

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT REVIEW UPDATE REPORT

INTRODUCTION

1. The intention of this report is to update Members of the Police Authority Personnel Committee on the Force's development of the Personal Development Review (PDR) process.
2. In the spirit of continuous improvement we are now looking towards the next phase of the development and improvement of the PDR process. The electronic evidence storage facility has been completed and was launched in October in time for the mid year interim review period. This facility has been received positively and has extended the evidence storage capacity significantly which was a previous criticism of the new system.

INFORMATION

3. There are a number of ongoing and current PDR Action Items:
 - Continue to embed Integrated Competency Framework /Personal Development Review into other Human Resources Processes (see *Appendix A*)
 - Develop and implement specification for Version 2 of PDR software to improve the functionality of system and ensure that the system is easier to navigate
 - Continue to develop reporting facility with client
 - Develop templates and examples of SMART objectives
 - Embed PDR awareness training into induction programme
 - Integrate Professionalising Investigation Programme levels onto electronic PDR system
 - Develop Quality Assurance /Dip Sampling process with Corporate Development
 - Development of Progression PDR
4. In an attempt to continue to embed the PDR into the organisation, an online post-implementation survey was conducted across the Force during August 2006. Regrettably despite a number of articles on Frontpage news and in G&I, the level of engagement in the PDR survey was very low, only 5%. As this only

represented the views of 179 respondents, it was not considered appropriate to base any action or enhancements upon the survey results.

5. As a result of the survey response, the process of conducting focus groups across the Force became even more critical to help determine how we should continue to fine tune the PDR to maximise the benefits to individuals and the Organisation. Focus Groups were conducted within Branches and Divisions during the months of September and October 2006. Approximately 100 people participated and all levels of the organisation were involved including Chief Officers. The results of both the survey and the focus groups are summarised at Appendix B.
6. The next phase of work on the PDR project revolves around the software in an attempt to make it more user-friendly and to incorporate some new national requirements such as PIP accreditation and mandatory evidencing against the Respect for Race and Diversity competence. A new "Progression" PDR is also in the process of being developed which will be used within internal recruitment and selection processes. It is intended that these changes will be launched in time for the new PDR year in April 2007.

RECOMMENDATIONS

7. It is recommended that Members note this Report and receive further updates as appropriate.

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LINKING ICF/PDR INTO OTHER HR PROCESSES

Work is ongoing in the following areas:

Police Officer Recruitment

- Development of “Progression PDR” as part of application/screening process
- ICF already fully embedded within Police promotion processes
- ICF being incorporated into lateral police recruitment

Police Staff Recruitment – 2 Phased approach

- Embed ICF into recruitment and selection processes: ie: Person specification; competency based shortlisting; etc.
- Review use of PDR in Recruitment and selection processes

Use of PDR for identification of Potential

- HPDS Talent Spotting section on revised PDR form
- Creation of Report on staff who achieve “Exceptional” ratings

Use of PDR to identify required PIP Accreditation

- PIP integrated within PDR process to demonstrate accreditation and ongoing competence

SUMMARY OF PDR SURVEY

80% attended a PDR training awareness session	66% thought training provided useful overview of revised process and new PDR software	46% do not think the revised PDR process is more beneficial to the individual
76% said supervisors administered their PDR correctly	69% reviewed their ICF role profile prior to their PDR meeting	
88% had their PDR meeting within 60 days of the PDR cycle starting	50% agree that assessment against objectives provides a better way of measuring personal performance	19% do not feel their role profile represents an accurate reflection of their role
84% said the PDR objectives set by their supervisor are clear and understandable	50% think that the PDR website is easy to navigate	32% do not think the automated PDR system is easy to use and not easy to navigate
76% understand their roles and responsibility in relation to the new PDR process	44% said their PDR was a positive experience. 26% were ambivalent.	Only 4% of respondents did not like the streamlined approach to not having to evidence against all activities and behaviours
96% know how to access the PDR through the PDR website	67% of supervisors indicated that they intend to meet with direct reports to provide feedback as part of the PDR either quarterly or monthly.	40% did not see the benefit of the introducing a 2 track system.

FOCUS GROUP FEEDBACK SUMMARY

The following is a summary of the responses that were received.

- The survey highlighted that many people are still uncertain about how they should engage in the PDR process. The question was raised as to what suggestions people had as to how awareness and understanding of the PDR process can be improved.**

Many Focus Groups agreed that staff are aware of the process, but it needs to be more attractive to staff. There was a general feeling that PDR is just another Home Office audit that does not directly benefit the Force. It was agreed that if staff were more aware of the benefits of the process, PDR would be more likely to be used on a regular basis. However due to time constraints it is hard to do this.

Other comments were that although the PDR team and trainers were well-informed, problems stem more from having to complete the forms electronically rather than supervisors lack of knowledge. Non-supervisory staff generally felt that supervisors have little interest in promoting the benefits of the PDR. It was felt that there should be more training for supervisors, emphasising that PDR is a dialogue between manager and staff and not a form filling exercise, which would ensure that the objectives that are set are relevant to an individual's personal and professional development and overall performance, and not just about completing a task.

