

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

**INTRODUCTION**

1. The District Auditor's Annual Audit Letter referred to the need for a joint approach towards audit in order to maximise the impact that all of the available audit resources can have on the organisation as a whole. There has and continues to have Member representation from the Police Authority and since their appointment, the Director of Performance and Resources and the Assistant Chief Executive have participated in the two meetings of the Board held on 5 January and 9 February 2006.
2. At the first of these meetings it was agreed that the activities of the Board would be summarised for the Audit and Strategy Committee. This represents the first of these reports which seeks to update members on the progress of audits and inspections that have recently been carried out on behalf of the Force Audit Board together with up to date information on completed HMIC Inspections and action plans and planning for forthcoming reviews. It will also inform members of the risks that have been identified through the Force Risk Register and reviewed by the Force Audit Board.
3. A report on proposals for the development of a Risk Management Strategy was considered at the meeting held on 9 February 2006 and this highlighted the need for the Secretariat and for this Committee on behalf of the Police Authority to place increased emphasis on risk management. The report therefore includes a recommendation to the Police Authority that the terms of reference of this Committee should be amended to specifically cover risk management issues.

**INFORMATION**

4. In addition to reviewing the schedule of in-force audits and a revision of the position in respect of audit and best value resources in the light of the restructuring proposals covered in the report to the Performance Scrutiny Committee, the meetings of the Board considered a range of issues including:-

#### 4.1. HMIC BCU Inspection of C Division

4.1.1 The BCU Commander for C Division attended the meeting and commented on the way the Division had responded to the recommendations in the HMIC report. A project team had been created, the communications strategy had been re-written, the Divisional Commander's Forums had been disbanded and concerns raised by staff had been addressed. Skills audits had been carried out and PDRs had been introduced with the Division working closely with Force PDR Project Team.

#### 4.2. HMIC BCU Inspection of D Division

4.2.1 The BCU Commander for D Division provided an update on his Action Plan. This has also been considered by the Vanguard Board. He specifically commented on team building exercises being undertaken, the communications strategy, training of sergeants, the performance handbook and NIM tasking. He also referred to the improvements in the number of open incidents and on the use of Prisoner Processing teams that had resulted in fewer offenders being given unnecessary bail.

#### 4.3. Stop and Search

4.3.1 Stop and Search is a matter that is already being considered by the Performance Scrutiny Committee. The Force Audit Board heard that an audit was carried out between the 3<sup>rd</sup> August and 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2005. The purpose of the audit was to benchmark the Police Authority and the Force against the Home Office Stop and Search Manual and to examine stops/stop and search data for potential disproportionality. The audit also looked at compliance against the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 Codes of Practice.

4.3.2 Data produced by the 2001 Census, Yorkshire Futures and a recent independent study would suggest that the use of stop and search in the Humberside Police area is proportionate and fair. However, the arrest rates following stop and search between white and non-white individuals does raise some concerns and further work is being carried out by the Force to examine the results for any instances of apparent disproportionality.

4.3.3 There are a large number of recommendations contained within the Manual, which need to be implemented and they include: -

- The Police Authority having members in place who are responsible for stop and search issues and who have an effective arrangement in place for the regular monitoring of stop and search data, including disproportionality.
- The Police Authority carrying out public consultation in relation to stops/stop and search and providing the public with stop and search summary reports and a mechanism to enable them to discuss individual stops/stop and search encounters.
- Local communities being involved in the drawing up of policies, the scrutiny of data and the development of training for stop and search.
- Divisions monitoring potential disproportionality in their figures and seeking explanations right down to an individual level if necessary. Potential disproportionality is currently only monitored centrally through the Diversity Unit.
- Divisions using stops/stop and search in accordance with the National Intelligence Model and analysis taking place to assess its effectiveness as a tactic.

4.3.4 All of the recommendations have been included in an improvement action plan and the plan has been allocated to the Head of Operations Branch for implementation. The Police Authority will be actively involved in this process through the work of the Consultation and Partnership Manager. The improvement plan will be monitored by the Force Audit Board on a regular basis.

#### 4.4 National Intelligence Model

4.4.1 The National Intelligence Model Minimum Standards require internal audits to be conducted on an annual basis. 'D' Division has recently been audited by Centrex whilst 'C' Division will be audited later in the year. The audit therefore focused on 'A' and 'B' Divisions, providing a two week snap-shot of the NIM process within each Division.

4.4.2 The main findings were that the NIM processes in 'A' Division were found to be well developed and efficient and closely followed the NIM minimum standards.

4.4.3 In 'B' Division there were several problems identified. The Target and Problem Profiles contained within the Tactical Assessments lacked information; there was little documented evidence to show that resourcing decisions had been made and there was a lack of documented accountability throughout the entire NIM process.

