions were filled. As previously reported, the devolution of decision-making authority to DCU Commanders is one of the lynchpins of the new beginning to policing envisioned by the Independent Commission. Once

given that responsibility, Commanders require appropriate authority and supporting resources before being fully accountable. A transitional General Order authorises DCU Commanders to deploy personnel within their command area.

A Costed Policing Plan for fiscal year 2003/2004 is now in place. Local Financial Management was introduced across PSNI on 1 April 2003. Devolved budget management now amounts to 81% of the total DCU budget. Comprehensive Financial Management Training sessions on the new devolved finance system were introduced in February and March of 2003. Additional training and briefing sessions will be held later in May and in June of 2003. DCU Commanders are included in this process. Participants have evaluated early training sessions positively. Goals for local financial management are clearly delineated in the Policing Plan 2003-2006.

Most DPPs were established early in 2003. While there is some evidence that local policing goals were established in consultation with existing community forums, implementation of the setting of district-level objectives, in collaboration with DPPs, must await initial meetings and opportunities to engage with the Police Service. The Change Management Team conducted an audit of 11 DCUs in September of 2002. Regional ACCs have completed one cycle of accountability reviews, with plans to conduct ongoing reviews in May and October of each year. Evaluation of these practices will continue.

#### **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: Chief Constable/NIO**

A plan for the reduction of Police Headquarters was developed in 2002. However, this plan was deferred by the Chief Constable, who resolved to bring about rank reductions and reallocation of positions by establishing targets and devolving the responsibility to Regional Commanders and Headquarters Departments. This means that the goals for Headquarters are now to be met within context of the broader Human Resource Planning Strategy. Rank reductions, which are not confined to Headquarters, total 204 positions including 9 positions at the rank of Chief Inspector or above. Documents provided by the Police Service reflect a reduction of 613 police positions between April of 2000 and March of 2003, the majority of which were due to severance and natural attrition. However, 66 positions were redeployed to front line policing. Interviews with DCU Commanders suggest that orientation and training are needed for police officers transferred from Headquarters to the DCUs.

Documents also show an increase of 20 civilian positions over the same period.



The Police Service confirmed that an across-the-board reduction of 10% applies to Headquarters. The total of ACCs and equivalents remains at 10, with chief officer staffing decisions determined by the Policing Board. The Secretary of State has determined that the rank of Chief Superintendent will be retained. Although overall goals for the reduction of ranks and positions have been established, there is as yet no detailed plan for implementation or target dates for completion.

#### **Recommendations 98, 99 and 101: Special Branch**

Patten Recommendations:

98. Special Branch and Crime Branch should be brought together under the command of a single Assistant Chief Constable.
99. There should be a substantial reduction in the number of officers engaged in security work in the new, amalgamated command.
101. The support units of Special Branch should be amalgamated into the wider police service.

#### **Lead Responsibility: Chief Constable/NIO**

The Policing Board and Chief Constable have shown a sincere commitment towards moving these recommendations forward. As of 15 May 2003 we have no results to report however, which we note is a concern. As previously reported, in January of 2002 the Police Service provided a plan intended to comply with the Independent Commission's recommendations on Special Branch. We noted that it did not meet the Independent Commission's intent and a modified plan was requested, as the documents provided to the oversight team did not address how the restructured Special Branch would provide timely and accurate information to police officers investigating violent or organised crime. At that time the Police Service was faced with a number of external and ongoing reviews, and suggested that producing a modified plan to meet our requests would be delayed until all of the reviews had been completed. The Policing Board agreed in principle with this rationale, but nonetheless requested that the Police Service provide a modified plan by November of 2002.

An HMIC report with 11 recommendations was received in November of 2002. The Police Service and the Chief Constable quickly endorsed these recommendations. However, as of 15 May 2003 a revised plan had not been received. Two further reports were released in 2003, by Sir John Stevens and HMI Blakey, both making recommendations which impacted on Special Branch and police handling of intelligence. Due to the various recommendations impacting on Special Branch, the Chief Constable asked the Policing Board to give the Police Service eight weeks in which to analyse all of the recommendations and determine their full implications for Special Branch. The results of this analysis were scheduled to be presented to the Board on 2 July 2003. Aside from any other effect, the delay in developing and implementing a new plan serves only to delay the changes to Special Branch that the Independent Commission recommended almost four years ago, most of which have already been agreed to by the PSNI.

The Police Service provided the Policing Board with progress reports on two separate occasions: 3 December 2002 and 2 April 2003. The progress report of 3 December 2002 dealt positively with the changes recommended by HMIC, indicating that all of them had been accepted and that

work on many of them was already well underway. However, the progress report of 2 April 2003 presented an altogether different approach, indicating that actual operational implementation had only occurred for one of the HMIC's 11 recommendations and that implementing four others would be complex and time-consuming. Implementation of six of the HMIC's recommendations was linked to the adoption of the UK-wide National Intelligence Model (NIM). With respect to a timeline, the April report noted that the implementation of the NIM recommendations by December of 2003, the initial target date, was "ambitious". While a new organisational structure and senior personnel changes were publicly announced in July of 2003, we have not yet been provided with any final, approved plan.

The Police Service has established a Project Board which includes the Assistant Chief Constable, Crime Department. The Project Board scheduled its first meeting for 14 May 2003, with a view to agreeing on a corporate approach to the implementation of the NIM. The Police Service proposes to begin the implementation phase in June of 2003, to complete the rollout by December of 2003, and to review the NIM progress and effectiveness during the Autumn of 2004.

Special Branch and Crime Branch came under the command of a single ACC on 1 April 2001, and on 1 September 2002 became part of Crime Department. The ACC Crime is directly responsible for six branches and a departmental support unit. Special Branch is now officially divided into two of the six branches of Crime Department. The resources of Specialist Operations Branch are available for deployment in support of other branches of Crime Department and the Police Service. Although the reorganisation of Special Branch into Intelligence and Specialist Operations was implemented over a year ago, there is little recognition of this within the wider Police Service. This is particularly true for areas outside Belfast. Intelligence and Specialist Operations offices located in various DCUs remain signed as "Special Branch", and are referred to as such by local police officers and supervisors.

Since the release of the Independent Commission's report the number of police officers engaged in Special Branch has decreased by approximately 17%. Reductions for the Police Service as a whole, over the same period, are approximately 18%. Overall reductions of up to 10% for each of the next three years are included in the Human Resource Planning Strategy, requested by the Policing Board and endorsed in November of 2002. Administrative compliance for these recommendations has not been fully completed.

#### **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: Chief Constable**

The new system for briefing DCU Commanders, and the new role given to Regional ACCs for controlling arrest and search operations by specialist teams, remains in effect. DCU Commanders have verified during the past two evaluation visits 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 being shared. Specific examples of intelligence sharing that resulted in significant criminal arrests were cited. DCUs have been made aware of the availability of and procedures for requesting specialised assets, though the availability is prioritised and therefore limited. Pending the full implementation of Recommendations 98, 99 and 101, administrative compliance for this recommendation has not been fully completed.

#### **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: Chief Constable**

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has not been completed. The Police Service's organisation-wide tenure policy which also affects postings in the security area, has not been approved by the Policing Board (see also Recommendation 83). Initially linked to the Board's ongoing review of the PSNI Human Resource Planning Strategy, approval and therefore implementation have now been delayed until 2006. Due to the delay, documented evidence of an exception and appeals policy have not been provided.

#### **Recommendation 103: Phasing Out of Full Time Reserve**

Patten Recommendation:

103. The future police service should not include a Full Time Reserve.

**Lead Responsibility: NIO/Chief Constable**

The Full Time Reserve (FTR) was formed in 1972 to perform security work and to free up regular police officers to perform day-to-day response to call and investigative duties. The Independent Commission recommended in 1999 that the Police Service should not include the FTR, and that it should be phased out over time. However, the Independent Commission also recommended that members of the FTR should be given an opportunity to apply for the regular police service. At that time there were approximately 2,900 members of the FTR. As of 12 March 2003 there were 1,807 members, with 1,581 actually assigned to DCUs.