Many participants felt that because the PDR does not have strong links to other HR procedures and processes, it is not seen as important. Staff expressed a need to feel that there is personal reason for engaging in PDR and the most commonly cited use was that the PDR should be used in promotion and recruitment processes. Supervisors felt that staff could not see the benefits of the PDR, and that there needs to be more rewards and sanctions attached to the process to encourage interest and participation. It was suggested that the benefits of the system should be critically analysed, and then marketed through “Innerscene”, with follow up workshops to encourage participants to see the value of the PDR, rather than just seeing it as another Force process.

One Focus Group suggested that it would be beneficial to have posters, case studies and examples of how the PDR has assisted in the personal and career development of Police Staff.

It was generally agreed that it can more difficult to apply SMART objectives that support Divisional objectives for Police Staff, but this would be the case regardless of the format of the PDR.

It is worth noting that some groups mentioned that apathy towards the PDR is historical – which suggests that it can be overcome.

2. The issue of a “one size fits all” single format of the PDR was raised and groups were asked if it is appropriate for both police officers and police staff? If no, what would be more useful?

In about half of the focus groups it was unanimously agreed that there should be a single format for both police officers and police staff, as the groups believe that it is easier just to have the one system for everybody. However, in other groups it was clear that they felt very strongly that there should be separate PDRs for police and police staff.

3. In a culture where tasks are abundant and time is very short, groups were asked how they maintain PDR discussions with their line managers on a frequent/regular basis?

When asked this question the majority of the people asked answered in the same way; they do not maintain regular PDR discussions. This is because they do not have the time to do this and that when prioritised PDR comes low down on the list of things that need doing. Although supervisors did say that they would like to have regular meetings with staff at least once a month because they feel that waiting six months to discuss issues with staff is too long. However some people said that they do have regular, informal meetings with their staff once a month to discuss if there are any problems but they rarely update the PDR.

Supervisors suggested that if a member of their team was not performing they would ensure that they addressed the issue immediately, and would not leave it until the next scheduled PDR meeting. It is also worth noting that many non-supervisory staff do add evidence to their PDRs on a fairly regular basis.

4. Groups were asked what they and their supervisors could do to make the PDR meeting a more meaningful and valuable experience?

It was clear that staff believe that PDR meetings cannot be meaningful, unless they can see how the PDR is meaningful. The general feeling at the Focus Groups was that staff felt that the PDR does not help with promotion and does not help when applying for vacancies or specialist posts within the organisation. Staff also feel that negatives in the PDR are noticed whilst positives are not acknowledged, and even if they are they do not help with promotions or new jobs. Non-supervisory staff would like the PDR meeting to be a more personal experience, and would like supervisors to react to PDR entries so that they can see that managers are following up. This would ensure that staff see a benefit to completing their PDR.

The following comment sums up the feelings throughout the feedback from the Focus Groups:

“Individuals do not like having to document their work and achievements in this manner when they feel like they are doing a good job all the time”.

Although it was felt that some supervisors tend to set objectives that are merely tasks rather than SMART objectives that are linked to performance and personal development, it was noted that this varies enormously depending on the manager. It was generally felt that some supervisors are very good at setting objectives and were interested in the development of their staff, whilst others obviously consider the process to be a chore and something to be dealt with as quickly as possible.

It was also suggested by non-supervisors that PDRs should not be done by newly promoted supervisors who may be new to their role and have a lack of understanding and awareness of their staff. Non-supervisors thought that mandatory attendance at PDR training sessions should be introduced for all staff.

One non-supervisory Focus Group suggested that 360° feedback would give staff the opportunity to give feedback on their managers, ensuring that the process is not so one-sided.

Supervisors Only

5. Having experienced using the PDR system, what key issues would you include in PDR training?

Supervisors generally felt that they would like to have learnt better interview techniques so that they could conduct better PDR meetings with their staff. They would have also liked to learn more of how to sell the PDR system to their staff and why it is a meaningful system. It was also felt that the training environment was not appropriate to some of the course content and that the training should have taken place in an IT classroom where they would have had a terminal to themselves to work through a mock PDR and complete different exercises. Supervisors would have liked the training to be nearer the implementation day because there was a big gap from the time of the training which meant that they had forgotten how to use the system.

Most groups felt that it was important to know more about SMART objective setting and how to make objectives relevant and personal to the individual. Some would like more general training on how to use the system.

6. Can you suggest anything that may help supervisors conduct more effective PDR interviews?

It was felt that supervisors need to clarify and have clarity on the process and purpose of the PDR. Generally, it was seen that individuals need to see and experience the benefits of the new system, and until this happens the level of interest and commitment will be low.

Overall supervisors said that if they had more time to dedicate to PDR meetings then they could conduct better interviews. Some suggested that the PDR was too long and if it was streamlined it would be quicker and easier at the meetings. Most groups agreed that the best way of conducting PDR meetings is to conduct the interview first and then complete the electronic form.

Some groups suggested that their staff in lower grade Police Staff roles feel that promotion possibilities are very limited and therefore engaging in PDR is pointless. There was a suggestion of a

“Greatly simplified system for Police Staff, which caters for non-career posts”.

This suggests that Track B of the PDR is not fully understood, and perhaps the features and benefits of the two-track system needs to be strongly re-emphasised.

7. Would it be helpful to have a sample PDR or sample SMART objectives for you to view on the PDR website

Many of the supervisors said yes this would be helpful, although some felt that it should only be used for training purposes. It was generally agreed that more training is necessary, but simple guides, examples and sample objectives would be beneficial to many supervisors. Overall the general feeling was that these would be unnecessary if the training was a more beneficial experience.