



Inspecting policing  
in the public interest

## **British Transport Police's response to the funding challenge**

**January 2014**

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# **British Transport Police:**

## **Executive summary**

Unlike Home Office police forces, the British Transport Police (BTP) does not receive a central government grant and is therefore not subject to the same funding reductions from the spending review.

Achieving value for money is an objective for the force and it has set a target of delivering £16.8m efficiency savings over the equivalent period of the spending review (2011 – 2015) In comparison to the savings requirement for Home Office police forces this is a smaller financial challenge. Where BTP particularly benefits is that, unlike Home Office forces where savings are made against a reduction in funding, the British Transport Police Authority (BTPA) has agreed that the savings the force achieves can be retained to fund areas of growth.

Despite this, the force is not without its challenges; it provides a national service across an expanding rail network where passenger numbers and freight movements are increasing.

The force is on target to achieve its savings requirement delivered through a major change programme. As BTP looks to deliver future efficiencies there are opportunities for learning from Home Office forces, in particular those which have fundamentally transformed how they deliver policing, achieving reduced costs while maintaining and improving service delivery.

### **Financial challenge**

BTP operates and is funded in a different way to other police forces. BTP is a national, specialist force for the railways with a jurisdiction that covers England, Wales and Scotland. It is responsible for policing the infrastructure maintained by Network Rail, and the trains and stations of 39 passenger and freight companies operating mainline rail services. It also provides a policing service to the London Underground system, the Docklands Light Railway, High Speed 1 (formally the Channel Tunnel Rail Link), the Tyne and Wear Metro, the Midland Tram System and the Croydon Tramlink.

The BTPA is the governing body for the BTP, responsible for overseeing the provision of an efficient and effective police service. The BTPA is primarily funded by the rail industry and does not receive direct Home Office funding. However, it may apply for specific grants to cover policing of the railways during exceptional events, such as the Olympics and the 2011 riots.

The Railways and Transport Act 2003 provides the statutory basis for the funding of the BTPA by the rail industry. The BTPA enters into a police service agreement (PSA) with the train operating companies (TOCs), freight companies and Network Rail. The PSA requires operators to use and pay for the services of the BTP and indicates the level of policing resource that will be allocated to its line or services. The costs attributed to each user are determined by a charging model, which allocates costs reflecting the extent of the policing activity attributable to each PSA holder.

As BTP is not funded by government grant the financial challenge facing the force differs from Home Office forces, which have experienced an actual reduction in central government grant.

However, the rail industry operates within financial constraints and in 2011 the McNulty Independent Rail Value for Money Study set a challenge to the rail industry to make a 30% unit reduction in the cost per passenger kilometre by 2018/19. This is a direct cost to the rail industry and the BTPA recognises the role that the force has in contributing towards this target to reduce cost. Although remaining relatively stable between 2004/05 and 2008/09, BTP's cost per passenger kilometre is on target to decrease by 29.12% during the period covered by the McNulty Review, a reduction from 38 pence to 28 pence. BTP is, therefore, in a good position in that it has already made, or has planned, significant progress in achieving the overall efficiency gains required from the McNulty Report. Indeed, BTP's cost per passenger kilometre is forecast to decrease by 39.5% over the *2013/19 Strategic Plan*.

After a period of growth in the force's budget between 2004 and 2009, subsequent below-inflation increases has meant a budget reduction in real terms. The force has identified that it will need to achieve efficiency savings of £16.8m, or 6% of the force's annual expenditure<sup>1</sup> between March 2011 and March 2015. This is considerably lower than the 17% reduction in expenditure facing Home Office forces.

Where BTP benefits is that – unlike Home Office forces where savings are made against a reduction in funding – the BTPA has agreed that the savings the force achieves can be reinvested in the frontline as the railway industry expands and demand for BTP increases.

The BTPA faces a particular financial challenge in the way VAT is treated which sets it apart from Home Office police forces. The authority is unable to claim VAT incurred in the purchase of goods and services. This affects a number of areas, in particular with collaboration arrangements where the authority adds an additional cost to services provided to others. This is also the case where assets are transferred to the authority.

