



THE GOVERNMENT REPLY TO THE SEVENTH REPORT
FROM THE HOME AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
SESSION 2007-08 HC 364

Policing in the 21st Century

**Presented to Parliament
by the Secretary of State for the Home Department
by Command of Her Majesty
February 2009**



THE GOVERNMENT REPLY TO THE SEVENTH REPORT
FROM THE HOME AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
SESSION 2007-08 HC 364

Policing in the 21st Century

**Presented to Parliament
by the Secretary of State for the Home Department
by Command of Her Majesty
February 2009**

© Crown Copyright 2009

The text in this document (excluding the Royal Arms and other departmental or agency logos) may be reproduced free of charge in any format or medium providing it is reproduced accurately and not used in a misleading context. The material must be acknowledged as Crown copyright and the title of the document specified.

Where we have identified any third party copyright material you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

For any other use of this material please write to Office of Public Sector Information, Information Policy Team, Kew, Richmond, Surrey TW9 4DU or e-mail: licensing@opsi.gov.uk
ISBN: 9780101755320

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO THE HOME AFFAIRS COMMITTEE: POLICING IN THE 21ST CENTURY

INTRODUCTION

The House of Commons Home Affairs Committee published the report of its inquiry into Policing in the 21st Century on 10 November 2008.

The inquiry focused in particular on:

- Accountability, performance indicators and monitoring procedures for the police, and the increase in efficiency by reducing bureaucracy and improving the use of technology;
- Improvements to Police Authorities and performance measures;
- The increase in police efficiency and productivity;
- Policing priorities, including combating minor crime and anti-social behaviour, alcohol-related crime, knife and gun crime, and tackling fraud;
- Collaboration between forces, the role of protective services, and the impact of Airwave and its role in the policing of the Olympics in 2012; and
- The role of Police Community Support Officers, the recruitment of police officers, and the importance of diversity within the service.

This Command Paper sets out the Government's response to the recommendations in the Committee's report and highlights the major programme of reform underway that is already delivering most of the committee points.

The Government strongly welcomes the Committee's report, which contains a great number of observations and constructive recommendations, many of which have already been initiated through the reforms outlined in the Policing Green Paper, *From the Neighbourhood to the National: Policing our Communities Together*, and the Policing & Crime Bill.

We are deeply appreciative of the efforts of members of the Committee in completing this report, and to all those who participated in the inquiry process.

The Government is committed to making policing even more visible, accountable and responsive to local people and this is a major theme of the reform programme currently underway. The continued improvements to neighbourhood policing through the introduction of the Policing Pledge, easy access to neighbourhood policing teams, monthly crime information and a commitment to listening to local people's priorities, together with a stripping away of all targets, but one (to raise confidence amongst local people), will transform the way in which the police service relates to local people.

We are also committed to reforming police authorities to ensure they are strong, effective and independent, and strengthening Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC), so that it can act as a powerful guarantor of the public interest.

We recognise the need to reduce bureaucracy in the police and have progressed a number of initiatives to further implement the work of Sir Ronnie Flanagan's review. Our approach is to enable a systemic approach to reducing the burdens on the service, to reform processes to reduce paperwork and to invest in the technology that will free up officer time. We will also ensure that we are communicating this change to the service so that officers and staff are encouraged to use their discretion more and to be less risk averse. To support these efforts, Jan Berry has been appointed as the new independent Reducing Bureaucracy Advocate to provide a national lead for bureaucracy reduction activity.

The Government welcomes the HAC's emphasis on the effective deployment of police staff, including the role of Police Community Support Officers. We are working hard with our colleagues at the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) and Association of Police Authorities (APA) to ensure that our work to change the Senior Appointments Panel will not only improve the selection process, but also strengthen succession planning and staff development. We are also committed to increasing diversity in the service, as demonstrated by the new three-year equality, diversity and human rights strategy.

The report emphasises the importance of tackling major issues such as knife and gun crime and the impact of alcohol-misuse in criminal and anti-social activity. The Government is working with the police and local authorities to put in a range of measures to tackle alcohol-related issues.

The Tackling Knives Action Plan is the key part of a strategy involving the police and third sector organisations to deal with knife crime, and is in addition to the £100 million of funding for the Youth Crime Action Plan, which set out a 'triple track' approach of enforcement and punishment where young people's behaviour is unacceptable, non-negotiable support and challenge where it is most needed, and better and earlier prevention.

By improving collaboration between forces, and by initiatives to tackle serious organised crime, the Government has made significant moves to improve the police response to providing protective services. The recommendations of the HAC helpfully ensure a continued focus on this work, including considering the impact of Airwave and the capacity of the police to protect the Olympics and Paralympics in 2012.

These fundamental reforms of the police service offer an unparalleled opportunity to continue to cut crime, build the public's confidence and enhance the discretion available to frontline officers.

The Government is therefore pleased to accept the majority of the conclusions and recommendations from the report. Our detailed response to each recommendation follows.

GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE TO THE COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATIONS

We have identified 63 recommendations and conclusions. Some of these recommendations have been grouped together for this response.

- 1. a) We recommend that an independent review, such as a Royal Commission, or similarly independent review, is established to review what the police do and how they are organised to do it. (Paragraph 17)**

The Home Office understands the committee's interest in commissioning a review to look at policing. That is why we recently completed two comprehensive and probing reviews to do just that. Sir Ronnie Flanagan, in his capacity as both the Home Secretary's senior professional advisor on policing and HM Chief Inspector of Constabulary, provided the *Review of Policing*, which gave a vision of what successful 21st century policing should look like. Louise Casey, on behalf of the Cabinet Office, also wrote *Engaging Communities and Fighting Crime*, a cross-departmental review on how front line agencies can get their communities better engaged in the fight against crime. These reviews have informed the fundamental reform of the police service that is currently underway.

- b) The Government should exercise caution in future when classifying undesirable behaviour as criminal offences. (Paragraph 17)**

We agree that we should not unnecessarily criminalise people, particularly young people, for undesirable behaviour. This is why we carefully considered Sir Ronnie Flanagan's recommendation to review the extent of the Notifiable Offences List and the range of violent crime it covers. Violent crime can have a major impact, even for offences without injury, and we therefore believe that it is right to continue to record such lower level crime within violence against the person. We know the public has a concern about both the most serious crime, and also about lower level crime that can blight their lives. We therefore believe that the significant steps being taken to reduce bureaucracy around recording lower level crimes are the right way forward.

- 2. The Home Office should provide us with assurance that all local authorities in England and Wales will be held to account for Assessment of Policing and Community Safety indicators. (Paragraph 18)**
- 3. Welcome changes to the 2008/09 statutory indicators should be reflected in local practice and must be reinforced by an alignment in performance measures between the police and the Crown Prosecution Service. The shift towards greater performance monitoring at a local level will require that police authorities are properly resourced to undertake this role. (Paragraph 38)**

Central to the Policing Green Paper, *From the Neighbourhood to the National: Policing Our Communities Together*, published in July 2008, is the abolition of all top-down force-specific Government policing targets except one single central target – to measure public confidence locally. As a result, the Home Office will scale back its performance management activities with forces – its police performance directorate has been phased out in its current form (whilst retaining Home Office expertise on supporting partnerships). At the same time, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) will be strengthened with a clear expectation that it will become a vigorous, independent and visible champion of the public interest, and as such, will also undertake thorough inspections of police authorities.