The Policing Board and the Police Service have reached an agreement to retain the FTR until April of 2005, at which time it will be phased out over an 18-month period. The FTR should be fully phased out by the Autumn of 2006. The Police Service projects that by May of 2005 the FTR will be down to 333 members, subject to a review of the prevailing security situation at that time. Decisions for implementing this recommendation need to be progressed in order to allow current members of the FTR the opportunity to seek other employment before their PSNI contracts actually expire. The NIO advises that negotiations with the Police Federation concerning severance arrangements and retraining will begin after April of 2003. Therefore, evidence of a plan to provide employment counselling and assistance with transition for members of the Full Time Reserve leaving the Police Service, provision within the plan for entitlements similar to those of regular police officers, and eventual implementation of this plan, must await future oversight visits.

An Independent Observer, responsible to the Chief Constable, reported to the Policing Board on 18 March 2003 that redeployment of the FTR has begun, with no assignments to regular police officer posts. This operational change is consistent with the Independent Commission's recommendations. The Police Service has provided a copy of the Human Resource Planning Strategy and the current complement of the FTR by numbers and location. While administrative compliance for this recommendation has not been fully completed, implementation of this recommendation is steadily progressing.

**Recommendation 104: Enlargement of 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: NIO/Chief Constable**

The Independent Commission noted that the Part Time Reserve (PTR) suffered low recruitment from Catholic and Nationalist areas. The Government accepted the recommendation that a new PTR be locally recruited from every neighbourhood in Northern Ireland, and that appointments come from those areas where there are currently very few reservists or none at all. This would make the PTR more representative of the community while also enhancing the connection between the community and the Police Service. The Government has confirmed the broad objective of recruiting in under-represented areas, and has granted the Police Service the authority to begin recruitment.

The Police Service presented a plan to the Policing Board for the deployment of 2,500 members of the PTR, in all the 29 DCUs. The Consensia Partnership, a private recruiting firm, received a contract to begin a pilot recruiting phase in January of 2003. Four DCUs, Banbridge, Coleraine, Lisburn and Newtownabbey have been designated as pilot areas. As of 15 May 2003 approximately 2,400 applications have been received for a total of 171 positions. 45% of applications were from females and 19% were from Catholics. The Police Service plans to conduct a full-scale evaluation of Consensia's pilot recruiting efforts in order to identify problems associated with administering the process.

The four pilot sites were selected by the Police Service as areas where recruiting was likely to succeed, although upon review this appears to fall short of the Independent Commission's recommendation to recruit from under-represented areas. While the Police Service's launch of the revised PTR programme is a success, it does not satisfy the need to specifically target areas in Northern Ireland which remain under-represented in the PTR, with three of the four pilot sites being in predominantly non-Catholic areas. In addition, the four test sites selected do not meet the criteria of being areas where there are currently few PTR members. Future oversight evaluations will focus on the issue of targeting under-represented areas. However, the Policing Board has been invited to participate in selecting the next four sites, which should facilitate implementation of the Independent Commission's intent.



New appointments to the PTR are scheduled to occur in mid-June of 2003, followed by three training options: a four-week full time course, evening classes or a blended learning concept. Current members of the PTR who are accepted into the new programme are also required to attend one of the pilot training sessions. These two pilot sessions will serve to finalise and validate the training materials and processes.

The Police Service reports that it has prepared a business case to the NIO that seeks funding for costs associated with the new PTR programme. Although the oversight team was given a brief response addressing the remaining performance indicators, no specific evidence, documents or reports were provided by the Police Service as of 15 May 2003. Therefore, administrative compliance for this recommendation has not been completed.



▶▶ size of the police service



## A. Chapter Summary

### Background

The Independent Commission compared the strength of Northern Ireland's police service with those 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 next 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 (FTR).

### Progress and Accomplishments

The Independent Commission projected that in Year 4 of its calculations, or by fiscal year 2003/2004, the Police Service would have 7,221 regular police officers available for duty. The Independent Commission also projected that by 2003/2004 the Police Service would have phased out the Full Time Reserve (FTR). As of 12 March 2003 the Police Service had approximately 7,178 regular police officers at its disposal, as well as approximately 1,807 members of the FTR. The total number of police officers available for duty is therefore approximately 8,985. Current service contracts for members of the FTR have been extended until 2005, when the Police Service intends to phase out the FTR over an 18-month period. All indicators suggest the Independent Commission's 10-year goal can be accomplished.

The early retirement or severance scheme has been successfully implemented with 1,528 regular police officers and 264 members of the FTR accepting severance during the first three years of the programme.

### Areas of Concern

Although a decision has been approved to phase out the FTR over an 18-month period beginning in April of 2005, members of the FTR have not been fully informed of the options that might be open to them. In other words, members of the FTR do not have clear direction as to their future employment, retraining programmes and benefits, among other things. In addition, no further progress on opportunities for members of the FTR with other police services has been made.

### Future Directions

Oversight will continue to compare progress at meeting multi-year recruitment, severance and other targets intended to reach and maintain a Police Service of 7,500 regular police officers. The willingness of the Police Service to address the needs of civilian members will be evaluated.

### 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: NIO/Chief Constable/Policing Board**

The Independent Commission recommended that the Police Service achieve a complement of 7,500 regular police officers. The Police Service and Policing Board agreed in the Human Resource Planning Strategy to achieving this recommendation by 2005. The Strategy incorporates the continued appointment of an equal number of Catholic and other than Catholic recruits for each recruit class, a total of approximately 540 recruits per year, and a modified severance programme that allows deferment of severance for certain police officers.

The Independent Commission projected that in Year 4 of its calculations, or by fiscal year 2003/2004, the Police Service would have 7,221 regular police officers available for duty. The Independent Commission also projected that by 2003/2004 the Police Service would have phased out the Full Time Reserve (FTR). As of 12 March 2003 the Police Service had approximately 7,178 regular police officers at its disposal, as well as approximately 1,807 members of the FTR. The total number of police officers available for duty is therefore approximately 8,985. Current service contracts for members of the FTR have been extended until 2005, when the Police Service intends to phase out the FTR over an 18-month period. All indicators suggest the Independent Commission's ten-year goal can be accomplished.

The Chief Constable has also appointed an Independent Observer to monitor implementation and assess the impact of the Human Resource Planning Strategy. The Observer's initial report dated 18 March 2003 concludes that current evidence indicates the revision of the severance scheme and recruitment of 540 police recruits per year should help achieve the target of 7,500 regular police officers within the planned time frame. The Human Resource Planning Strategy proposes increasing local police resources by deploying regular police officers from Headquarters, among other areas, to the District Command Units, thereby increasing the number of police officers in DCUs from approximately 4,620 at present to 5,400 by 2005. Verification by the oversight team will continue to evaluate progress reports prepared by the Police Service and the Independent Observer.

#### **Recommendations I06 and I07: Severance Arrangements**

Patten Recommendations:

- I06. 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.
- I07. 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: NIO/Chief Constable/Policing Board**

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has been completed. Government approved the severance regulations 10 May 2003. Oversight will continue with the evaluation and verification phases. Starting in January of 2001 the early retirement or severance programme recommended by the Independent Commission was successfully implemented, with offers to



regular police officers and members of the Full Time Reserve who obtained minimum age and service levels. Evidence that the Voluntary Severance Support Unit effectively communicated the programme to eligible officers was verified by an internal "Service Improvement Study", and by a counselling firm under contract to the Police Service to evaluate the programme. An extensive review of the voluntary severance scheme in December of 2003, by a large consulting firm commissioned by the Northern Ireland Office, also found that the severance programme had been successfully implemented. These evaluations and reviews confirm observations previously reported by the Oversight Commissioner.

During the first three years of the programme, from 2000 to 2003, approximately 1,528 regular police officers and 264 members of the Full Time Reserve voluntarily retired from the Police Service under the severance programme. Following a recommendation outlined in the Human Resource Planning Strategy, and in order to retain police officer expertise and ease resource shortages in the short term, the severance programme for Year Four has been suspended. However, the programme will continue to operate again in 2004/2005.

#### **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: NIO/Chief Constable/Training and Employment Agency/PRRT**

The Police Service established the Voluntary Service Support Unit (VSSU) to manage the implementation of this recommendation and the administrative processes related to outplacement. The VSSU handles inquiries, produces severance programme information, and pension and career advice for regular police officers and reserve members. There is no similar programme envisaged for civilian employees. The Police Service conducts and has provided copies of their annual review of the effectiveness of the programme.

In severance Year One, of the 119 candidates for whom external training plans were approved, 28, or 23%, actually attended the approved training. In Year Two 70, or 27%, of the 259 for which training plans were approved attended an approved training course. In Year Three 48, or 16%, of the 292 attended. The Police Service plans to increase the role and usage of the Police Retraining and Rehabilitation Trust. Administrative compliance for this recommendation has not been fully completed.