## **Progress in making savings**

BTP has planned how it will save all of the £16.8m required by March 2015 and is well on track to achieve this; it has delivered 74% of this requirement between 2011/12 and 2012/13.

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<sup>1</sup> Based on a baseline gross expenditure in 2010/11.

## Changes to the workforce

The £16.8m savings are planned to come from across a wide range of areas including restructuring in both back office and operational support areas and also reviews of non-pay expenditure.

Between March 2010 and March 2013 the number of police officers has increased by 26 to 2,910, an increase of 0.9%. Over the same period police and community support officers (PCSOs) increased by 59 to 371, a 19% rise, and police staff have increased by 275 to 1,599 a rise of 21%. This differs from most Home Office police forces where there has been a reduction in police community support officers and police staff.<sup>2</sup> In addition, the increase in police officer numbers is not in keeping with the trend seen in most Home Office police forces.

## Impact on the public

HMIC expects forces to make savings without damaging the service provided to the public. We monitor whether they are achieving this by examining crime rates and the results of the victim satisfaction surveys which all forces conduct.

Over the first two years of the spending review, recorded crime rates (excluding fraud)<sup>3</sup> fell by 11%, which is smaller than the figure for England and Wales (13%). BTP's survey of victim satisfaction shows a slight increase from 84% in 2011/12 to 85% in 2012/13.

## Future challenges

BTP is operating within a rapidly expanding sector with anticipated growth across all elements of the rail network. This growth will place greater demands on BTP for services and creates a challenge for the force to continue to become more efficient and not simply seek more resources from the rail industry. Savings achieved to date and a recognition that it must continue to drive further efficiencies provides a sound basis as BTP plans for the future.

Other forces faced with much greater budget reductions provide an opportunity for learning, in particular those forces that have fundamentally transformed how they deliver policing while maintaining a strong focus on achieving policing objectives.

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2 HMIC uses workforce information provided by forces to the Home Office as part of the Annual Data Requirement (ADR). However, BTP is only required to provide a partial return so for this report we have used BTP's actual workforce figures. While an equally valid source of data, the two are not directly comparable, the conclusion that for forces in England and Wales, the numbers of police officers, police staff and PCSO are decreasing where as in BTP they are increasing is nonetheless accurate.

3 Crime excluding fraud, as per the new crime classifications released in July 2013 by the Office for National Statistics.

## The challenge

BTP's funding sits outside the funding arrangements for Home Office police forces and it is not affected by the reductions in central government grant to policing, nor is it reliant on income received from council tax.

BTPA is funded via the 'user pays' principle; as such each train operating company (TOC), freight company and Network Rail enter a police service agreement (PSA) with the authority which sets out the level of policing resource that will be provided. The charges paid by each are calculated through a charging model on an annual basis and draws on a number of information sources including crime, incident and resource data.

BTP's London Underground Area is funded separately by London Underground Limited (LUL). Under the agreement, BTPA recharges all payroll and other direct costs of providing the police service to LUL on a periodic basis. In addition, the agreement provides for the recovery through the PSA charging mechanism of an appropriate share of BTPA's overheads.

In addition to the core policing arrangements, some police service agreement (PSA) holders purchase additional policing services through an Enhanced PSA (EPSA) with BTPA. In addition BTP does apply (when applicable) for additional funding from the Home Office or other agencies for specific areas of work.

The force's strategic plans and long-term performance are closely linked to railway industry investment. The McNulty Independent Rail Value for Money Study 2011 challenged the rail industry to make 30% reduction in passenger cost per kilometre by 2018/19. The BTPA requires the BTP to support achieving this target by delivering efficiency savings as it is a cost to the rail industry.

Although remaining relatively stable between 2004/05 and 2008/09, BTP's cost per passenger kilometre is on target to decrease by 29.12% during the period covered by the McNulty Review, a reduction from 38 pence to 28 pence. BTP is, therefore, in a good position in that it has already made, or has planned, significant progress in achieving the overall efficiency gains required from the McNulty Report. Indeed, BTP's cost per passenger kilometre is forecast to decrease by 39.5% over the *2013/19 Strategic Plan*.

The force's medium-term financial plan shows an annual budget of just over £200m (excluding a budget of just over £50m for London Underground operations). Charges to the rail industry through PSAs saw a reduction of 2.5% in 2011/12, a 0% change in 2012/13 and a 1.8% increase in 2013/14.

