

FORCE AUDIT BOARD – AUDIT AND INSPECTION REPORTS AND RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

INTRODUCTION

1. This report contains a summary of the Force Audit Board meetings that took place on the 23 March and 4 May 2006 and seeks to update members on the progress of audits and inspections that have recently been carried out. This represents the second report to this Committee on the activities of the Board. It will also inform members of the risks that have been identified through the Force Risk Register and reviewed by the Force Audit Board.
2. Work is continuing on the development of a Risk Management Strategy that can be rolled out across the Force and that can be applied to the Police Authority. This will be considered at the next meeting of the Board on 8 June 2006.

INFORMATION

In addition to reviewing the schedule of in-force audits the meetings of the Board considered a range of issues including: -

3. Stop and Search Implementation Plan
 - 3.1 Chief Supt Davison provided an update and described the work done on the plan. He said that there would be an implementation team chaired by ACC (OS) John Crosse with representation from the Police Authority. It was agreed that implementation should be completed by the end of the year and the plan would be brought back to Force Audit Board for signing off in January 2007. The Board would also receive an interim update on the plan in August.
4. Transference of Intelligence to the Police National Computer
 - 4.1 The Force was subject to a PNC compliance inspection in October 2005 by HMIC. One of the recommendations was for the Force to expand the process for capturing intelligence to ensure that information on the PNC was updated and current and that information placed on the person's in-force nominal record was entered on the PNC.

4.2 The Intelligence Manual of Guidance lists the primary source documents which should be used to update the Force's nominal system and which then could be used to update the PNC.

4.3 It was felt that all intelligence information should be placed on PNC. An implementation plan is being developed although actions may be affected by the need for an IT upgrade. In the meantime, potential backlogs of information are being addressed.

4.4 The situation will be reviewed in September 2006.

5. Sex Offender Registration re-audit

5.1 The re-audit found that improvements had been made to staffing levels and processes since the original audit was carried out in September 2004. However, it also identified that more investment was necessary in relation to supervision, administrative support, equipment, vehicles and training especially as the number of registered sex offenders was rising.

5.2 It also highlighted that the notification process between the courts and the police needed to be improved.

5.3 Recommendations from the audit report have been included on an implementation plan and the ACC(O) has appointed an implementation manager.

6. Crime Recording

6.1 The requirement for an audit of crime recording and investigation was established as a result of the poor grades received by Humberside Police in assessments of performance in reducing and detecting crime. The audit was concerned with looking at the crime process to identify areas of improvement.

6.2 The audit found that there is significant commendable activity taking place by the Crime Management Units in each Division to raise the Force's sanction detection rate. The report also commented on the crime screening policy adopted within D Division and issues that have now been addressed.

6.3 The Head of the Crime Management Branch has been given responsibility to prepare an action plan to make improvements to the process and to report back to the Force Audit Board in June.

7 Sickness Absence

7.1 The Board were informed that the Force may be overstating sickness absence figures but was still the third best force in the country. More accurate calculations will involve conversion of days to hours. This was being considered by the Human Resources Project Board. Further work is

also being undertaken in connection with documentation on return to work interviews and to improve notification of returns to the Pay Section.

8 Race Equality Scheme

- 8.1 The Board considered issues in relation to the Race Equality Scheme and agreed to pursue initiatives in relation to NMIS, bail monitoring, improvements to training and on the need to consult with other forces on the procedures and processes in place to carry out ethnic monitoring. A report will be prepared for COG on the topic.

9 Hi Tech Crime

- 9.1 The Board considered the activities of the Hi Tech Crime Unit and the implications in the growth of this area of activity that was causing pressure on equipment and accommodation. The Unit had been the subject of a peer review by a member of staff from the National High Tech Crime Unit and it was agreed that an update on all of the recommendations in respect of the Unit including those from the peer review will be considered in July.

10 BATS Improvement Plan

- 10.1 Following consideration of the Briefing and Tasking System (BATS) at a previous meeting it was agreed that a small team would conduct audits of the relaunched system and that staff from the Police Authority would conduct a series of reality checks on the system independently. The results will be reported to the Board in two months.

11 Vulnerable Persons in Custody

- 11.1 The Board received details of a re-audit carried out in respect of vulnerable persons in custody which highlighted a number of issues requiring attention. It was agreed that this should be referred to the Force Custody Board. It was also agreed that this re-audit should inform the work of members of the ICVS. This is currently being considered.

12 Audit of Domestic Violence Arrests

- 12.1 An audit was carried out to verify that the data which is sent to the Home Office in relation to domestic violence arrests was accurate.
- 12.2 The audit found that the current process of recording arrests did not allow for the recording of arrests, which had taken place after the date that the crime had been recorded. However, in anticipation that an arrest would take place one Division was recording arrests that had not taken place but which would take place in the future. There was an element therefore of under recording and over recording of arrests.

12.3 A process has now been put in place to record arrests both at the time and after the date of reporting, which should ensure that the data captured was accurate.

13 Financial Investigations

13.1 Terms of Reference were agreed in respect of an audit of financial investigations. This work will be carried out in conjunction with the work of Internal Audit on proceeds of crime.

14 External Audit Reports

14.1 The Force Audit Board received reports on the following:

- User Satisfaction
- PNC
- Domestic Violence
- Sanction Detections

Action plans will be considered at future meetings of the Board.

15 Risk Management

15.1 The Force Audit Board considered the following risks at the meeting: -

- Force Restructuring
- Failing to train staff appropriately for changes to legislation
- The introduction of the Serious and Organised Crime Agency
- The Civil Contingencies Act/Business Continuity
- NCPPE Professionalising Investigation Programme
- The Unison day of action
- Police Use of Firearms
- CIS 4
- Police and Justice Bill

15.2 All of the issues were discussed in relation to what control measures were in place and what further measures were deemed necessary in order to minimise the risks. It was noted that the business continuity plan had come into operation for the day of action on 28 March and this had worked well. Further work that was required on some of the risks was actioned for co-ordination by the Business Change Manager.

15.3 Discussion took place at both meetings on the Force's approach to risk including risk management, environmental scanning, the risk register and levels of risk. Following on from the draft strategy document referred to in the report to this Committee on 28 February 2006 a flow chart had been developed detailing proposals for dealing with risk issues. The new process will be piloted in C Division and in the Police Authority. Advice on the process is also being sought from the Audit Commission. A draft policy will be considered by the Board at its next meeting.

16 RECOMMENDATIONS

16.1 It is recommended that:

- (i) the members note the contents of this report; and
- (ii) discuss the issues arising.

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Background papers: Force Audit Manual