The Assessments of Policing and Community Safety (APACS) indicators that relate to local authorities are included within the performance framework for local government in England. They are part of the National Indicator Set, which are available for selection for Local Area Agreement targets, and as such, will be assessed through the Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA). Local authorities, as part of Local Strategic Partnerships, will be held to account formally through this process.

At the same time, Home Office teams in regional Government Offices, (and the Home Office crime team in Wales), will continue to monitor and support local Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRPs), of which Local Authorities are a key part. Likewise APACS contains key indicators from the Government's Public Service Agreements (PSAs) that relate to community safety and criminal justice. Those indicators that relate to improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the Criminal Justice System in bringing offences to justice mirror the performance measures adopted by the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), meaning that there is now much greater alignment between the objectives of the police service and the CPS.

4. We welcome the Government's removal of the front-line policing measure from the statutory performance indicators. Rather, the Home Office should keep the public informed of the amount of time officers spend on visible patrol. (Paragraph 63)

We completely agree that the public should be kept informed of what police officers are doing. To this end the frontline policing measure did this between 2003/04 and 2007/08 as it assessed the time spent by police officers on core policing duties such as neighbourhood policing, responding to 999 calls, as well as the activities of CID and specialist squads targeting issues such as drugs or burglaries. In 2007/8, 64.9% of officer time was spent on frontline duties, an increase of 2.9% since 2003/04. However, data collection for the frontline policing and visible patrol measures imposed unwelcome and significant bureaucratic burdens on frontline officers and we have therefore decided that they should cease immediately.

The Government is determined to ensure the police have the time and flexibility to respond to the concerns of local communities. We have listened to feedback from the service about central targets hindering this, and so have already removed the targets we set for the police which affected frontline officers the most, such as the target to bring more offences to justice. We have removed all but one central target on police forces – to increase public confidence that the police and other agencies are dealing with local crime and anti-social behaviour priorities.

5. Police authorities in their current form are under-resourced and relatively unknown to local people. Therefore, we support reform in this area. (Paragraph 245) We are also concerned about the potential for this additional layer of representation to undermine partnership working between the police and local authorities. (Paragraph 246) We do, however, welcome the Government's further proposal to raise the capacity and influence of police authorities by introducing guidance on capacity, improving training and skills development and removing barriers to exchange of data from police force to authority. It is doubtful, however, whether their capacity can be much improved without more resources. (Paragraph 247)

The Government welcomes the committee's support for reforms to increase the public visibility of police authorities and strengthen their capacity and capability. The provision of strong, effective and independent police authorities is at the heart of Government's strategy for police reform. The landmark reviews carried out by Sir Ronnie Flanagan and Louise Casey clearly showed that people want more influence over the way that policing is run. Under provisions in the Policing and Crime Bill police authorities will be required to put the views of local people at the centre of all their work, strengthening and complementing their existing duty under the Police Act 1996 to obtain the views of the public.

We agree that partnership working is vital at neighbourhood, regional and national levels and that joint working must deliver across all these areas. To properly meet a local priority a collaborative response may well be needed and police authorities must ensure the right mix of approaches.

Building strong and effective police authorities capable of meeting these challenges is vital. HMIC and the Audit Commission started a programme of police authority inspection pilots last year with a view to rolling out regular inspections later this year. This will mean that for the first time there will be objective information on the effectiveness of authorities available to the public. This evidence will also aid them in improving their capacity and capability, as will the development of a clear description of what an effective police authority looks like supported by the necessary guidance and improvement toolkits.

Efficiency and value for money are key tenets of the work of any police authority, and so a core part of improving capacity and capability will focus on the best use of resources. By assessing the results of the inspection programme, and working to develop a description of an effective authority, we will monitor progress on the efficiency of authorities. There may be a case for additional dedicated resources at a future date, but at present we await the results of the work that is currently underway.

6. We support Sir Ronnie Flanagan's recommendation for full application of the police funding formula at the next Spending Review. In the interim, we recommend that the 5% cap on council tax be removed for those authorities which have below-average precept levels, and that this is coupled with measures ensuring greater accountability to local people for policing. (Paragraph 73)

The Police Service in England and Wales has benefited from a huge increase in resources over the past ten years. On a like-for-like basis the Government grant will have increased by over 60%, or over £3.7 billion, between 1997/98 and 2010/11. This is why the Government thinks that council tax payers deserve protection from excessive increases, and maintains the possibility that we may need to cap any excessive increases.

Although no decisions have been taken yet on capping principles for 2009/10, we do expect the average council tax increase in England to be substantially below 5% in 2009/10. Capping in Wales is of course a matter for the Welsh Assembly Government.

7. We recommend that forces are required to give greater priority to tackling fraud (including identity fraud) and are allocated sufficient resources to carry out this function. (Paragraph 39)

The Home Secretary's Strategic Policing Priorities (SPPs), published on 8 December 2008, emphasise the strategic context in which local accountability and planning should be undertaken. They do not require each force to prioritise specific crime types.

However, we agree with the committee that we should properly resources efforts to tackle fraud and we have allocated £29 million over 3 years to implement the National Fraud Programme. This includes the creation of a National Fraud Strategic Authority (NFSA), an Executive Agency of the Attorney General's office, which was launched last October; a new national lead force role for the City of London Police; and a National Fraud Reporting Centre (NFRC), expected to become fully operational in 2010, which will radically streamline the way that the public report fraud to the police, and which will equip law enforcement agencies with a powerful intelligence tool, and help form the basis of better prevention advice and alerts for business and the public.

Funding for the national lead force role is in addition to established Home Office funding of just over £1 million per year, matched by the Corporation of London, for the City of London Police to take a lead role in the investigation of fraud across London and the South East. It is also additional to the Government revenue funding for the police overall, which will rise by at least 2.7% in each of the three years from 2007/08 to 2010/11.

8. We are concerned that minor crime and anti-social behaviour, which are of great concern to the public, will continue to lack sufficient police attention. (Paragraph 56)

There is a clear expectation amongst police forces, as set out in the Policing Pledge, of the need deal with issues of minor crime and anti-social behaviour that matter most too local people.

The Home Secretary has decided to take a more-strategic, less prescriptive approach to the 2009/10 Strategic Policing Priorities. This decision was reached against the background of a number of recent national strategies and initiatives on policing. Most prominent among these is the Green Paper, which includes among its proposals the abolition, with one exception, of national top-down targets for police forces in England and Wales. The one exception concerns public confidence in the police and local councils to address anti-social behaviour and crime issues that matter locally.

Both the Home Secretary and the National Policing Board were absolutely clear that there must be consistency in messages coming from the Home Office, and that SPPs containing prescriptive directions to chief constables would be out-of-step with the new emphasis on removing top-down targets and encouraging local planning to meet local needs.

9. We urge the Government to facilitate speedy implementation of HMIC recommendations for national standards for the role of sergeant, training for frontline sergeants and review of promotion processes. (Paragraph 41)

We agree with the committee and the tripartite leadership of policing has asked the National Policing Improvement Agency (NPIA) to take this work forward. The Green Paper outlined the Government's expectation that the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) should emphasise the importance of effective frontline supervision and leadership to the quality of service and citizen-focused policing.