Over the four years of the spending review (March 2011 to March 2015), BTP has identified that it needs to find savings of £16.8m, which equates to 6% of its total expenditure. This does not include any savings resulting from their proposed restructuring project which could amount to more than £7m.

This is lower than the savings requirement for Home Office police forces in England and Wales which have a savings requirement of 17%<sup>4</sup>. Where BTP particularly benefits is that unlike Home Office forces where savings are made against a reduction in funding, the BTPA has agreed that the savings the force achieves can be reinvested in the frontline as the railway industry expands and demand for BTP increases.

## **Progress in making savings**

Over the first two years of the spending review period, the force successfully achieved 74% (£12.4m) of the total efficiency savings required by March 2015. The force has plans in place to achieve further savings of £3.1m in 2013/14, and another £1.3m in 2014/15.

## **Looking beyond 2015**

BTP's Strategic Policing Plan for 2013 – 2019 sets out how it will respond to the significant changes in the rail industry. It outlines how BTP will respond to wider industry pressures, both financial and operational. It will do this by delivering improved service quality and significantly reducing unit costs; this will be within the environment of a nationally expanding railway network and increasing passenger numbers. The force objectives are to reduce crime on railways by 20%, reduce disruption caused by police-related incidents by 20% and increase passenger confidence.

These challenging targets are set within a medium-term financial plan (MTFP) that anticipates an increase in PSA charges in line with the retail price index (RPI). For 2014/15 this represents a 2.6% increase, in 2015/16 a 3.4% increase and for 2016/17 a 3.0% increase.

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<sup>4</sup> Based on a gross revenue expenditure baseline of 2010/11.

## The scale of the challenge

Although BTP is in the unique position that it can recharge costs to the rail industry, it faces challenges as it meets its savings requirement. This is because:

- it operates within a competitive commercial environment, where the railway industry continually seeks to drive down costs and improve performance;
- it is facing a major force restructure and has already reduced significantly the number of senior police officers across the force;
- the force has a very low level of reserves, meaning it has limited opportunities to support change initiatives e.g. funding redundancies or meeting shortfalls in savings targets;
- of the increasing emphasis on minimising delay to rail services as the force exercises its functions; and
- as a national, force it has to provide infrastructure over the whole of the rail network e.g. accommodation and travel.

However, there are opportunities to achieve further efficiencies and cost savings:

- BTP's spend on human resources is the second highest nationally with a 2.1% of net revenue expenditure in comparison with an average of 1.2%, or £1,096 per full-time equivalent compared with an average of £671;
- premises costs are the third highest nationally: 5.7% of net revenue expenditure in comparison with an average of 4.1%, or £3,004 per full time equivalent member of staff compared with an average of £2,191<sup>5</sup>;
- further collaboration including police to police and police to private sector; and
- transforming the force operating model.

## Demand

Forces face different levels of demand for the service they provide to the public. This section looks at two of the key indicators of demand to provide an overall impression of the challenges each force faces:

- the number of calls the force receives from the public; and
- the number of crimes the force deals with.

Each year BTP receives approximately 40,000 emergency calls from Home Office forces and rail partners/users. In addition BTP receives in the region of 430,000 external non-emergency calls. In 2012/13, BTP dealt with 16,545 emergency calls requiring an immediate response and 30,998 priority calls. Outside their own jurisdiction BTP attends over 3,000 calls in support of other forces. However, BTP receives fewer calls than for Home Office forces.

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<sup>5</sup> Data taken from Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Police Objective Analysis (POA) estimate for 2012/13.

BTP has one of the lowest overall crimes per officer in England and Wales.

While call volumes, deployments (both to emergency and those requiring a priority response) and crime is lower than in a majority of Home Office forces, BTP has the unique challenge of providing a national service.

In addition, when looking at the demand on BTP, it is important to take account of other indicators of demand, in particular passenger numbers and freight movements. Since 2008, passenger numbers have increased by 50% to 1.4bn. Forecasts show that this is likely to grow even more with passenger journeys predicted to increase by an average of 16% by 2019 and freight traffic by 23%.