#### **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: NIO/Chief Constable/Home Office**

As of 15 May 2003 there has been no significant progress in developing a programme to permit members of the Full Time Reserve (FTR) to apply for employment with police services in Great Britain. In October of 2001 the Police Service conducted a survey of the FTR and found that 51% were interested in such employment. The Police Service reported that a new survey would be conducted in an attempt to further gauge interest in employment with other police services, however no details have been provided. Previously, the reason given for the delay in implementing this recommendation was the pending decision on the future status of the FTR. However, the Policing Board and the Police Service resolved this in October of 2002, when the decision was made to phase out the FTR over an 18 month period, beginning in April of 2005. There is no discernable reason why this recommendation cannot proceed in order to provide current members of the FTR with an opportunity to seek such employment before their contract with the PSNI expires. Evidence of a current programme, a detailed plan and timelines and the evaluation of results are still required. Administrative compliance for this recommendation has not been completed.

**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: NIO/FCO/Home Office/Chief Constable**

Administrative compliance with this recommendation has not been completed. Negotiations with regard to severance packages for members of the Full Time Reserve (FTR) are currently in progress. These include discussions on a retraining component.



▶▶ **composition and recruitment**



## A. Chapter Summary

### Background

The Independent Commission on Policing for Northern Ireland 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.

### Progress and Accomplishments

As previously reported, the Consensia Partnership was selected for the recruitment of police officers and continues to produce excellent results. The lay assessors, who actively participate in each competition, are an essential component of the recruitment programme. The lay assessors possess a broad range of experience and have proven to be a significant asset to the selection process. Another asset to the recruitment programme are lay observers, who participate in the selection process and have served to strengthen the programme as a whole.

As of 15 May 2003 Consensia was in the beginning stages of Competition Five with results exceeding projections. In the first four competitions Consensia received a total of 47,396 requests for applicant information packs, which resulted in 21,825 actual applications being made. Almost 36% have been from Catholics and over 37% from females. Preliminary data suggest that Competition Five generated another 9,752 requests for applicant packs resulting in 6,100 applications, 36.5% of which were from the Catholic community, and 35.9% from females. At the present rate, it is anticipated that Competitions Four and Five may produce more than the number of recruits that the Police Service is prepared to accept into training from each competition.

Grafton's recruitment programme for civilian support staff is also well designed, innovative and meets contemporary policing and human resource standards. Independent community observers check the testing facilities to ensure adequacy, and evaluate whether assessment processes follow established protocols. An external contractor has been engaged to monitor civilian recruitment and assessment procedures for quality assurance. Grafton Recruitment has conducted nine competitions for civilian support staff, in which the 50:50 recruiting requirement applies. An additional four competitions are underway.

The most significant competition is that of approximately 260 Station Enquiry Assistants, envisaged by the Independent Commission as replacing police officers at enquiry desks. Following an internal trawl that produced 32 transfers, in February of 2003 the Police Service requested that Grafton undertake a competition to fill 60 of these positions. Grafton received requests for 6,217 application packs, which resulted in 1,890 subsequent applications. A total of 1,398 applicants have been short-listed and are proceeding through the selection competition.



### Areas of Concern

The Government's August 2001 Implementation Plan committed to developing a "package of measures" which would ultimately create a more representative PSNI civilian workforce, one which would also be more effectively integrated into the Police Service. As of 15 May 2003 no evidence of a formalised plan or strategy, with goals and timelines to accomplish these objectives, had been provided. However, some measures to move towards a more representative workforce have been implemented. These include the requirement that Civil Service members who accept a promotion within the Police Service give up their Civil Service status and become employees of the PSNI. In addition, any person now joining the Police Service as a civilian employee will be classified as a Direct Recruit.

The number of Direct Recruit civilian staff has increased from 791 in 1999 to 1,655 by March of 2003. However, the percentage of Catholic civilian support staff has not increased appreciably and does not compare favourably with the percentage of Catholic staff found within the larger Northern Ireland Civil Service. In 1999 PSNI Direct Recruits represented 23.3% of the civilian workforce, of which approximately 12.3% were Catholic. By March of 2003 the number of Direct Recruit staff represented 47.4% of civilian staff, of which 13.5% were Catholic. Although the number of Direct Recruit staff has almost doubled between 1999 and March of 2003, the actual increase in Catholic civilian PSNI employees has risen by only approximately 1.2%.

Unless the pace of recruitment is accelerated, it is unlikely that civilian staff of the Police Service will be representative of the broader community in the near future. The recruitment for civilian support posts is combined with internal trawls as well as internal promotions. While it is recognised that these practices provide opportunities for the current staff, internal promotions and transfers will not make the civilian workforce more representative of the broader community.

The Independent Commission noted that the key to making a police service in Northern Ireland more representative of all communities was that community leaders, including political leaders, local councillors, members of the clergy, teachers and sports authorities actively encourage young people to become police officers. Further, that they should take steps to remove all discouragements to members of their communities from joining the police, in fact that they should make it a priority to encourage young people to apply. Although the Catholic Church and public officials have publicly expressed support and encouragement for young people to join the Police Service, the continued success of the programme to attract police officer and civilian applicants representative of the community is dependent on the encouragement of even greater and more comprehensive cross-community support. This support has not been forthcoming from all segments of the community, and there are examples where police recruits have been openly discouraged from joining or remaining with the Police Service.

The Government's August 2001 Implementation Plan wanted to see liaisons established between the Police Service and all schools, colleges and universities. As of 15 May 2003 the Police Service had not provided an implementation schedule to establish outreach initiatives for liaisons with all schools and universities, with a particular emphasis on those schools with which there is presently no liaison.



The relatively straightforward recommendation relating to the registration of interests and associations was made by the Independent Commission in September of 1999, and accepted by the Government in its August 2001 Implementation Plan. The authority to require the registration of memberships is spelled out in section 51 of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000. This recommendation had not been implemented as of 15 May 2003. However, the Police Service has since completed and published a policy on the registration of memberships which will be reviewed during the upcoming oversight visit in September of 2003.

#### **Future Directions**

Oversight will continue to update progress on developing a more representative civilian workforce in the PSNI. Oversight will also review the implementation of the Police Service's policy for the registration of interests for police officers.

#### **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: Chief Constable/Policing Board/NIO**

The Police Service's civilian component is comprised of members seconded from the Northern Ireland Civil Service, and in lesser numbers those directly recruited into the Police Service. The Government has determined that it is not possible for other Civil Service departments to absorb the large number of civilian staff currently employed by the Police Service, nor would it be practical for the employees themselves. The Government's August 2001 Implementation Plan committed to the development of a "package of measures" the cumulative effect of which would be twofold: a more representative civilian workforce and more effectively integrated into the Police Service. Although the Police Service has not provided evidence of a formalised plan or strategy with goals and timelines that will accomplish these objectives, some measures designed to move towards a more representative workforce have been implemented. Civil service staff accepting promotion within the Police Service will be required to give up their Civil Service status and remain with the Police Service, and they will be classified as Direct Recruits.

The number of Direct Recruit civilian staff had increased from 791 in 1999 to 1,655 by March of 2003. However, the percentage of Catholic civilian support staff has not increased appreciably and does not compare favourably with the percentage of Catholic staff found within the larger Northern Ireland Civil Service. In January of 2002 the Northern Ireland Civil Service workforce was approximately 29,840, of which 54% were Protestant and 42.5% were Catholic, with 3.5% coming from an undetermined community background. In 1999 PSNI Direct Recruits represented 23.3% of the civilian workforce, of which approximately 12.3% were Catholic. By March of 2003 the number of Direct Recruit staff represented 47.4% of civilian staff, of which 13.5% were Catholic. As can be seen, although the number of Direct Recruit staff has almost doubled between 1999 and March of 2003, the actual increase in Catholic civilian PSNI employees has risen by only approximately 1.2%.

Another measure designed to move towards a more representative civilian workforce was the appointment of Grafton Recruitment in June of 2002. Grafton is the independent agent tasked with recruiting all PSNI civilian support staff. When recruiting for six or more posts at the same level, as required by section 44 and 46 of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000, Grafton provides the Police Service with a pool of candidates from which an equal number of Catholics and other than Catholics are appointed. The Police Service consults with the Equality Commission regarding issues that arise in relation to 50:50 recruitment. By March of 2003 Grafton Recruitment had conducted nine competitions for civilian staff using this criterion, with an additional four competitions underway.