HMIC will be conducting a major workforce inspection, *Working for the Public*, in 2010 and one of the elements of workforce management that it will be examining is forces' progress on the development of the role of sergeant.

10. Police representatives believe that the funding increases allocated in the most recent Comprehensive Spending Review are not sufficient to meet requirements. We consider the solution lies in finding ways to release resources through greater efficiency rather than major increases in funding. (Paragraph 72)

We agree that the police service must be properly funded and we have provided for realistic and affordable increases in the police grant. The three-year funding settlements bring stability, and allows police authorities to improve the medium-term financial planning.

However, we also agree with the view that we need to build on the good record that police forces in England and Wales have in delivering efficiency gains. The need to make further significant cashable improvements in efficiency and productivity is recognised in the Efficiency and Productivity Strategy for the Police Service 2008-11. The strategy has been agreed by the APA, ACPO and the Home Office, and has been refreshed to take account of the Green Paper.

11. We urge caution when it comes to allowing police staff to undertake investigative tasks. (Paragraph 229).

We appreciate the caution urged by the Committee, but we do consider the ability of police staff to undertake *limited* investigative tasks an important element of an appropriate workforce mix. The ability of police staff to undertake investigative tasks is set out in Part 2 of Schedule 4 of the Police Reform Act (2002). The tasks are set out as part of the primary legislation, and therefore any proposed changes to their powers would be subject to public consultation and Parliamentary approval. However, those staff that carry out such investigative tasks do so in close supervision from officers.

12. We welcome the assurances received that the Minister of State would seek to repeal Sections 120 and 121 of the Serious and Organised Crime Act. (Paragraph 230)

As the Green Paper set out, we want authorities and forces to consider what mix of police officers and staff will provide the highest quality of service to the public. This includes looking at issues of resilience which is why in Part 12 of Schedule 6 of the Policing and Crime Bill we are proposing the repeal of sections 120 and 121 of the Serious Organised Crime and Police Act 2005 and the provisions they inserted into the Police Reform Act 2002. These Sections made provisions for the use of designated civilian staff to be appointed as custody officers and to carry out the functions of a custody officer.

13. We would be concerned should police numbers reduce significantly. However, we accept that police forces and authorities should focus on how officers can be deployed in the most effective way rather than concentrating on maintaining an arbitrary number of officers. (Paragraph 301).

We appreciate the Committee's concern and so are pleased that police officer numbers remain historically high. Figures published in January 2009 show that at 30 September 2008 there were 140,539 police officers in England and Wales (including secondments). Numbers have increased slightly (by 309) on the 31 March 2008 total. Police officer numbers fell in 21 forces between March and September 2008, increased in 21 forces and remained unchanged in one.

We agree that there needs to be a strong focus on the effectiveness and efficiency of the workforce, as well as on absolute numbers. The Green Paper sets out, the effective deployment of officers and staff will enable them to be in the right place at the right time to deliver for the public. The tripartite Leadership Strategy for the Police Service identifies the importance of strengthening resource management skills, and extends to frontline supervisors and managers, including sergeants. The strategy identifies business skills, including resource and workforce management, as one of the three key domains for police managers. The Green Paper also focuses on forces and authorities planning for the optimum workforce mix of officers and staff at the frontline as a key way in which the highest quality of service can be provided to the public.

Good deployment decisions and ensuring the right workforce mix both have a key part to play in increasing public confidence in the service they receive from the police and in improving police responsiveness. These are central elements of the 2010 HMIC workforce inspection *Working for the Public*.

14. The Home Office should continue to monitor applicant to vacancy ratios. (Paragraph 307)

We agree that the Government should continue to monitor applicant to vacancy ratios and we will do just that.

15. We strongly regret the move a year ago not to give officers the full pay award recommended by the independent pay review. However, we anticipate that efforts to cut bureaucracy and restore officer discretion, should they be successful, will also have a beneficial impact on morale. (Paragraph 316)

The Government has enormous respect for the work that police officers do and takes the responsibility for determining the pay of police officers extremely seriously, balancing this with a focus on affordability, both for police service and the taxpayer. Further, we recognised the strong feelings generated at the time of the last pay award and we agreed in October 2008 to the recommendation from the Police Negotiating Board for a three-year pay deal for police officers.

However, it is important to recognise that pay is only one part of developing a well-motivated and effective workforce. It is essential that officers and staff are given necessary development, support and leadership in order that they can make the most effective contribution to the work of their force. Helping police officers and staff to do their job as well as possible also means making the best use of their skills, abilities and training. The Green Paper proposals for the development and deployment of the workforce, as well as those on reducing bureaucracy, greater use of discretion and appropriate use of resources, will enable officers and staff to exercise their professional judgement in providing the very best service to the public.

16. Retention is a particular problem for forces surrounding London. We recommend that the South-East Allowance be substantially increased to make it more feasible for officers living in the South-East to work outside London. In addition, we encourage the Metropolitan Police to agree a protocol with surrounding areas to seek to limit transfers. (Paragraph 317)

The Government recognises the concerns of South East forces and authorities over the transfer of some experienced officers to the Metropolitan Police. The Home Office continues to work with ACPO, the APA and representatives of the forces and authorities concerned on this issue.

Ongoing discussions are taking place in the Police Negotiating Board on a proposal to give the South East forces flexibility in the payment of the South East Allowance in support of this. Discussions have taken place between the South East forces and the Metropolitan Police and some progress has been made; it is important that arrangements are in place that meets the needs of all police forces.

17. The Home Office should commission research on the cost implications to forces of officers on long-term sick leave, with a view to move towards more flexible contracts that would allow for them to be transferred to a staff role. (Paragraph 318)

We agree with the Committee that long-term sick leave in the police service is an important issue and one that should be looked at closely. The Home Office published an Institute of Employment Studies review of absence policies and management in police forces in September 2007. This review will be used by police forces to improve current practice, including addressing the needs of officers on long-term sickness appropriately.

However, it should be recognised that the police service has been more successful than most of its public sector counterparts during the last eight years in reducing sickness absence, which in 2007/08 stood at 8.4 days per officer.

18. We oppose direct entry to the police at chief officer level. We are not convinced that the Government's proposal for advertising posts in co-ordinated rounds, with a greater role for the Senior Appointments Panel in advising on matches, will be sufficient. (Paragraph 325)

The Government agrees with the Committee and shares its opposition to direct entry at levels above constable. The changes to the Senior Appointments Panel that we are making are part of an approach to increasing skills in areas agreed by ACPO, APA and the Home Office. They are about changing chief officer selection and development, and improved succession planning – not just appointment. However, it is pleasing to see more people now coming through the chief officer selection process.