4.4.4 Once the problem areas had been identified they were rectified quickly by the Division and a re-audit, which took place in January 2006, confirmed that the necessary improvements had taken place. Particular reference was made to improvements in B Division and the benefits of defining roles and responsibilities.

#### 4.5 Domestic Violence

4.5.1 The action plan in respect of Domestic Violence was considered and it was agreed to include the need for C Division to appoint a trainer to deal with domestic violence issues, training of custody officers and for quality assurance processes to be implemented. The issue will also be added to the audit schedule.

4.5.2 Concern was expressed about the need to consider risk assessment training as there were no training courses available nationally on this topic.

#### 4.6 Missing Persons

4.6.1 An update on the action plan in respect of Missing Persons was discussed. This highlighted further training requirements and also commented on the consultations that were taking place with CDRPs.

#### 4.7 Briefing and tasking

4.7.1 The Board heard that BATS, the briefing and tasking system, was now the standard briefing tool across the Force, but was not used for tasking. As BATS is still not yet the finished version it was agreed that the system should be assessed in 3 months time.

#### 4.8 Other matters

4.8.1 Other discussions covered reports on Racially and Religiously Aggravated Crime and Volunteers have already been considered by the Police Authority

## EXTERNAL INSPECTIONS/AUDITS

### 5. Learning and Development

5.1. At the January meeting consideration was given to the terms of reference of reviews of Learning and Development and Crime Recording. In the case of Learning and Development a health check was underway in advance of the inspection. The Health Check drew attention to the fact that the HMIC had only issued grading criteria for good. An action plan had been drawn up and a significant number of the tasks identified had already been completed with target dates agreed for outstanding issues.

### 6. Sickness Absence

6.1 The Board were advised of the "Good" rating for Sickness absence arising from an Audit of Sickness Absence carried out by the Home Office (A copy of the Home Office Report is available from the Secretariat).

### 7. Professional Standards

7.1. The Board were formally advised of the "Poor" rating from the latest HMIC Inspection of Professional Standards (A copy of the HMIC Inspection is available from the Secretariat). The matter was discussed at last meeting of the Audit and Strategy Committee prior to the release of the final report at the end of December 2005. The November meeting noted that the key issue was the conscious decision, taken in the current circumstances, not to divert resources away from front line policing to create a proactive capability to deal with internal matters. It was in no way a reflection on the work of the officers in the Professional Standards Branch. In the Force's opinion procedures were in place to deal with incidents satisfactorily using major incident teams if necessary. It was noted that the decision that will be kept under continuous review.

7.2. The final HMIC report and rating has been widely reported in the press, together with the Force's response. The rating is particularly disappointing; given the previous assessment was "Excellent".

7.3. There are three recommendations in the report, two of which relate to the fact that the Force does not have a proactive unit as recommended by the HMIC. The third recommendation relates to the issue of reporting settlements in civil cases. This is dealt with in a separate report on the Audit and Strategy Committee agenda (Item 23).

## **RISK MANAGEMENT**

8. The Force Audit Board has considered the following risks:-
  - The implications of the introduction of the Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005. (SOCAP)
  - The possibility of a Pandemic Influenza outbreak.
  - Failing to train staff appropriately for changes to legislation and our current training resilience.
  - The implications of the introduction of the Serious and Organised Crime Agency.
  - The effects on the Force of the Civil Contingencies Act/Business Continuity.
  - The implications of the National Centre for Policing Excellence Professionalising Investigation Programme. (PIP)
  - The effects of the recent change to the Licensing Laws.
9. 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 Force have a number of gold groups in place addressing specific operational risk issues and that these are the subject of separate regular briefings between the Chief Constable and the Chairman and Chief Executive of the Police Authority.
10. The issue of risk management was discussed in detail at the meeting held on 9 February when a draft risk assessment policy was circulated. It was agreed that this should form the basis of joint working between the Force and the Secretariat to develop an integrated risk management strategy.
11. It would seem appropriate that the reporting line for this work on risk management should be through the Audit and Strategy Committee. This would involve an addition to the terms of reference of the Committee which would need the approval of the Police Authority.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

12. It is recommended that:-
  - a. the contents of the report and the actions taken to strengthen the involvement of the Police Authority in the work of the Force Audit Board be noted,
  - b. the "Good" rating following the Home Office Audit of Sickness Absence be noted
  - c. the disappointing "Poor" rating in respect of Professional Standards arising principally from the conscious decision not to create a proactive unit in this area be noted,
  - d. proposals to extend the terms of reference of the Audit and Strategy Committee to include more extensive engagement in risk management issues be submitted to the Police Authority at its meeting on 21 March 2006.

**T Hollis**  
**Chief Constable**

**John Bates**  
**Director of Performance**  
**and Resources**

Contact Officers John Ford Telephone 01482 578194  
John Bates Telephone 01482 334880

Background papers: Force Audit Manual