As the industry continues to expand, the importance of minimising delays to rail services takes on even greater importance.

## **How difficult is the challenge?**

BTP faces challenges which differ from Home Office forces. As a national force it provides policing across the whole of the rail network which adds to its cost base. In delivering policing functions the force must consider a wider mission, in particular the impact of policing on the rail network and minimising the disruption to passengers from crime and related incidents, as well as making rail travel safer for passengers and staff.

While BTP has had to absorb a reduction in real terms in the force's budget, the savings requirement is considerably smaller than for Home Office forces. The main advantage for the force is that it can retain efficiency savings for reinvestment in other areas of the force and to support growth. Overall, HMIC would assess that the force faces a moderate challenge.

## Response to the challenge

As over 80% of police budgets (on average) is spent on staff costs, it is not surprising that forces plan to achieve much of their savings by reducing the number of police officers, police community support officers (PCSOs) and police staff they employ.

### Changes to workforce numbers

BTP has actively reduced senior officer ranks (chief inspector and above) using a voluntary severance scheme to reduce the numbers (this approach can be used as BTP police officers are contracted employees rather than servants of the Crown).

In addition, the force has centralised some functions such as human resources, payroll and information management. This has led to some compulsory redundancies; however, the force has sought to limit this through redeploying staff to other roles.

The following table shows the force's planned changes to workforce numbers between 2010/11 to 2012/13.

	2010/11 (baseline)	2012/13	Change	Change %
Police Officers	2,884	2,910	26	0.9%
Police Staff	1,324	1,599	275	21%
PCSOs	312	371	59	19%
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,520</b>	<b>4,880</b>	<b>360</b>	<b>8%</b>
Specials	240	247	7	3%

**Note:** HMIC generally uses workforce data provided by a force to the Home Office as part of their Annual Data Requirement. Unlike other forces, BTP is not required to provide this information in the same format as other forces. We have therefore used workforce data from the Police Objective Analysis (actuals) submitted by the force to the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA).

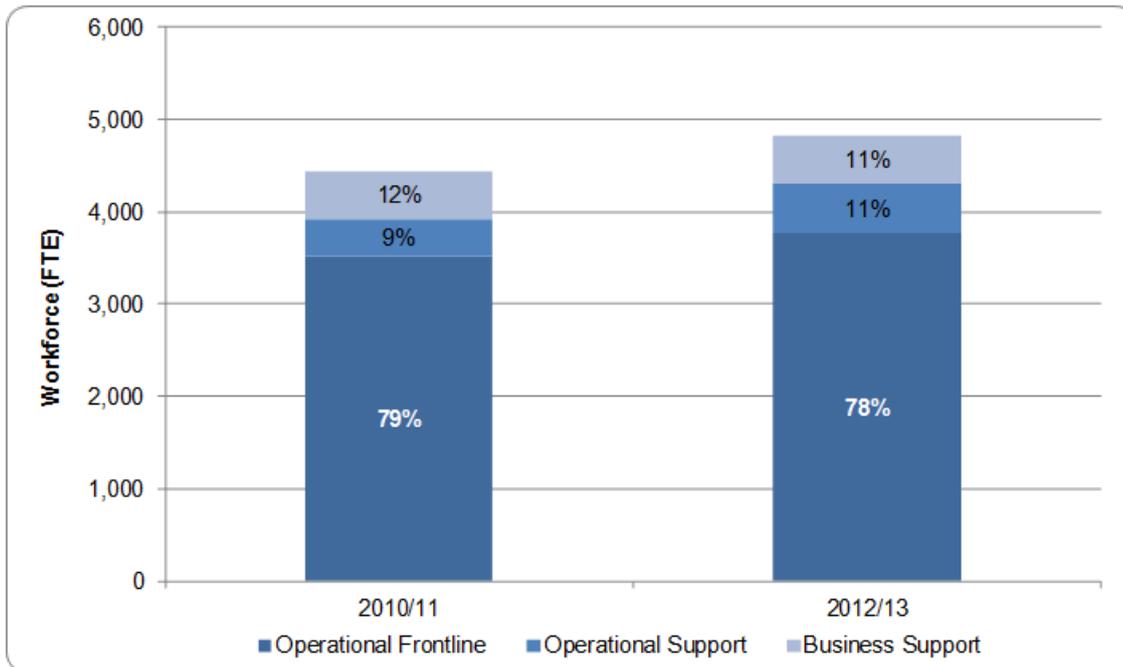
Overall, the table shows that over the first two years of the force's current saving programme (and the spending review period), BTP has increased the number of police officers and increased the numbers of police staff, PCSOs and special constables.