19. The public should be provided with better information about crime levels in their neighbourhood – crime mapping. The Home Office should be alert to the potential for criminals to use information to target certain areas. Local police successes should be publicised in more detail. Police forces should make available to the media the general details of criminal activities that have been reported to the police. (Paragraph 46)

20. It is important that the public is kept informed of progress against local priorities. (Paragraph 257)

21. We believe community engagement exercises facilitated by neighbourhood police teams can be an effective means of setting local priorities. (Paragraph 258). All forces should ensure that they have adequate systems in place so that intelligence can be shared easily between neighbourhood officers and specialist and response teams. (Paragraph 261)

We are in total agreement with the Committee on the need to provide the public with better information and to keep them informed and engaged in local community safety activity. We have now entered a new era of policing, and central to this vision is a new relationship between the police and the public – to provide a more-consistent, visible and accessible service that is responsive, meets public needs and expectations, deals with local priorities and keeps local people informed. Work is underway to achieve precisely this, through the Policing Pledge and associated work on rolling out crime mapping, both of which have now been introduced across England and Wales.

All forces now publish crime maps with information about burglary, robbery, theft, vehicle crime, violent crime and anti-social behaviour incidents. The public can now access crime maps to see volume of crime, as well as crime trends and comparisons with the rest of the country. The crime maps allow the public to see how local crime fighting partnerships are impacting on issues of local concern and give people the information they need to dictate local priorities.

22. Neighbourhood policing is competing with specialist services for funding. We welcome the Government's three-year commitment to continue to provide ring-fenced resources to neighbourhood policing. We are concerned that a large number of neighbourhood officers also have to undertake with response duties. In our view, all forces should adopt an abstraction policy that ensures that neighbourhood police officers are dedicated to operating in their neighbourhood. (Paragraph 264)

The neighbourhood policing model is one that is working and working well and since April 2008 there has been a neighbourhood policing team in every area. There are now around 3,600 dedicated teams in place across England and Wales, consisting of over 13,500 Sergeants and Constables and around 16,000 Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs). As the Committee has acknowledged, we have accepted the need to continue to provide ring-fenced funding for neighbourhood policing teams and are doing so for at least the remainder of this CSR period.

Although abstraction is an operational matter for forces themselves, we are in complete agreement that in order for the neighbourhood model to continue to work well we should try to ensure that neighbourhood officers remain dedicated to operating in a specified neighbourhood. It is for this reason that the new Policing Pledge, which all 43 forces have now signed up to delivering, emphasises the importance of visibility on a 'patch'.

23. We were impressed with trials undertaken in some forces to give members of the public who contact the police in a non-emergency situation more choice of whether and when they would like an officer to attend. (Paragraph 57)

24. We recommend that central funding for the single 101 non-emergency number be reinstated and that the scheme be implemented across England and Wales. (Paragraph 58)

We agree that the public need to know who to contact in a non-emergency situation and for this reason the Policing Pledge sets out the national commitment to provide contact details of neighbourhood policing officers. The Government is also maintaining the central funding of the infrastructure for 101, to enable the development of locally-funded operations. Sheffield, Cardiff, Hampshire and the Isle of Wight are all running 101 services, and the Government is committed to encouraging other local areas to adopt the single non-emergency number.

25. We support the principle behind providing local people with mobile numbers for their neighbourhood officers, but in this form the proposal is impracticable, given that neighbourhood officers are not always on duty. It may be more appropriate for forces to reconfigure call-handling procedures to ensure that members of the public can access local information and be directed to the relevant local officer. (Paragraph 59)

Neighbourhood policing has revolutionised the contact between the police and the public. All neighbourhood policing teams have made public their contact details, providing a variety of methods by which they can be reached – this can be a central number to call, an individual voicemail number for a particular officer or e-mail addresses. The introduction of the Policing Pledge serves to cement that deal with the public.

- 26. We recommend that all forces employ consistent recording practices for offender and victim nationality, in order to improve understanding and allow resources to be allocated to meet demand. We recommend that some of the transitional migration fund be diverted to support greater education on British laws. The results of the Migration Statistics Improvement Programme should be made available in time for the next Spending Review. (Paragraph 90)**
- 27. The Home Secretary must set out proposals to assist those forces whose funding has not kept pace with changes in population. (Paragraph 91)**
- 28. A more diverse workforce can ease some of the burden on forces by reducing interpretation costs and facilitating information-sharing between new communities and the police. (Paragraph 92)**

The Home Secretary met chief constables earlier in the year to discuss the impact of migration on policing. The police also sit on a forum which the Government set up to discuss these issues. We already require migrants who want to settle here or become British citizens to pass tests in English. Under the new points system, skilled workers wanting to come to the UK will also need to have an acceptable level of English. We will also ask migrants to pay a little extra towards a fund of tens of millions of pounds to help services deal with the short term pressures of migration.

A comprehensive cross-government programme of work led by the Office for National Statistics is underway to improve the population and migration statistics, including those at the local level. This involves improvements to surveys, data sharing and the use of a range of administrative data sources, as well as the development of local indicators. The programme will deliver improved estimates and projections by 2010, in time for the next spending review and to calculate the next three year local government finance settlement from 2011-12.

The fund to manage the transitional impact of migration will come into operation from April 2009 and we envisage that each region will receive a share of this fund, with those experiencing higher levels of inward international migration receiving proportionately more. All local service providers, including local authorities and the police, will be able to benefit. This could be spent, for example, on recruiting PCSOs from migrant communities. We will also be considering migration and population issues as part of our consideration of future funding awards.

We are also making a change to the National Strategy for Police Information System's (NSPIS) custody & case preparation applications to ensure that the system makes it mandatory to input nationality for offenders and to remove the default to United Kingdom. This is scheduled to be deployed to all forces by the end of March 2009.

- 29. Alcohol-related crime places a heavy burden on police resources and diverts officers away from dealing with other types of crime. There is limited evidence of the effect of the Licensing Act 2003 on the total number of alcohol-related offences, but there is certainly a strong perception amongst police forces that alcohol-related violence is on the increase. (Paragraph 100)**

We agree that policing alcohol-related incidents can place a burden on forces. Therefore, we are pleased that the first independent review of the Licensing Act 2003, published in March 2008, showed that since the Act came into effect the overall volume of incidents of crime and disorder has remained broadly stable, with some reductions in violence.

30. Licence-holders who sell to under-age drinkers or who do not take reasonable steps to prevent alcohol-related crime and disorder increase pressure on the police. We are not convinced that full use is being made of powers under the Licensing Act 2003 to review licences where the holder is found to be irresponsible. The Government should also investigate the ability of local authorities to refuse licences or impose appropriate conditions on licences to promote the licensing objective of preventing crime and disorder, and their capacity to monitor compliance with licence conditions. (Paragraph 106)

We agree that not all police forces and local authorities are using all of the powers at their disposal to tackle alcohol problems. Therefore we have rolled out a series of regional practitioner training events to encourage more-effective and consistent use by the police and local authorities of the powers they have available to them through the Licensing Act, and developing a comprehensive digital-support package for those at the frontline of the drive to tackle alcohol-fuelled crime and disorder.

In addition, Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships have been awarded a £3 million cash injection to target enforcement activities on specific alcohol-related problems in 190 areas across all police forces. A further £1.5 million has been allocated to our top 50 priority areas to strengthen their ability to tackle underage sales, confiscate alcohol from under-18s, and run communications campaigns to tell people what action is being taken to successfully reduce alcohol-related crime and disorder in their local area. Alongside this enforcement drive, the Government also intends to introduce a new mandatory code of practice to target the most irresponsible retail practices. Primary legislation to create the framework for this code is contained within the Policing and Crime Bill.