The Police Service has not provided evidence of a management-led programme for enhancing the integration of police officers and civilian staff, which encompasses the civilianisation of posts (see also Recommendations 53 and 90), and the training, education, development and management of support staff (see also Recommendation 129). As of 28 March 2003 work had not yet commenced on this project. Administrative compliance for this recommendation has not been completed.

#### **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: NIO/Policing Board/Police Ombudsman**

The Northern Ireland Office, the Policing Board and the Police Ombudsman, all of which regularly interact with the Police Service, provide data for review by the oversight team on a regular basis. Each agency has established plans and practices to ensure that their respective staffs are diversified to the degree possible and consistent with applicable legislation.

#### **Recommendations 113 and 115: Support from Community Leaders/Liaison with Schools**

Patten Recommendations:

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.

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: NIO/Chief Constable/Policing Board**

The Independent Commission and the Government recognised that the key to making the Police Service more representative of the communities it serves is the broad-based and balanced



recruitment of members from all communities. To accomplish these objectives requires that all community leaders, including political party leaders and local councillors, members of the clergy, schoolteachers and sports authorities, take steps to remove all discouragement to members of their communities applying to join the police, and to make it a priority to encourage them to apply.

The Catholic Church and public officials, including those at the ministerial level, have publicly expressed support and encouragement for young people to join the Police Service. This support has contributed significantly to the success of the recruitment programme for police officers. However, the continued success of the programme to attract police officer and civilian support applicants representative of the community is dependent on the encouragement of even more broadly-based, cross-community support. This support has not been forthcoming from all segments of the community, and there are examples where police recruits have been openly discouraged from joining and remaining with the Police Service. The Policing Board's Community Affairs Committee, in conjunction with the Chief Constable, has been assigned the task of determining how best to broaden and ensure continued support.

The Government's August 2001 Implementation Plan also wanted to see liaisons established between the Police Service and all schools, colleges and universities. As of 15 May 2003 the Police Service had not provided an implementation schedule to establish outreach initiatives, for liaisons with all schools and universities, with a particular emphasis on those schools with which there is presently no liaison.

The Police Service began but has not indicated completion of the development of a Citizen and Safety Education Programme that included representatives from several sectors of education, including the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools and representatives from integrated education establishments. In addition, the Police Service has conducted career conventions, career talks, distributed literature at several schools and accepted applications for the work experience programme.

Between September of 2000 and June of 2002 the Police Service took the work experience programme to 74 Protestant, 26 Catholic, and 24 non-designated schools. Between September of 2001 and June of 2002 the work experience programme was taken to 70 Protestant, 66 Catholic, and 21 non-designated schools. Of the total number of Catholic schools available, this represents a participation rate of 24% during the first year and an increase to 59% during the second year, which is balanced with a participation rate of 61% for Protestant schools. Data for September of 2002 to June of 2003 is not yet available.

The Police Service has suspended the work experience programme until September of 2003, and reassigned the six career advisers to operational policing duties. At that time, it is anticipated that the schools contact programme will become a key community involvement activity in all District Command Units.

It is recognised that these programmes are not for the short term, but are designed/conducted to interest and encourage young people to consider a future career with the Police Service. For example, recent data reveals that the average age of those who have been appointed to the Police Service since commencement of the new recruitment programme is 28 for females and 29 for males, which indicates a ten-year span between participation in a work experience or other

programme and appointment to the Police Service. This is a long-term programme and comprehensive results will not be known for some time. Administrative compliance for these two recommendations has not been completed.

**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: GAA**

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

**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: Chief Constable**

Section 42 of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000 provides legislative authority for the establishment of a police cadet scheme. However, the Police Service does not anticipate the development of a Cadet Scheme until 2005. Administrative compliance for this recommendation has not been completed.

**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: NIO/Chief Constable/Policing Board**

As noted in previous reports, the Police Service contracted the Consensia Partnership in January of 2001 to recruit police officers. Lay observers also participate in the selection process and have proven to be an asset that strengthens the recruitment programme.

Consensia began the first recruitment competition in March of 2001, with Competition Five now underway.

The recruitment programme includes innovative and imaginative advertising that is critiqued by focus groups and specifically designed to reach all communities, particularly those currently under-represented in the Police Service. Advertising encompasses Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland and Great Britain. Consensia received a total of 47,396 requests for applicant information packs, which resulted in 21,825 actual applications being made over the four recruitment



competitions completed as of May 2003. Almost 36% have been from Catholics and over 37% from females (see also Recommendations 118 and 119). Preliminary data suggests that Competition Five generated another 9752 requests for applicant packs that resulted in 6100 applications, 36.5% of which were from the Catholic community, and 35.9% from females. At the present rate, it is anticipated that Competitions Four and Five may in fact produce a greater number of recruits than the Police Service is prepared to accept into training.

The Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000 authorises a similar programme for the recruitment of civilian staff, and Grafton Recruitment was selected. Consistent with legislation, 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. Independent community observers check the testing facilities to ensure adequacy, and evaluate whether assessment processes follow established protocols. However, there is no lay assessor participation in the actual selection process. Grafton has engaged the services of an external contractor that monitors civilian recruitment and assessment procedures for quality assurance.

By March of 2003 nine competitions for civilian support staff were completed, all under the 50:50 recruiting requirement. An additional four competitions are underway. The most significant competition is that of approximately 260 station receptionists (Station Enquiry Assistants), envisaged by the Independent Commission to replace police officers at the enquiry desk (see also Recommendation 53). Following an internal trawl that produced 32 transfers, in February of 2003 the Police Service requested that Grafton undertake a competition to fill 60 of these positions. Grafton received requests for 6,217 application packs of which 1,890 submitted applications. A total of 1,398 applicants have been short-listed and are proceeding through the selection competition.

#### **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: Chief Constable/Recruitment Agency**

The Police Service and Consensia provided ample materials illustrating that the advertising programme for police officer recruitment included extensive, imaginative and persistent advertising in places likely to reach groups currently under-represented in the Police Service. The programme includes press, television and on-line advertising which covers Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland and the United Kingdom. In addition, radio, outdoor billboard and cinema advertising are also used. The responses from all communities has been positive (see also Recommendations 117 and 121). Preliminary data for Competition Five suggest another 6,100 applications have been received and that there are increases in applications from Catholics and women. Consensia is continuing its work to develop outreach programmes that will further enhance contact with young

people and minority groups. Focus groups actively involving serving police officers are being held to assist with the development of these programmes.

Similarly, Grafton Recruitment, using information gained from focus groups, has provided materials illustrating the development of an innovative and imaginative advertising strategy designed to reach groups who are currently under-represented in the Police Service. The strategy includes on-line 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. Initial responses appeared to be sufficient to allow for the appointment of applicants representative of the broader community. Grafton Recruitment continually evaluates its advertising strategies and makes adjustments as required. No current information has been provided regarding reports, assessments and data specifying the number of applications received from beyond Northern Ireland. Also not provided was information on how the applicants became aware of employment opportunities with the PSNI, a strategy designed to identify and encourage applications from experienced Northern Ireland Catholic officers in other police services, or data specifying the effectiveness of this part of the recruitment programme.

#### **Recommendations I20 and I21: Selection of Recruits**

Patten Recommendations:

- I20. 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.
- I21. An equal number of Protestants and Catholics should be drawn from the pool of qualified candidates.

#### **Lead Responsibility: NIO/Chief Constable/Policing Board**

Section 46 of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000 provides legislative authority for the recruitment of qualified applicants on a 50:50 ratio between those identified as Catholic and those identified as other than Catholic. The Consensia Partnership, consistent with its contract to recruit and produce a merit pool from which police recruits can be appointed to training on a 50:50 basis, has developed a comprehensive selection process along with the Police Service. Applicants are required to meet an established set of job related core competencies and medical standards. The selection criterion has been approved by the Chief Constable and is consistent with that for other police services in the United Kingdom. Consensia continually evaluates the pass/fail rate and other aspects of each stage of the selection process and has from time to time made several modifications to improve the process.



Applicants successfully completing the selection process are entered into the merit pool and, except for fulfilling the training requirements, are considered fully capable and qualified to perform the duties of a police officer. Each of four competitions has provided a merit pool from which an equal number of Catholics and those other than Catholics are selected for appointment to police training facility.