The increase in police officers is not in line with the trend seen in Home Office police forces. Unlike Home Office forces, BTP has also increased the numbers of PCSOs and police staff where there has been a reduction elsewhere.

## Changes to the proportion of workforce on the front line

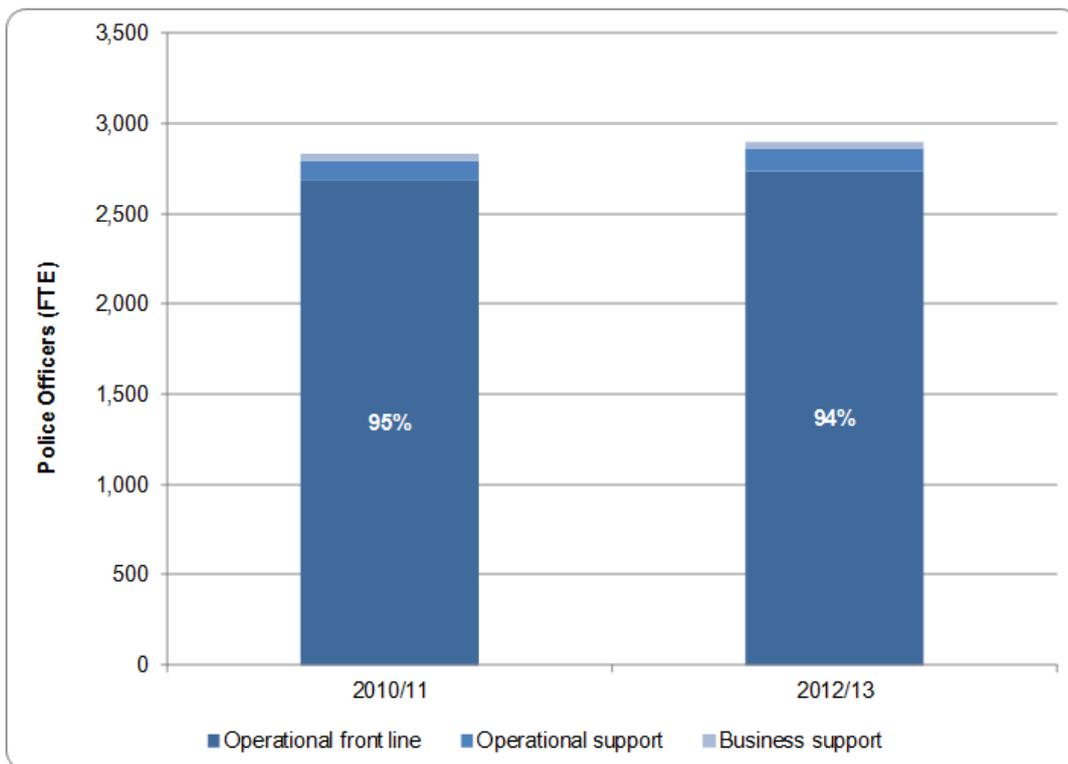
HMIC defines the people who work on the police front line as “those who are in everyday contact with the public and who directly intervene to keep people safe and enforce the law.” It is important that as forces reconfigure their structures and reduce workforce numbers, they focus on maintaining (or if possible increasing) the proportion of people in these crime-fighting roles.

The following chart shows the change in the workforce frontline profile in BTP between 2010/11 and 2012/13.



This chart shows how the number of officers, PCSOs and staff (i.e. of the force’s total workforce) working on the front line has increased from 3,512 in 2010/11 to 3,774 in 2012/13. Over the same period, the proportion of BTP’s total workforce allocated to frontline roles has decreased marginally from 79% to 78% (although due to rounding this is considered broadly consistent). This compares with the figures for England and Wales where there was an increase from 74% to 77%.