31. We recommend that the Government commission further research into proactive use of penalty notices for disorder.

Penalty Notices for Disorder (PNDs) are a well-established tool for tackling alcohol-related problems and regular information is already collected to assess their use with findings being published on an annual basis. According to the latest published statistics, the issuing of PNDs for drunk and disorderly behaviour and sales to underage drinkers continues to increase year-on-year. We do not see that there is a need for further research at this time but we will keep this under review.

32. We recommend that a thorough evaluation of the Alcohol referral schemes pilots should be completed before they are implemented nationwide. (Paragraph 107)

We agree with the committee and can confirm that the four original Alcohol Arrest Referral (AAR) pilot sites are currently being evaluated by an independent contractor with the final report due to be delivered in August 2009. Interim findings have helped inform the design of the second wave of AAR pilots, which commenced operation in November 2008. A related independent evaluation of the nine additional pilot sites will commence in March 2009. This will include a full evaluation of the Gloucester AAR scheme – a non Home Office funded referral scheme, which has been operating for 10 years and claims to have reduced re-offending rates by 50%.

33. We share the concerns of the House of Lords Merits of Statutory Instruments Committee that Alcohol Disorder Zones may be overly-bureaucratic. We recommend an evaluation of their take-up and effectiveness within one year of their commencement.

We agree that ADZs should be evaluated and Lord West made a commitment in Parliament to report back to the House in one year (in June 2009) on the take-up and effectiveness of ADZs. To ensure that local authorities and the police are fully of how the ADZ process works, we have also now issued new hardcopy step-by-step guidance for local authorities and the police.

34. We further recommend that the Government encourage greater participation in voluntary Pubwatch schemes to facilitate partnership between licensees and the police. (Paragraph 114)

Partnership working is at the heart of the National Alcohol Strategy, and we continue to work in partnership with Pubwatch, Best Bar None and other industry schemes to improve the management of premises and the night-time economy. We are currently working with National Pubwatch on how the commencement of Drinking Banning Orders might provide a further opportunity to foster the partnership between local police and licensees.

35. We recommend the Government establish as soon as possible a legal basis for banning the use of loss-leading by supermarkets and setting a minimum price for the sale of alcohol.

The Government is determined to tackle alcohol-related problems in a way that doesn't unfairly punish the majority who drink responsibly. After two independent reviews and a full consultation, the Government has decided not to introduce a national minimum unit price at this stage. While the initial study showed that a minimum unit price would not significantly affect moderate and sensible drinkers, at a time of household budget pressure from elsewhere, we want to do further work to ensure that any policy would not be unfair to that group.

36. The Home Office should also work with the Department for Culture, Media and Sport to ensure that local authorities are fully informed on how to use their powers under the Licensing Act 2003 to impose licence conditions forbidding drinks promotions. (Paragraph 124)

Following a Ministerial summit in June 2008 with senior police officers and local authority chief executives, the Home Office and Department for Culture, Media and Sport are introducing a 'yellow card/red card' scheme to encourage earlier and stronger intervention with licensed premises which present a risk to the four licensing objectives. This will include the use of tougher conditions. The power to limit irresponsible drinks promotions will also be addressed through the new code of practice for alcohol retail.

37. KPMG has issued a damning verdict on the negligible impact of the alcohol trade's Social Responsibility Standards. The standards need to be reissued on a compulsory basis with a more effective inspection regime and penalties for breaches. They should include a ban on drinks promotions and measures to ensure responsible labelling and staff training.

Following the KPMG report, the Government, through the Youth Alcohol Action Plan, pledged to work with the industry to revise these standards with a view to making them mandatory. Over the summer we published '*Safe. Sensible. Social – Consultation on Further Action*', which set out the case for a mandatory code of practice for alcohol retail, including labelling and training, and options for how it might be implemented. On 3 December 2008 the Government announced that it intended to introduce a new mandatory code of practice to target the most irresponsible retail practices. This will set out compulsory licensing conditions for all alcohol retailers and will give licensing authorities new powers to clampdown on specific problems in their areas. Licensing authorities will also be able

to impose these new powers on several premises at once. The framework for this new mandatory code of practice for the alcohol trade is being created through the Policing and Crime Bill, and we will shortly consult on a range of conditions that everyone will have to meet, with tough penalties if they break these rules.

38. We are also disappointed by the decision by the British Beer and Pub Association to withdraw its policy on promotions. Safeguards intended to promote public health and reduce crime and anti-social behaviour are needed. The Government should clarify whether competition law really does prevent such safeguards, if necessary by bringing a test case. (Paragraph 125)

We share the Committee's concern about irresponsible promotions, which is why we are legislating to impose new standards on the alcohol industry to crack down on promotional activity that can fuel excessive drinking. But industry still has a role in promoting responsible retail through its own guidance.

We are aware that the British Beer and Pub Association (BBPA) decided to withdraw advice it had been giving its members about responsible drinks promotions. The BBPA appeared concerned about whether their advice would be compatible with competition law. It is for the BBPA to satisfy itself on this matter and to obtain legal advice as appropriate. We know that the BBPA have previously sought advice from the Office of Fair Trading (OFT). The OFT's letter to the BBPA, dated 3 June 2005, provides a clear and comprehensive statement of their position on the implications of competition law for the BBPA's guidance. As far as we are aware, their position on this has not changed. Having seen the BBPA's guidance document, there seems no strong reason to be concerned about its compatibility with competition law. It directly reflects text contained in a social responsibility standards document prepared jointly by both the Government and the drinks industry in 2005.

39. We do not support an increase in the age at which alcohol can be legally purchased; rather, young people should be encouraged to drink responsibly. (Paragraph 126)

We agree with the Committee that the age at which alcohol can be legally purchased should not be raised and we have expressed this in the Youth Alcohol Plan. As the Committee rightly points out, the challenge is to encourage young people to drink responsibly.

40. We support the proposal that bail be granted in cases of murder only if the court is satisfied that there are really exceptional circumstances to justify it. (Paragraph 138)

In the light of responses to the consultation paper '*Bail and Murder*', the Government has decided that the test for bail in murder cases should be changed, but in a slightly different way from that initially proposed. As amended, the test will provide that bail should be granted to defendants in murder cases only if the court is of the opinion that there is no significant risk that the defendant would commit an offence that would cause injury. This provision is included in the Coroners and Justice Bill, which was introduced on 14 January 2009.

41. ACPO should consider drawing up guidance on monitoring procedures for offenders released on bail. (Paragraph 139)

We agree that it is important to monitor offenders released on bail and ACPO are looking at this as part of broader guidance on risk identification and management being developed. Most forces across the country already have systems to help identify and manage risk factors around violent offenders and situations, and part of this will help to ensure

compliance with bail conditions. This includes the exchange of information across force boundaries. These offenders might have a significant impact on crime figures or be potentially dangerous offenders. However, not every offender is managed this way as there has to be a proportionate approach to bail monitoring that reflects the risk posed.

42. We welcome the proposal that Her Majesty's Court Service should introduce separate seating arrangements for victims' families in court. This should be done immediately. (Paragraph 140)

We agree that the safety of victims and their families is of paramount importance. This is why both the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime and the Witness Charter already require the courts to provide separate seating where possible. This requires local co-operation with CJS agencies (Witness Care Units and/or police and the Witness Service) to work together.