The goal of the Police Service is to appoint 540 police officers annually. Through May of 2003, the recruiting and selection process provided four merit pools totalling 2,264 candidates from which a total of 674 applicants have been appointed to recruit training. The 674 recruits were appointed according to 50:50 requirements. Recruit training and field performance success rates of all graduates will be continually evaluated as progress occurs.

Similar to the recruitment provisions for police officers, sections 44 and 46 of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000 require 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. Through its contract with Grafton Recruitment the Police Service has established a process for the selection of civilian support staff that is consistent with this requirement. Applicants are required to meet an established set of job-related competencies.

The Police Service and Grafton Recruitment have established an evaluation component to assess each step of the selection process. By May of 2003, nine competitions for six or more posts at the same level have been completed, four of which have been successful in fulfilling the need for those specific posts on a 50:50 basis. As a result 84 people were appointed. 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. In four competitions the merit pool was insufficient to fulfil the posts on a 50:50 basis, and one competition is ongoing. Grafton is also conducting competitions for positions where there are less than six posts available. Administrative compliance is complete.

#### **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: NIO/Chief Constable**

Details of existing Police Service policy for part time work and job sharing programmes for regular police officers and members of the Full Time Reserve are spelled out in previous oversight reports. Policy for civilian staff is further advanced than that for police officers. Although the Police Service allows regular police officers and reservists to use unpaid leave for the purpose of career breaks, it has yet to develop a policy authorising such breaks which is consistent with the intent of this recommendation. The Police Service indicated that a review of existing policy was not anticipated before the summer of 2003. Administrative compliance for this recommendation has not been completed.



### **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: Chief Constable**

The Police Service has been conducting research on childcare initiatives since 1999. However, there is no evidence of progress on this recommendation. The Police Service has not provided evidence of a plan to assess the practicality of introducing childcare facilities or of providing other options to assist with childcare expenses. The Police Service has also not provided a timetable for implementing this recommendation. Administrative compliance for this recommendation has not been completed.

### **Recommendation 124: Length of Recruitment Process**

Patten Recommendation:

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

**Lead Responsibility: Chief Constable/Recruitment Agency**

The Police Service and Consensia continue to be in full compliance with the requirements of this recommendation. Applicants generally report high levels of satisfaction with Consensia's selection process. Any concerns expressed by applicants are reviewed by Consensia and the Police Service, and are addressed. Consensia continually evaluates all aspects of the selection process to identify any other concerns, such as the number of applicants not appearing at various stages of the selection process. Consensia expeditiously addresses issues as they arise.

### **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: NIO/Chief Constable/Policing Board**

The Secretary of State appointed an Independent Assessor in May of 2001 for a period of three years, to validate decisions on disqualifications where candidates disagree with the decision. Data provided by the Police Service for the first three recruitment competitions describes the number and reasons why police officer applicants were disqualified during the selection process. None of the data provided indicates that there is a predisposition to disqualify applicants on the basis of community background. This recommendation will proceed to the evaluation and verification phases.



### **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: Chief Constable/Police Ombudsman**

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has not been completed. The Independent Commission first recommended this in September of 1999 and it was accepted by the Government in its August 2001 Implementation Plan. The authority to require the registration of notifiable memberships is spelled out in section 51 of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000. As of 15 May 2003 no evidence of an administrative order, consistent with this legislation and requiring all police officers to register and update their interests and associations with the Chief Constable, had been issued. However, this policy has since been issued and was communicated publicly by the Police Service in August of 2003. The new policy will be examined during our upcoming oversight visit in September of 2003.

### **Recommendations 127 and 128: Functions of New Recruitment Agency**

Patten Recommendations:

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.

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

**Lead Responsibility: NIO/Chief Constable/Recruitment Agency/Policing Board**

The Independent Commission recognised that, although the proportion of Catholics at senior rank within the Police Service was more than double that of Catholics at other ranks, this number should be doubled in as short a time as possible. Section 45 of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000 provides legislative authority for the Policing Board in respect to senior police officers, and the Chief Constable in respect to other ranks, to seek applicants from other police services, including the Garda Síochána. The Police Service has and continues to make efforts to identify Northern Ireland Catholic officers in other police services. However, the actions required by other recommendations relating to a slimmer headquarters, severance, and the size of the Police Service have significantly changed the makeup of the senior staff and there is no progress reported with regard to an increase in the number of Catholics in the senior ranks at this time (see also Recommendations 97, 105 and 106).

The Independent Commission also recognised that the Police Service could benefit from an infusion of diverse talent and experience from outside of Northern Ireland and recommended, regardless of religion, the encouragement of lateral entry and secondments from non-police agencies. Experienced officers may apply, compete for and be selected for lateral entry or

permanent transfer, to positions above the rank of Constable. As of 15 May 2003 there is no such provision allowing for police constables from other police services to laterally transfer as constables. Instead, they must successfully compete in a trainee competition and then successfully complete the entire recruit-training programme.

This requirement inhibits the ability of the Police Service to recruit experienced Catholic officers, originally from Northern Ireland, who are members of other police services. Consequently, as of 25 April 2003 seven members of other police services were appointed to the PSNI, three as Sergeants and four as Inspectors. 24 Constables applied and due to the requirement spelled out above, are currently in the process of completing PSNI recruit training. However, since that date the Government has introduced new regulations to facilitate the entry of serving police officers at the rank of constable into the PSNI without having to undergo recruit training.

The Police Service continues independently as well as through Grafton Recruitment to recruit civilian staff employees. There were 14 such external competitions in 2001 and 29 in 2002. By May of 2003 eight competitions had been held. Administrative compliance for these recommendations has not been completed.



▶▶ **training, education and development**



## A. Chapter Summary

### Background

The Report of the Independent Commission on Policing for Northern Ireland 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 Report recommended the development of Training, Education and Development (TED) Strategy for both the recruit and in-service training programs. The TED Strategy was to clearly demonstrate the inter-connection with the overall aims of the Report and to the objectives and priorities set out in the future policing plans of the PSNI and Policing Board.

The Report emphasised the importance of a new state of the art Police College as critical to the long-term success of the training program and the transformation of the Northern Ireland 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 for modern learning and development techniques.

### Progress and Accomplishments

A new Director of Training, Education and Development for the PSNI's Training College was appointed effective 1 April 2003, following an international selection process. The new Director has a doctorate and significant experience in policing and police education and training, as well as international police training experience. Progress has been accomplished in a number of areas. The Policing Board approved the TED Primary Reference Document in April of 2002, with a proviso for the PSNI to complete a comprehensive training needs analysis (TNA). Training Branch developed a business case for outsourcing the TNA, which was initiated in April of 2003.

An assessment by the University of Ulster of the twenty-one week recruit training programme has been completed. Results are being reviewed for areas of programme improvement, and will also be examined by the oversight team. A number of probationary constables in the tutor programme were interviewed during the last oversight visit, and demonstrated motivation and commitment. The tutor trainers interviewed are dedicated individuals and mentors who are prepared to sacrifice time and effort in the exercise of their policing duties. The overflow demands for training continue to be addressed through the use of different sites including Steeple Barracks, Antrim. The Executive Leadership Faculty and the Open University established new executive and managerial training and development programmes in April of 2003.

The PSNI submitted a Costed Training Plan to the Policing Board in March of 2003. It was the first attempt at a costed plan of all TED activities covering fiscal year 2003/2004, and represents a significant step forward in the management of the PSNI's training area. The Costed Plan provides a base for future funding estimates and for the first time, provides a fiscally responsible assessment for training needs throughout the PSNI. In addition, the creation of a Learning Advisory Council and of Design Workshops have allowed crucial input into PSNI training and development from outside the organisation. Representatives, particularly on the Learning Advisory Council, include those from the community, academia, commerce, finance organisations, as well as other areas of the private sector.

The Course for All had been delivered to approximately 8,300 PSNI employees by May of 2003. Contingency plans are in place to ensure delivery to as many of the remaining employees as possible by October of 2003. The training programme for civilian crime analysts continues to be seen as a positive project that is providing results at the district level. The analysts that were interviewed are motivated and well-equipped to accomplish the tasks assigned them. The DCU Commanders interviewed value the role of their crime analysts in providing information crucial to targeting local crime.

The Policing Board is also focussing more attention on training, with the appointment of an advisory position to assist in the Board's monitoring of TED. This resource and attention will compliment the Human Rights Advisor hired in February of 2003, and is a positive development with respect to the Policing Board's commitment to monitor PSNI progress in the critical area of training.