Within this workforce total, frontline police officer numbers have increased from 2,691 in 2010/11 to 2,736 in 2012/13, as the following chart shows. The proportion of those remaining on the front line has marginally decreased from 95% to 94% (although due to rounding this is considered broadly consistent). This compares with the figures for England and Wales where there was an increase from 89% to 91%.



At the time of inspection, the force was not able to provide projected workforce numbers to March 2015.

## Collaboration

HMIC monitors forces' progress on collaboration<sup>6</sup> because it offers the opportunity to deliver efficient, effective policing and help achieve savings.

BTP has a strong record of partnership working to support the force's strategic and policing priorities. The force assesses that these will result in an annual additional income in 2013/14 of £16.5m, adding 8% to the overall force budget. The force has collaboration and partnership arrangements covering the front line, operational support and in procurement and outsourcing.

Where appropriate, these partnership arrangements are covered by enhanced police service level agreements (EPSA) which are established to provide additional or enhanced services over and above the provision covered by BTP's core budget. Examples of EPSA include an agreement with Mersey Travel to supply six additional PCSOs for dedicated patrols on the Merseyrail network. Other partnership work has led to additional funding for improving access, the use of CCTV and the establishment of a National Metal Theft Task Force. The force is also working in partnership with the NHS in relation to mental health incidents on the railways. Mental health practitioners are now part of multi-agency teams to manage the 300 suicides and 200 attempted suicides annually. They develop care plans for the individuals to divert them away from crime or suicide. Operators pay £1.5m a year to fund this work.

<sup>6</sup> HMIC defines collaboration as "It activity where two or more parties work together to achieve a common goal, which includes inter force activity and collaboration with the public and private sectors, including outsourcing and business partnering."

The force also collaborates with forces, both formally and informally. Operation Benbow is a long-standing arrangement with the Metropolitan Police Service and the City of London Police for joint working across London in major events or incident handling. BTP also collaborates with the London forces in areas such as regional and organised crime and training.

National contracts for purchasing uniforms are in place and the fleet is managed externally. They also have an Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) framework agreement with Thames Valley Police and a business and accommodation contract with Devon and Cornwall Police.

The force operates in a specialist environment and, as it is a national organisation, this adds to the complexity of collaborations between forces. In addition BTP faces a different VAT position to Home Office forces. As a result, the financial benefits of collaboration are reduced because services provided by other forces incur VAT. Similarly, the transfer of assets to the Authority and any exchange of costs will also incur costs.

The force has an extremely strong record of partnership working and has experience of working closely with other forces. This gives BTP a sound foundation for developing more comprehensive collaborative working with other forces and organisations to drive further efficiency and provide better value for money.

## **Managing change**

The strategic development and operation of BTP, is linked intrinsically to the changing environment and the commercial objectives of the rail industry.

The rapid expansion of the rail network over the next few years will result in significant organisational growth of BTP across a wide geographical area; a flexible workforce will be required to reflect these changes in demand. Rail operators are increasingly using a 'low-cost airline' approach to fares, offering much lower charges at off peak times to encourage use during the quieter periods and spread demand outside peak times. This is increasing the number of passengers outside standard commuter hours. BTP will need to ensure it matches its resources to this potential change in demand. BTP already operates variable shift patterns to ensure more staff are visible and available during peak travel periods and for big events such as football matches.

The force has responded well with change programmes including Frontline First, Frontline First 2 and Future Programmes, and they have also carried out central services reviews and a previous requirement for all departments to reduce costs by 5%. The force reports that £16m of efficiency savings have already been made since 2008.

The next phase of change proposes a fundamental restructuring of the force. BTP is currently organised into seven geographical areas each led by an Area Commander of chief superintendent rank. The areas are: London North, London South, London Underground, North Eastern, North Western, Wales and Western, and Scotland. The restructuring plan aims to reduce the number of policing areas from seven to three or four areas and to achieve savings in business support, operational support and senior management number.

The rationale for the force restructure is primarily the redistribution of resources through centralisation so the force can have greater frontline resilience and new challenging

targets can be achieved. There are a set of principles underpinning the new operational model: improved performance, stakeholder engagement, delivering more for less and decreased unit costs. The operating model will provide an improved centralised response and increases of resources in areas of strategic geographic importance.