Following the review by Louise Casey on *Engaging Communities in Fighting Crime*, guidance was sent to the courts on 5 August 2008, to re-emphasise the importance of being proactive in meeting the needs of victims and their families well in advance of the trial date, including, where possible, the provision of separate seating both before and during the trial.

However, there are factors which do limit the extent to which we can ensure total separation. If some form of physical separation were to be implemented in each court, there would be significant and disproportionate resource costs for Her Majesty's Court Service, which in the current financial climate is not possible.

43. We welcome the use of tagging orders to enable the police to monitor more effectively defendants released on bail. The Home Office should keep this under review. Breaches should be dealt with by withdrawal of bail. (Paragraph 144)

We agree that the use of tagging should be kept under review. The Ministry of Justice manages the contracts with the electronic monitoring suppliers and closely monitors the use of tagging on bail and will continue to do so. ACPO are also engaged in the oversight arrangements.

Tagging is an important tool for use in monitoring offenders released on bail. The courts were invited in 2005 to make greater use of tagging on bail for adults as an alternative to remand in custody, and use has increased substantially since then. For those aged over-16, tagging on bail is available only as an alternative to custody. For those aged 12-16, the use of tagging is subject to different criteria and does not have to be an alternative to custody. It is for the court to decide, taking account of all the circumstances, whether a defendant who breaches the curfew or tampers with the tagging equipment should be remanded in custody, or can be re-bailed with the same or different conditions. Courts are also aware that tagging is an alternative to custody.

44. Knife crime: greater use of accident and emergency data would be helpful, as would proposals to extend the British Crime Survey to cover under-16s. Gun crime causes irreparable damage to the communities affected by it. We believe that more emphasis and resources should be assigned to tackling knife crime, given its far greater prevalence. (Paragraph 151)

45. HAC will undertake an inquiry devoted to knife crime. (Paragraph 163)

46. We recommend that the additional funding provided by the Government to tackle knife crime is used to replicate the approach in Hackney and Moss Side. (Paragraph 164)

We agree with the Committee that we should prioritise and adequately resource efforts to reduce knife crime.

The British Crime Survey has now been extended to include those aged 10 years old and over and we are also keen to increase the use of accident and emergency data, and are working closely with the Department of Health to improve systems for sharing data between Accident and Emergency (A&E) departments and Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRPs). Some examples of good practice exist, particularly in the South East, and we are looking to build on these as part of the Tackling Knives Action Plan (TKAP). The numbers of hospitals sharing information across the thirteen TKAP areas are increasing on a weekly basis, and we continue to work with other hospitals as the work is rolled out, with targeted A&E departments working together with the Department of Health.

Tackling knife crime is a priority for this Government: the Home Office-led Tackling Knives Action Plan, launched in June 2008, pledged £2 million across 10 police force areas to target teenage knife crime. In addition, a further £3 million has been made available to forces to improve the safety of young people who are at risk of involvement in knife crime, and a £4.5 million fund for third sector organisations working in this field has also been announced. This is in addition to the £100 million youth crime action plan, which focuses on enforcement and early intervention.

47. We recommend that the Home Secretary asks the Sentencing Guidelines Council to revisit their guidelines for knife and gun offences to ensure this is properly reflected. (Paragraph 166). We look forward to the results of the crime-recording and streamlined justice process pilots and urge national implementation as soon as possible should they be successful. (Paragraph 176)

The courts already take gun and knife crime seriously, and sentence accordingly. In 2007, 60% of offenders sentenced for firearms possession received the five-year mandatory minimum sentence (or three years for those aged under 18). Sentence lengths have increased since the Government introduced the minimum five-year sentence in 2004, to an average of 56 months for adult offenders in 2007. The Sentencing Guidelines Council has not issued a guideline on possession of a firearm, but the Court of Appeal has produced guidance on ‘exceptional circumstances’, which entitles judges to sentence to less than five years.

In August, the Sentencing Guidelines Council reviewed the guidelines on possession of an offensive weapon, so that the starting point for least serious case of possession of a knife is now 12 weeks custody. Offenders who carry knives are now less likely to be cautioned, and more likely to be prosecuted and given prison or a tough community penalty. In the last year, the numbers in prison on remand for weapons possession has increased by a third, as has the proportion sentenced to immediate imprisonment, although TKAP forces tell us that the proportion of those caught with knives remains small.

48. We recommend that police officers are given clearer guidance as to when they may search those they have stopped for non-arrestable offences for weapons, upon discovery of any recent convictions for carrying a knife or gun. (Paragraph 165)

As a result of the Committee's helpful recommendation we will look at how we can improve existing guidance. Following the review of PACE and the recent change to PACE Code A, which removed the requirement to record a stop and account encounter (other than the ethnicity of the person being stopped), we will be looking later this year at how we can simplify the content of the Code.

However, we would not anticipate extending the scope of reasonable suspicion to include past offending alone as being sufficient grounds to stop an individual or conduct or to stop and search. The Code is already explicit on what constitutes reasonable suspicion to carry out a stop and search. It does not include previous convictions alone as sufficient grounds to search a person. That is an important safeguard to prevent a person being subject to arbitrary interference simply because they have a conviction. But when there is supporting intelligence or suspicion that a person may be carrying a knife or other gun, an officer would be perfectly entitled to stop and search the person for that purpose. If a person has been arrested for shoplifting for example, a police officer may search the person for evidence of the offence or for any items which might be used to assist him to escape from lawful custody.

49. We welcome the change of PACE Code A to allow the approach to be piloted in seven Basic Command Units across four forces over the summer. We await the results of the pilots, which will be presented to the House in due course. (Paragraph 181) We are cautiously optimistic that current attempts to reduce bureaucracy may be more successful than previous efforts. It is essential that the service achieves the level of efficiency savings quantified by Sir Ronnie Flanagan. (Paragraph 182)

We agree with the committee that it is important to achieve the levels of reduction in bureaucracy identified by Sir Ronnie Flanagan. We have made significant progress on implementing the recommendations made by Sir Ronnie, in both his interim and final reports. 19 of the 59 recommendations (across both reports) have already been assessed as completed and most of the remaining are at a good stage.

Following the successful pilot, the Home Secretary visited West Midlands Police on 22 December 2008 and announced the national scrapping of the stop and account form, and encouraged the national roll-out of proportionate crime recording. Changes were made to PACE Code A by negative resolution, and the changes took effect from 1 January 2009. We anticipate that the changes to recording of stop and account will realise savings of around 690,000 hours per annum in terms of street activity, back office inputting, management supervision, community engagement and storing and providing paper copies of records.

The Home Office has a clear vision for reducing bureaucracy and set this out in the Green Paper. Our approach is to free up police time to concentrate on driving down crime and driving up confidence by: combating red-tape; ensuring access to top-quality IT; reducing paperwork involved in policing; and returning discretion to officers. Our efforts are greatly assisted by the appointment of Jan Berry as the independent Reducing Bureaucracy Advocate.