#### **Areas of Concern**

The lack of an adequate training facility remains a serious concern that has been extensively covered in previous reports. It remains important to expedite this process, and for the Government to provide the funding needed to allow the development of the state-of-the-art police training facility that the Independent Commission recommended, and that the Police Service desperately needs. Progress on the College is widely recognised as crucial for a number of reasons, including the new beginning envisioned by the Independent Commission in 1999, the need to have facilities that will continue to permit its aggressive recruiting programme, and the development of facilities that support a modern policing agency. It would appear that three years on there is no site, no approved architectural design, no contractors selected, all of which would have been reasonable to expect at this point in time. Evidence outlining the objectives and timetables for a new college, the plan for meeting requirements in the interim, and the comparative data relating to interim measures versus a new facility was not provided.

However, there has been some limited progress on this initiative. The training college initiative is under the guidance of the Estate Steering Committee, which includes representatives from the NIO, the Policing Board and the Police Service. The Police Service and the NIO have approved the Outline Business Case, which has proceeded to the Treasury for approval of funding. The Policing Board has lifted a previous location restriction, and the new college can now be located anywhere in Northern Ireland. The Policing Board has advised that it will not change the 2007 date for expected completion of the college. Although all of this represents some progress in the bureaucratic stages, it is not what might be expected of such a critical capital issue.

The lack of progress on the Independent Commission's recommendations regarding Service Level Agreements (SLAs), between Training Branch and DCU Commanders remains a concern, as discussed in previous reports. SLAs had not been completed as of 15 May 2003. The Independent Commission recognised that, while there will be training and education common to all police officers, different DCUs might have unique training needs. The process also allows Commanders to be more aware of the extent to which police officers under their command have the skills needed to deal with the complexity of policing and achieving service objectives, or need additional training to acquire those skills. SLAs are an important step in the devolution of authority to the DCUs, and important to community training needs now that the DPPs have commenced.



Progress on the SLA initiative will be reviewed during upcoming oversight visits.

As noted in previous oversight reports, we have expressed concerns with the Course for All with respect to the level of information that can be imparted in a two-day training course. This is particularly the case for the way the Course satisfies the Independent Commission's intent of having every employee receive instruction on new constitutional and policing arrangements, both of which are complex and time-consuming topics. It will be crucial for TED, through the Course for All review project, to identify and subsequently address any learning gaps that the review exposes.

The Independent Commission also articulated a need for the Police Service to make use of off-site training facilities for learning and developmental opportunities. To date the use of university facilities in the manner intended by the Independent Commission has not been accomplished. However, as noted earlier the results attained through partnerships with Open University, the Association of NI Colleges, the Police Retraining and Rehabilitation Trust and others will be examined against the Independent Commission's recommendations and its emphasis on ensuring expert and community input into the Police Service's training function, as well as ongoing civilian input into police training.

Finally, there remains slow progress on the publication of the training curricula to the public. As noted in our previous reports, this was recommended in order to enhance the PSNI's transparency. The intent of the Independent Commission was to encourage openness and transparency, and to provide the public the opportunity to get to know their police service better.

#### **Future Directions**

Oversight will examine progress on the contracted Training Needs Analysis, as well as on the new police training college. Oversight will also review the assessment of the recruit training programme recently completed, as well as on the Police Service's continued progress on developing meaningful Service Level Agreements between Training Branch and DCUs, and also on enhancing the transparency and public accessibility of the PSNI's training area. Finally, oversight will examine results from the recently established Learning Advisory Council.

## **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: Chief Constable/Policing Board**

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has not been completed. The Police Service produced a business case for the outsourcing of the Training Needs Analysis (TNA), which was forwarded to the NIO on 13 December 2002. This received Ministerial approval on 25 March 2003. Draft notices for tenders were drawn up by the PSNI and advertisements placed in the



main Northern Ireland papers on 7 May 2003. Final submissions and expressions of interest are due back to the PSNI on 16 June 2003. The entire TNA is scheduled for completion by 30 November 2003. The Communication Training curriculum was reviewed with the Operational Planning staff in January of 2003, and training needs in specific areas were identified. There is contact with the DCUs to ascertain their specific needs, and these will be incorporated into training plans.

#### **Recommendation 130: Training 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: NIO/Policing Board/Chief Constable**

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has not been completed. The Police Service submitted its first comprehensive Costed Training Plan, covering fiscal year 2003/2004, to the Policing Board in March of 2003. An annual report detailing how the training budget was used against the Training Plan, will not be available until June of 2004. After gaining the Board's approval of a business case for the purchase of costing software, purchasing has now commenced. This will significantly improve the Police Service's ability to collect and analyse training needs and related cost data.

#### **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: NIO/Chief Constable/Policing Board**

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has not been completed. The Outline Business Case has been approved by the Police Service and the Policing Board, and is currently with the Treasury awaiting approval. Although no final site has yet been selected, the previous distance restriction of keeping potential sites within 45 miles of Belfast has now been lifted. However, as of 15 May 2003 we had not been provided with information indicating how the PSNI will use present facilities and interim facilities to meet training needs, or on the facilities, capacity, financial costs and impacts of utilising interim facilities to meet training strategy objectives. The PSNI has taken steps to meet the overflow demand for training, with a number of training disciplines being moved to Steeple Barracks in Antrim. As noted in previous oversight reports, timelines are required and it is important that this recommendation be progressed as soon as possible.



### **Recommendation 132: Service Level Agreements on Training**

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: Chief Constable**

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has not been completed. The lack of progress on the development of Service Level Agreements (SLAs), between Training Branch and DCU Commanders/Departments remains a significant concern. The development of SLAs had been recommended by the Independent Commission in September of 1999, as a critical device in the delivery of training to DCUs. As of 15 May 2003 the Police Service had not provided a policy statement and procedures for SLAs, a DCU analysis of training needs, including numbers and time tables, and a subsequent central training review and executive approval of these needs. Once training is delivered Training Branch will also need to indicate and evaluate results. DCUs have been in place for over 2 years now, and the continued lack of SLAs hamper the ability of DCU Commanders to meet their policing and community service responsibilities.

The training needs of DCU Commanders are currently being addressed on an ad hoc basis, and Training Branch responded to a number of training requests from both DCUs and the Crime Training Committee. These include the advanced interviewer course and detective training. For example, training was provided to 160 CID aides on the National Intelligence Model.

### **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: Chief Constable/Policing Board**

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has not been fully completed. Since our last report the police to civilian instructor ratio has improved from 7:1 to 5:1. There has been no change with respect to the integration of police and civilian staff on joint training programmes. The Police Service advised that this would remain on hold until April of 2004, however no specific plan has been provided. There are currently no permanent civilian instructors in the recruit training programme, and the Police Service has not provided evidence of a proposal for including civilians on the institutional staff of the recruit training programme. Certain elements of the recruit curriculum including communications, first aid and driver training are delivered by civilian instructors, and the programme is undergoing a review in order to identify other components which might be suitable for delivery by civilian instructors. The Independent Commission

recommended other areas including instruction on constitutional matters, human rights and aspects of the criminal justice system.

The Independent Commission also thought it vital that police recruits continue to consider themselves, and the Police Service as a whole, to be an integral part of the community, however as of 15 May 2003 no evidence of proposals to deliver training on university premises, projected timelines and financial impacts had been provided. The induction course for the Blended Learning for members of the Part Time Reserve was held at the University of Ulster in Jordanstown. Finally, as of 15 May 2003 we had not been provided with information on specific qualifications for police staff and civilian instructors for assignment to the police college, including evidence that instructors are trained and certified in both adult learning and the core areas they will teach. Reports on the selection process for assignment to the police college and length of tenure, with specific details on the selection process and the procedures used to evaluate instructors, were also not 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: Chief Constable/Policing Board**

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has not been completed. There is no progress to record since the last oversight report. To date the Police Service has not provided evidence of a revised proposal to integrate civilian support staff training with recruit training, the identification of recruit training modules amenable for joint training, and timelines for the integration of recruit and civilian training programmes. We have been advised that work on this is de-prioritised and on hold until April of 2004.

#### **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: Chief Constable/Policing Board**

As noted in our last report, administrative compliance for this recommendation has been completed, and this recommendation will be subject to ongoing statistical update and review. All students must obtain a Certificate in Police Studies prior to becoming a police officer. The Diploma in Police studies is a programme that recruits are encouraged to enrol in during the first two years of probationary service.