If approved by the BTPA, it is intended that the restructuring programme will be implemented in October 2013 and will be broadly in place by April 2014. Full implementation is expected to take longer. The aim is to redeploy people where possible but it is recognised that some redundancies may result.

The force maintains relatively small reserves of approximately 1% of its budget. This level of reserves has been explicitly agreed with key stakeholders and the Department for Transport on the basis that the BTPA has the statutory right to recharge all costs to the industry, which reduces the risk that they have to manage. This does mean the force has fewer opportunities to use reserves to fund costs as the force reconfigures or to support specific change projects e.g. to fund voluntary redundancy or invest to save schemes.

## **How is the force engaging police officers, PCSOs and staff in the change programme?**

BTP has a number of initiatives where staff can contribute their ideas on change. The Creativity & Innovation Programme seeks to capture new ideas from all levels of the organisation and implements solutions to identified problems. Focus groups of staff are set a topic for discussion and the results and ideas generated from these sessions are presented to a panel of senior management for progression and possible implementation.

Within a programme on force values called Operation Inspire, staff views are captured. As part of the leadership section of the programme, leaders are being targeted to take part in workshops that will empower them to demonstrate and champion the values, and take on a more positive and empowered leadership style. Leadership 'champions' are also being established across the force as local reference points for managers and supervisors to achieve best practice and help problem solve.

Much of the communication on change is through briefings cascaded through line managers and on the force intranet. However, the staff we spoke to had mixed experiences of how well they felt they had been engaged. HMIC found little evidence of two-way engagement in this process, although unions and staff associations have been consulted and information is available to staff.

The staff associations reported that they have a good relationship with chief officers; morale is good amongst staff although some are understandably apprehensive about potential changes caused by the proposed restructuring. The staff associations felt that they could be more involved in the change programme and contribute more to planning and decision making on the restructuring plan.

As BTP embarks on more fundamental change and restructuring, the force would benefit from identifying a senior communications lead who can oversee and deliver a communications change plan which promotes engagement, involvement and awareness of staff. This would not only help to allay anxiety and maintain morale but also ensure a valuable input from staff at all levels.

## **How effective has the response been?**

BTP is well on target to meet its required savings against the backdrop of an expanding railway network which will have increased passenger numbers, stations and freight. However, the spending review has brought significant (and greater) financial challenges to Home Office forces and this has focused these forces to fundamentally review and transform how they deliver policing. There are many examples of good practice which BTP can learn from as it continues to drive further savings and efficiencies.

This was recognised by the force during HMIC's inspection and will assist the force as it develops future plans to meet its objectives, while delivering greater value for money and lower costs.

# Impact of the changes on the public

The challenge for forces is not just to save money and reduce workforce numbers, but to ensure the choices they make in deciding how to achieve this do not have a negative impact on the service they provide to communities. HMIC therefore looked for evidence that the force considered the effect on the public and kept this at the heart of their choices.

## Visibility

The work done by police officers and staff in visible roles (such as officers who respond to 999 calls, deal with serious road traffic collisions or patrol in neighbourhood teams) represents only a part of the policing picture. Chief constables need to allocate resources to many other functions in order to protect the public, such as counter terrorism, serious and organised crime, and the investigation of sexual offences (to name just three).

That being said, research shows that the public values being able to see police officers patrolling, and that those who see police in uniform at least once a week are more likely to have confidence in their local force. HMIC therefore examines the visibility of the police on the rail network.

In 2012/13, BTP allocated 72% of its police officers to visible roles<sup>7</sup>. This is seven percentage points higher than it allocated in 2010.

Police visibility is further enhanced by PCSOs who principally support community policing. Looking at the proportion of police officers and PCSOs, BTP locates 75% to visible roles. This is seven percentage points higher than it allocated in 2010/11.

## Calls for service

HMIC examined whether BTP was taking longer to respond to calls for help as a result of the changes it had introduced to save money.

During three years, from 2010 to present, BTP has maintained the same target response time of 20 minutes or less for calls graded as 'emergency' (also known as grade 1).