50. We support a cautious extension of their powers so that all PCSOs are awarded powers that are currently at the discretion of Chief Constables. The Home Office should consider piloting the provision of a warrant card to allow PCSOs to make arrests in exceptional circumstances, where lives are in danger. PCSOs should not undertake any more than the bare minimum of bureaucracy necessary to the role and should not be based in police stations. (Paragraph 337)

Through the Green Paper, we committed to a further evaluation of PCSO powers. That work is now drawing to a close and our aim is to be clearer about the powers that all PCSOs have, no matter where they are in the country. We welcome the Committee's recognition of the very distinct role of PCSOs, based on high-visibility patrol, community engagement and problem-solving. The Government remains committed to maintaining that distinctiveness. However, we do not believe that the provision of warrant cards and giving PCSOs the power of arrest, even in limited circumstances, is appropriate for the role.

51. In addition to standard powers, PCSOs across the country should wear the same uniform. (Paragraph 338)

We agree with the Committee that the current disparity in PCSO uniforms is confusing to the public. This was considered as part of the PCSO Review, conducted by the NPIA, which is due for publication in the Spring. As a result of this consideration we have agreed with ACPO and the APA that there will, in future, be greater standardisation of the uniform, with nationally-consistent identifying features of a plain blue hat band, plain blue epaulettes and a plain blue tie. These changes will be phased-in as uniforms are replaced.

52. We welcome the Home Secretary's recent grant of £50 million to fund PDAs in 19 English forces and her promises of a further £25 million. We recommend that sufficient funding is made available as soon as possible to enable all frontline officers to have access to a PDA. (Paragraph 192) NPIA should take the lead in negotiating the purchase of PDAs and their supporting infrastructure on a uniform basis, in order to reduce costs and remove contractual burdens from individual forces. In doing so, they should give careful consideration to the supporting infrastructure to ensure ease of use and flexibility to adapt to future innovations. It is important that officers who will use the technology are involved in system design to ensure it meets their needs. (Paragraph 206)

We welcome the Committee's endorsement of the current investment in mobile technology. A further £30m, in addition to the £50m already provided, will be made available to forces via the NPIA in order to meet the target to deliver 30,000 devices by 2010. £15m will be made available in 2008/09 with the remaining £15m in 2009/10.

The NPIA has negotiated national framework contracts for Mobile Data Services (including the devices, their support, infrastructure and applications) which all forces can now use. This gives the advantage of them securing nationally negotiated rates as well as avoiding the need for lengthy procurement processes with bespoke contracts. A significant number of the forces receiving grants from the Home Office will be using these framework contracts. Forces will continue to be intimately involved in the development and evolution of these services to ensure that the focus of this work remains in support of operational Policing requirements.

53. It is essential that the British Transport Police is able to access the Police National Database on the same basis as Home Office forces, to enable intelligence to be shared fully across the service. We hope the Home Office can provide assurances that funding for this will be forthcoming. (Paragraph 209)

The Police National Database (PND) will replace the Impact Nominal Index (INI) system that is currently used to share information between United Kingdom police forces. As current users of INI, the British Transport Police (BTP) will therefore have access to PND. It will be necessary for the NPIA to charge the British Transport Police their proportion of the costs of PND, as is the case with INI, in order to avoid any cross-subsidisation of government departments. The NPIA's IMPACT Programme, responsible for delivering PND, are in regular contact with BTP with regard to their implementation of PND. A recharging model is being developed for all Non-Home Office funded forces and other organisations, and this will be shared with BTP.

54. We are concerned about the shortfall in police capacity to deal with serious and organised crime. We remain unconvinced about the effectiveness of the Serious and Organised Crime Agency and its relationship with police forces. (Paragraph 277)

We reaffirmed in the Green Paper our commitment to ensuring that all forces achieve the necessary standards that we and the public demand and expect for all the protective services, including serious organised crime.

We have made significant developments in improving the police response to protective services through the tri-partite Protective Service Improvement Programme, including £35 million over three years of targeted investment in protective service improvement.

We have followed a twin track approach of helping forces and authorities to take ultimate responsibility for delivering effective protective services whilst simultaneously helping to create the delivery environment above force level that gives the best possible chance of success. To that end we have undertaken work with partners to improve individual force capacity and capability, such as:

- Setting out our expectations in police planning regulations that forces and authorities should map the risk and threat faced from protective services and what actions were being put in place to mitigate the threat;
- Developing minimum standards for all protective services (developed by ACPO);
- Creating a threat assessment tool to assist forces in accurately assessing their demand for these services (developed by NPIA).

We have been clear that, collectively, forces and authorities have a responsibility to collaborate to realise the necessary efficiencies and make the necessary improvements and have focused on taking forward collaboration by:

- Leading a £5 million programme of ‘collaboration demonstrators’ involving 13 projects and over 30 forces to generate lessons and best practice in joint working; and
- Bringing forward legislation that is currently going through Parliament to strengthen the framework within which collaboration is taken forward.

We have also paid particular attention to areas that HMIC highlighted as being in particular need of increased capacity and capability, such as serious organised crime, and have:

- Continued to tackle serious organised crime by supporting existing collaboration such as Regional Intelligence Units, set up in each region to analyse, assess and develop information and intelligence held by police forces and other law enforcement agencies on serious organised crime;
- Continued to fund the work of the office of the National Co-ordinator for Serious Organised Crime, whose role, amongst other things is to ensure there is a co-ordinated response to cross-border serious organised crime across the country, and that improvements needed in tackling cross-border organised crime are identified and addressed;
- Created the Organised Crime Partnership Board (OCPB) attended by senior representatives from all the law enforcement agencies, with a view to assist in

providing the necessary strategic direction and co-ordination for a joint response to serious organised crime nationally across all agencies;

- Established a Ministerial Advisory Group with cross-Government representation to sponsor the work of the OCPB, and ensure that good progress is made in this vital area;
- As well as continuing to support and fund the work of the East Midlands Special Operations Unit – a region highlighted as an acute gap in the 2005 HMIC report; and
- £2 million of matched funding will be made available in 2009/10 and £3 million in 2010/11 for the most needy regions to strengthen their operational response to Serious Organised Crime through collaboration.

We stated in the Policing Green Paper that there was a growing consensus that some protective services such as Serious Organised Crime could benefit from a more robust and consistent collaborative platform, building on the positive collaboration already taken forward in this area. We have asked Denis O'Connor to explore in partnership with the tripartite what opportunities exist for developing collaboration in this way and in particular to come up with proposals on what this could mean for Serious Organised Crime. This report is due in March 2009 and we look forward to considering the recommendations and using this to help map out a way forward in this important area of policing.

We think SOCA is effective, but we do accept the challenge of ensuring that it remains so. SOCA's annual report of 2007-08 shows impressive results – they were, for example, involved in seizures of 90 tonnes of Class A drugs. Police forces and SOCA are working closely together through the programmes of activity which comprise the UK Control Strategy for Organised Crime. Additionally, in 2008-09 SOCA are planning to put some 18% of their effort towards operational and institutional support to partners outside the Control Strategy. Most of these partners will be police forces.

55. We accept that it is inappropriate to measure performance on counter-terrorism and serious and organised crime through quantitative targets and the Home Office should devise a different means of measuring performance in this area. (Paragraph 40)

SOCA has robust arrangements, agreed with the Home Office, for measuring its performance. We do not have specific diagnostic indicators for forces on serious organised crime. Serious organised crime covers a broad range of criminality, and is partly picked up in terms of performance management by indicators on linked crimes, such as gun crime and other serious crimes; it is also covered by performance indicators on enforcement activity, such as asset recovery. There is more to be done, and we will be looking to explore opportunities to develop robust performance indicators in this area.