### **Recommendation I36: Timing of Attestation as a Constable**

Patten Recommendation:

I36. 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: Chief Constable/Policing Board/NIO**

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has been completed. The Independent Commission recommended that police recruits should be attested as Constables at the end of the training programme as opposed to the beginning, so that attestation marked an achievement rather than a foregone conclusion. The Course Document Assessment Strategy provided a definition of the term: "sufficiently rigorous standard", as well as assessments of the academic and testing standards to be used in recruit training. Policy on separation from the Police Service, based on physical fitness and firearms qualifications, is contained in the document on Student Regulations. Evidence has also been provided of the number of successful recruits and the number of recruits who were separated from the Police Service. A total of 467 had graduated from the new recruit training programme by December of 2002, a pass rate of approximately 98%. Between January and March of 2003 a total of 95 people had enrolled in the recruit training programme, although training is ongoing for the 2003 calendar year.

The Police Service has also provided details on all separations from the training programme. Since the programme's inception 17 recruits have had to re-course, 4 have been dismissed for disciplinary reasons and 1 suspended. Over the same period 7 recruits have resigned for personal reasons. As of 15 May 2003 no recruits had been dismissed for reasons of academic failure. The Independent Commission considered failure rates of around 10% to be typical, and that an academic programme of sufficiently rigorous standard would serve to ensure that completion of the programme and attestation constituted meaningful achievements. The oversight process will continue with the evaluation and verification phases.

### **Recommendations I37, I38 and I39: Contents of Recruit Training Programme**

Patten Recommendations:

I37. The hours spent on drill should be considerably reduced.

I38. Problem-solving and partnership approaches should be central to the recruit training course, and scenario exercises should be further developed as training tools.

I39. 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: Chief Constable/Policing Board**

Administrative compliance for these recommendations has been completed, with the exception of the Policing Board's analysis of progress of the training objectives. This is expected later in 2003.

The Policing Board has hired an advisor to assist in the monitoring of the PSNI's TED strategy. The Policing Board's Personnel and General Purposes Committee is in the process of developing the review and monitoring mechanisms to ensure progress and compliance with the Board's Annual Policing Plan, as well as with the Independent Commission's recommendations.

#### **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: Chief Constable**

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has been completed. A number of interviews were conducted with probationary constables and tutor officers at DCUs across Northern Ireland. The training is well-accepted by the probationary constables and remains an impressive programme. As of 15 May 2003 two probationers resigned from the Police Service for personal reasons, however no probationers had been dismissed from the Police Service by that date. The oversight process will continue with the evaluation and verification phases.

#### **Recommendations 141, 142, 143 and 144: Training Needs and Priorities**

Patten Recommendations:

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.

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.

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.

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

**Lead Responsibility: Chief Constable/Policing Board**

Administrative compliance for these recommendations has not been completed. Our concerns regarding the Course for All, and its ability to address these recommendations, are detailed in our Report No. 7. The Course for All had been delivered to approximately 8,300 PSNI employees by May of 2003. Contingency plans are in place to ensure delivery to remaining employees by October of 2003. The Course review and impact evaluation report is being tabulated and is



expected to be available in June of 2003. The Policing Board is taking the necessary action to develop an independent assessment capability to review the effectiveness of the Course for All.

The names of the external groups involved in the development and revision of recruit training have been supplied. The recently appointed Director of Training has established a Learning Advisory Council (LAC), comprised of PSNI and community representatives, as well as representatives from business and the private sector. Among other things, the LAC's purpose is to provide independent analysis and support in planning, implementing and delivering the PSNI's training objectives, as well as to allow members of the wider community input into police training. The LAC meets five times per year and reviews all aspects of training. Results as to the effectiveness of this form of consultation with members of the community will be determined during upcoming oversight visits.

The aggressive five-year training projection by the Executive Leadership Faculty aims at having 3,200 students accredited in the two-week Executive Development Course. Partnership work with the Open University and other learning partners is ongoing, with a view to developing the curriculum for the open learning programmes through which accredited qualifications will be attained.

The Police Services Faculty has completed a Communication Training Plan for 2003/2004. This is being delivered by the Communication Training Unit, which delivered communications and IT training to over 2,300 students in 2002/2003. All members of the Unit are accredited through the Institute of Information Technology Training. There is continued contact with other police services in order to learn of related developments in this field. As of 15 May 2003 we had not been provided with records of police officers who have successfully completed the training or a copy of the training programme for IT.

#### **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: Chief Constable**

As noted in our Report No. 7 there has been significant progress on this recommendation. The programme for joint training with civilian analysts and police personnel has been advanced extensively, with joint training taking place in the Management of Serious Crime course, and attendance and class lists have been made available. Joint training initiatives with other agencies, including Social Services and the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, is also ongoing. The oversight process will continue with the evaluation and verification phases. Administrative compliance for this recommendation has not been fully completed.

#### **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: Chief Constable/Policing Board**

The Executive Leadership Faculty has provided nine Community Beat Officer training courses, with a total 194 police officers completing the course. This critical course provides instruction on core themes including aspects of the Independent Commission's report as it relates to Policing with the Community, Community Safety, Community Justice, Human Rights, Ethics and Integrity and Problem Solving, among others. It is a comprehensive and wide-ranging curriculum, which is delivered over four days in total. A copy of the evaluation of this course was provided, and clearly showed overall satisfaction with the training provided. Additional training modules will be developed during 2003. It will be important, however, to develop SLAs for important areas like this, including for first line supervisors (see also Recommendation 45). Administrative compliance for this recommendation has not been fully completed.

#### **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: Chief Constable**

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has not been completed. As of 15 May 2003 a plan detailing when training curricula would be made available to the public had not been provided. However, a training calendar, or list, of courses within each training faculty has been prepared and is scheduled for internal publication on the PoliceNet by June of 2003. In addition, the list will be made available to the public via the internet and other media by September of 2003, and will also show those courses where public participation is invited, as well as details on how members of the public can gain access to courses. This recommendation is linked to broader efforts to increase the transparency of the PSNI, and it is important that it be progressed (see also Recommendation 37).



#### **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: Chief Constable**

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has not been completed. A written policy for public attendance at training sessions has not been provided. Members of the Policing Board have a standing offer to witness police training courses, as do representatives of organisations mandated to conduct police training studies. Specialised training to members of District Policing Partnerships and DCU Commanders is being provided in conjunction with the Policing Board. This will provide a further opportunity to sensitise a number of community representatives to the PSNI's training programme. However, the Police Service has stated that an evaluation of this initiative will not be available until June of 2004.

#### **Recommendation 149: Pilot Citizens Course**

Patten Recommendation:

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

**Lead Responsibility: Chief Constable**

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has not been completed. The work on a Police Citizen's course has not started, and is not expected to commence prior to September of 2005. The rationale for this lengthy delay should be reviewed by the Policing Board's training advisor, and will also be assessed during upcoming oversight visits.



▶▶ **culture, ethos and symbols**



## A. Chapter Summary

### Background

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. The Policing Board has a critical role to play in interpreting community values and their expression in the change process.

### Progress and Accomplishments

The final step in management responsibility for maintaining a neutral working environment was achieved through publication of a General Order in April of 2003. A recent audit of eleven DCUs by the Change Management Team provided assurance of continuing attention. The new appraisal system requires assessment of all police officers on their responsibility to maintain a neutral working environment.

### Areas of Concern

There are no specific areas of concern for this report.

### Future Directions

Among other things, oversight will assess progress on the Garden of Remembrance.

## 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: NIO**

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

### Recommendations 151: New Police Badge

Patten Recommendations:

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: NIO/Chief Constable/Policing Board**

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

#### **Recommendations 152: Flying of Union Flag**

Patten Recommendations:

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

**Lead Responsibility: NIO/Chief Constable/Policing Board**

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

#### **Recommendations 153 - Flying of PSNI Flag**

Patten Recommendations:

153. On those occasions on which it is appropriate to fly a flag on police buildings, the flag flown 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: NIO/Chief Constable/Policing Board**

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

#### **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: Chief Constable/Policing Board**

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

#### **Recommendation 155 - Police Memorials**

Patten Recommendation:

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

**Lead Responsibility: Chief Constable/Policing Board**

Site preparation for the Garden of Remembrance is well advanced and the Garden is scheduled for completion in July 2003. The Board of Trustees of the Foundation will manage maintenance. There is no progress to report on funding for the Museum.