Over that period, the force met its target response time for 'emergency' calls 91% of the time in 2011/2012 and 92% of the time in 2012/2013.

## Crime

In 2010, the Home Secretary, Theresa May, set a clear priority for the police service to reduce crime.

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<sup>7</sup> Based CIPFA POA actuals 2012/13.

Between 2010/11 and 2012/13 (the first two years of the spending review), BTP reduced recorded crime (excluding fraud) by 11%, compared to 13% in England and Wales. Over this period, victim-based crime (that is, crimes where there is a direct victim – an individual, a group, or an organisation) was reduced by 9%, compared with 12% in England and Wales.

It is important that crimes are effectively investigated and the perpetrator identified and brought to justice. When sufficient evidence is available to say who has committed a crime, it can be described as detected. The force's sanction detection<sup>8</sup> rate (for crimes excluding fraud) for the 12 months to March 2013 was 28.3%. This is higher than the England and Wales sanction detection rate of 27.0%.

## Victim satisfaction surveys

An important measure of the impact of changes to service delivery for the public is how satisfied they are with the overall service they received when police assistance is sought.

Victim satisfaction has increased slightly from 84% in 2011/12 to 85% in 2012/13. But because of differences in the way victim satisfaction data is gathered it is not appropriate to make a direct comparison with the figure for Home Office forces.

## Changes to how the public can access services

The force operates a number of police stations nationally and has a range of front counter provision both within dedicated police buildings and across the station network. Emergency call routing from members of the public generally comes through Home Office forces but equates to approximately 10% of emergency calls, with most emergency calls coming from rail operators. BTP currently uses a standard number for non emergency contact but is considering moving to a 101 option. The force uses the internet and social media to improve its communication with the public. The force has an online presence providing a wide range of information and advice as well as setting out how its police services can be accessed. While the site does not provide access to police services, it directs the public to where this may be found.

BTP also uses Twitter and sends two to ten tweets a day covering:

- alerts about new content on the website, media centre, publications, its YouTube, Flickr and Foursquare channels, and publicity campaigns;
- links to content on other websites;
- invitations to provide feedback on specific issues;
- information from senior officers about the work they are doing;
- coverage of selected events; and
- updates from officers on selected neighbourhood policing teams.

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<sup>8</sup> A sanction detection is a 'solved crime' where a suspect has been identified and notified as being responsible for committing that crime and what the full implications of this are, and has received an official sanction. Official sanctions include charges, cautions, penalty notices, offences taken into consideration (TICs) and cannabis warnings.

## Conclusion

HMIC assesses that BTP faces a smaller financial challenge than that of other forces; it also has the significant advantage that it will be able to reinvest any savings it makes in the force.

However, there is a clear expectation from the rail industry for BTP to provide value for money and to make efficiency savings. The force has responded well and can demonstrate that it has been making efficiency savings since 2008 which amounts to £16m. BTP has a clear plan to meet its specific savings challenge and is planning a major force restructure so that it can meet the future growing demands of policing the railway network and meeting the expectations of both the public and the train operating companies.

HMIC is confident that the force is on track to deliver its savings target. It has a good track record in this area and maintains a strong focus on crime reduction and a range of performance targets.

BTP recognises that it must continue to strive to achieve further efficiencies. As the force develops plans for the future it has the opportunity to benefit from what other forces have learnt from each other. In particular, BTP can learn from forces that have faced a larger challenge and have had to significantly transform the way they operate to meet their savings requirement, while at the same time protecting the front line and continuing to improve delivery of its services.

In October 2010, the Government announced that central funding to the Police Service in England and Wales would reduce by 20% in the four years between March 2011 and March 2015.

HMIC's Valuing the Police Programme has tracked how forces are planning to make savings to meet this budget demand each year since summer 2011. This report identifies what we found in this third year.

Our inspection focused on three questions:

1. How is the force responding to the budget reduction?
2. What is the impact for the workforce and the public?
3. How is the force managing current and future risks?

National findings and patterns across all 43 Home Office forces are given in our thematic report, *Policing in Austerity: Rising to the Challenge*, which is available from [www.hmic.gov.uk](http://www.hmic.gov.uk).

This report provides the findings for the British Transport Police.