56. We recommend the Home Secretary should now use her powers to mandate those forces who are not doing so voluntarily to share support services (Paragraph 215)

57. While we consider the Government was right to withdraw its proposals to compel forces to merge, we are convinced of the need for closer working at a regional level. Therefore, we are not opposed to voluntary mergers but reiterate we our support for the Government to require collaboration in protective services where this proves necessary. (Paragraph 278)

58. We are encouraged at progress made to improve the ability of the police to manage the terrorist threat. However, we were unable to judge during our inquiry whether the police have the capacity and capability to respond to a major terrorist attack. (Paragraph 279)

We welcome the Committee's endorsement of our approach to strengthen collaboration to drive the necessary improvements in both support and operational services, and particularly protective services. Collaboration is becoming a critical part of 21st century policing, and the Green Paper sets out how we intend to go further to strengthen collaborative working across the country. It makes clear that evidence points to the fact that some policing functions, such as serious organised crime, can benefit from being delivered collaboratively above force level.

We have asked Denis O'Connor as acting HM Chief Inspector of Constabulary to explore what police functions could benefit from a more robust and consistent collaborative framework. We are bringing forward legislation to ensure that forces can collaborate readily to put themselves in the best possible position to secure greater efficiencies and effectiveness in delivering these vital services. We are also clarifying the Home Secretary's powers to give directions about collaboration where it is in the public interest. Where the inspectorate concludes that particular functions are best delivered at the cross-force, multi-force or regional level, those powers, including the power to mandate collaboration, will be used.

59. Insufficient progress has been made in bringing forward a plan to secure the London Olympic Games, which are now only four years away. The Home Office should take urgent steps to ensure that planning security for the Games is properly co-ordinated across police forces and other authorities. (Paragraph 293)

The Home Office is leading work to develop a 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Safety and Security Strategy and an accompanying National Concept of Operations, as well as individual Workstream Plans. This work is at an advanced stage and is driven by a requirement to integrate activity across the various delivery organisations: particularly the police, the Olympic Delivery Authority (ODA) and the London Organising Committee for the Olympic Games (LOCOG) and connect with other security programmes across Government.

Co-ordinating these security plans and achieving a shared vision is a key requirement for a safe and secure 2012 Olympic Games. From the outset the Home Office has sought to produce our Olympic security plans through a collaborative process with the full involvement of the police and their authorities. We have disseminated our draft strategy, concept of operations and workstream plans to a wide audience comprising senior officials in all the relevant departments and agencies, the police, particularly those forces hosting an Olympic venue in 2012, the APA, the ODA and LOCOG. In total this consultation has involved several hundred representatives from over 25 different organisations with links to the Olympic security effort. This includes ACPO, who are responsible for co-ordinating Olympic policing activity nationally. The completed security strategy and accompanying documents were presented to ministers on 25 February 2009. We will ensure that the committee receives an update on progress shortly.

60. We are concerned about the potential for the Airwave network to fail during the Olympic 2012 games, given the numbers of officers who will be deployed. The Home Office should address this as a matter of urgency. We expect the Home Office to keep us informed as to practical steps they are taking in partnership with Airwave Solutions. (Paragraph 294)

Robust and resilient communications are a key part of the security architecture for the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. The Home Office and police colleagues have recognised the importance of Airwave and the fact that there will need to be a significant increase in capacity requirements during the 2012 Games. We are already planning to expand capacity to ensure that the Airwave network remains resilient, involving technical expertise in this process to ensure that these plans are deliverable.

To this end, we have been working with the NPIA, as holders of the national Airwave contract to take forward our anticipated requirement. Airwave Solutions, in partnership with the NPIA, is in the process of working with all of the affected forces to gather radio communications requirements for the Olympics and is assessing the capacity that will be required to ensure that the service available during the Olympics will be fit for purpose. Airwave Solutions have already provided proposals on ways in which they could bridge potential capacity shortfalls, which include increasing capacity if operational requirements demand it. In light of this, the Home Office is consulting with Ofcom on the release of additional radio spectrum, should this be required. We will, of course, be continually refining Airwave requirements in line with our developing Olympic Security Plan in order to get best value. This will include confirming the resilience of the network through the Olympic test event programme which will begin in 2011.

61. We welcome assurances that radio communication between tunnel and surface is now possible through most of the London Underground network. (Paragraph 295)

Airwave is now operational throughout the whole of the London Underground system and is working well. Six emergency response vehicles (mobile masts) are always on permanent standby to provide extra communications on the Underground should the need arise.

62. We are encouraged by the proportion of women entering the service and do not support the introduction of affirmative action. We believe there should be more mentoring opportunities throughout the service to support women in applying for promotion. (Paragraph 343) We support increased diversity in the police. (Paragraph 353) We are disappointed that police will not meet Home Office targets for BME recruitment in 2009. We do not support affirmative action. We hope that some of these PCSOs will be encouraged to apply for officer positions where appropriate. (Paragraph 354)

63. We are unable to assess the extent of racism in the police service. We hope that the results of the Mayor of London and Home Secretary initiated inquiries and subsequent actions taken will encourage black and minority ethnic officers to join the police. (Paragraph 355)

The Home Office set out proposals in the Green Paper for a three year Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Strategy, including more mentoring and active talent management in areas where representation of underrepresented groups is of concern to address issues such as the relatively low numbers of women seeking and obtaining promotion. We also published an assessment of BME recruitment, retention and progression in the police service. It pointed to the progress that had been made on increasing overall minority ethnic representation. For example the doubling of representation of minority ethnic officers since

1999, from 2.0% to 4.1% and successful recruitment of BME PCSOs which accounted for 11.5% of the total number of PCSO in England and Wales (higher than the overall 7% national target for police staff). The BME police staff and special constable national target of 7% was achieved in 2007.

However, the assessment recognised that there was considerable progress still to be made and set out an ambitious programme of work on positive action; including guidance on positive action (and how this can be used within the scope of the law) to be developed by the NPIA and the Equality and Human Rights Commission. Increased performance in equality and diversity will be driven by new equality standards for policing, which are being developed by the NPIA. These will include local decisions on the setting of local targets, including increasing ethnic minority recruitment, retention and progression. Ambitious targets will be set on the most important issues locally. Police authorities will set these targets in consultation with local forces and the community.



Published by TSO (The Stationery Office) and available from:

Online

www.tsoshop.co.uk

Mail, Telephone, Fax & E-mail

TSO

PO Box 29, Norwich NR3 1GN

General enquiries: 0870 600 5522

Order through the Parliamentary Hotline *Lo-call* 0845 7 023474

Fax orders: 0870 600 5533

Email: customer.services@tso.co.uk

Textphone: 0870 240 3701

The Parliamentary Bookshop

12 Bridge Street, Parliament Square

London SW1A 2JX

TSO@Blackwell and other Accredited Agents

Customers can also order publications from:

TSO Ireland

16 Arthur Street, Belfast BT1 4GD

Tel 028 9023 8451 Fax 028 9023 5401

ISBN 978-0-10-175532-0



9 780101 755320