#### **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: Chief Constable**

As noted in Report No. 7, compliance with this recommendation has been achieved. General Order 7/2003, Neutral Working Environment, issued on 3 April 2003 formally mandated the maintenance of a neutral working environment. The new appraisal system introduced on 1 April 2003 requires evaluation on responsibility for maintaining standards. A comprehensive site inspection of the police estate was conducted in 2002. An audit of 11 DCUs by the Change Management Team in the first quarter of 2003 found police premises compliant, with two minor exceptions, which were immediately corrected. Local maintenance is now a command and supervisory responsibility.

▶▶ **co-operation with other police services**



## A. Chapter Summary

### Background

The Independent Commission was asked to make proposals concerning the scope for structured co-operation with An Garda Síochána and other police forces. The Independent Commission discussion in this area recognised the excellent operational co-operation between the (then) Royal Ulster Constabulary and other police agencies around the world. However, it noted that co-operation 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 practice ideas between police services would help the effectiveness of domestic policing.

### Progress and Accomplishments

A legislative framework to enable personnel exchanges was required of both the British and Irish governments, for the full implementation of the Inter-Governmental Agreement signed in April of 2002. As of 15 May 2003 the British Government had passed primary legislation and the Irish Government had its legislative proposals in progress and expected by June of 2003. Draft regulations to support UK legislation are currently being circulated for consultation. Both the PSNI and An Garda Síochána have protocols in place for short and long term exchanges. A joint live disaster exercise between the PSNI and An Garda Síochána was scheduled for 21 May 2003. This successfully took place at a border location and the resulting report is awaited. The PSNI has maintained a level of participation of 42 police officers in UN Peacekeeping missions; however, these have been reduced with the agreement of the PSNI and Policing Board to maintain policing capacity in Northern Ireland. 12 police officers are currently seconded to other police services in Great Britain. As of 15 May 2003 two police officers, both experienced investigators, were seconded to the PSNI from other police services in Great Britain.

### Areas of Concern

The same areas of concern noted in our last report remain. Specifically, the PSNI have not yet developed formal or systemic collaboration agreements with other training facilities, including Bramshill in England, Templemore in the Republic of Ireland, and Tulliallan in Scotland. The impact of this is that best practices and exchanges of ideas are neither imported to the PSNI, nor exported from the PSNI.

As previously noted, a longer-term concern relates to the development of the PSNI's capacity to draw on the experience of police services from around the world, while at the same time contributing the PSNI experience to global policing issues. While an ad hoc approach continues, the impact of not having a strategy is that the intent of the Independent Commission, of increasing the experience and capacity of the Police Service via north-south, UK and global experiences, will not be realised.

### Future Directions

The oversight process will examine the results of the recent British and Irish legislative frameworks that will now allow exchanges of police personnel between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, including actual exchanges between the two police services when they are legally able to do so.

## B. Recommendation Summary

### Recommendations 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163 and 164:

#### Co-operation between the Police Service and An Garda Siochana

Patten Recommendations:

157. The Northern Ireland police and the Garda Siochana should have written protocols covering key aspects of co-operation.
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 co-operation in areas of common concern.
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 co-operation between the two services is most needed, such as drugs, and in areas such as training.
160. Consideration should be given to posting liaison officers from each service to the central headquarters and/or border area headquarters of the other.
161. There should be structured co-operation between the two police services in training.
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.
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.
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: British and Irish Governments/Chief Constable/Garda Commissioner

Administrative compliance for these recommendations has not been completed. The signing of the Inter-Governmental Agreement by the British and Irish Governments in April of 2002 generated a need for primary legislation in each jurisdiction to facilitate exchanges in each police service. As of 15 May 2003 primary legislation was in place for Northern Ireland and legislation is scheduled for implementation by the Irish government before the Summer of 2003. Protocols have been agreed between the PSNI and An Garda Siochana for personnel exchanges, which were scheduled to commence in January of 2003. However, these were delayed and none had occurred as of 15 May 2003. Long-term personnel exchanges and HQ liaison officer exchanges between the police services have not been accomplished. Some structured training exchanges had taken place as of 15 May 2003 although none had been reported for the current year.



One annual conference between PSNI and An Garda Siochanna has taken place to date, with the PSNI scheduled to host the next conference in September of 2003. A joint live disaster training exercise was scheduled for 21 May of 2003 and observed to take place. Details and results will be examined when the joint PSNI/Garda report is released. Evidence of structured joint operational teams has not been provided, however this will be accomplished with Joint Investigative Teams under European Directive 2002/465, which includes the PSNI and An Garda Siochanna. The Legislative framework for the UK is in the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2003, and the Republic of Ireland legislation mentioned earlier is pending. Case-by-case success continues to occur on a number of joint, cross-border operational cases. Finally, there is no progress to report on cross-border radio and IT links (see also Recommendation 93).

#### **Recommendation 165: Joint Database Development with the Garda**

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: British and Irish Governments/Chief Constable/Garda Commissioner**

Administrative compliance for this recommendation has not been completed. Discussions are ongoing regarding the PSNI joining a common European police data system, which would include the Republic of Ireland.

#### **Recommendations 166 and 167 - Personnel Exchanges with GB Police Services**

Patten Recommendations:

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.

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

**Lead Responsibility: Chief Constable**

There is no change from our last report. 12 police officers are currently seconded to other police organisations in Great Britain. However, as of 15 May 2003 there were only two police officers seconded to the PSNI from police services in Great Britain.

#### **Recommendation 168: Links between Police Training Colleges**

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: Chief Constable/NIO/Other Government Departments**



There is limited progress in developing structured links between Police Training Colleges, however, ad hoc linkages do occur between the colleges relating to specific needs, for example crime and communications training. Agreements regarding secondment for courses, sharing of resources, exchange of staff and consultative meetings, as well as the extent of Police Service participation, must wait upcoming oversight visits.

#### **Recommendations 169 and 170: International Training Exchanges**

Patten Recommendations:

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

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

#### **Lead Responsibility: Chief Constable/Policing Board**

There has been little progress since our last report towards creating a programme for international exchanges or training of other police services. A partnership agreement has been developed between the Ontario Provincial Police in Canada and PSNI's Executive Leadership Faculty, however this had not been signed as of 15 May 2003. There also remains a need to develop a research capacity in order to study best practices when developing policy in this area. Assessments of a number of other indicators must await future oversight visits. Indicators include, among others, the number of officers participating in exchanges, evidence that best practices are being considered, evidence of that planners are aware of experience in other countries, co-operation with other forces and the development of policy for identifying and providing training for overseas police in areas of PSNI expertise.

#### **Recommendation 171: United Nations Peacekeeping Operations**

Patten Recommendation:

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

#### **Lead Responsibility: NIO/FCO/Policing Board/Chief Constable**

As of 15 May 2003, 42 PSNI police officers were serving in international missions: 3 in Bosnia, 25 in Kosovo, 1 in East Timor and 13 to the Central Services in the UK. This represents a decline from the 80 officers in the previous reporting period, however, is in line with the agreement of the PSNI and Policing Board to concentrate on the policing capacity in Northern Ireland until normalisation.



▶▶ oversight commissioner



## 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 is found in the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000, at sections 67 and 68, and in Schedule 4.

### Progress and Accomplishments

The Oversight Commissioner has established an office and small staff in Northern Ireland, along with a United States and Canadian team of experienced senior law enforcement and academic experts to evaluate and report on the progress of change. This is the second public report for 2003. Full details can be located on our web site at: [www.oversightcommissioner.org](http://www.oversightcommissioner.org)

### Areas of Concern

There are no concerns at the present time. Full co-operation from all agencies and organisations has been provided and is expected to continue. Adequate current resourcing and support have been received from the Government, along with respect for our complete independence.

### Future Directions

Reports will be submitted three times per year on an approximate schedule of May, September and December.

## B. Recommendation Summary

### Recommendation 172: Appointment of Commissioner

Patten Recommendation:

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.

**Lead Responsibility: Oversight Commissioner**

Compliance with this recommendation has been achieved.

### **Recommendations 173, 174 and 175: Functions of Commissioner**

#### **Patten 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: NIO**

Reports and documents are being provided by the different agencies in response to the Oversight Commissioner's requests. In turn, the Oversight Commissioner is reporting publicly three times per year. The Oversight Commissioner's mandate was recently extended until May of 2005.



▶▶ notes