

PEEL: Police effectiveness 2017

An inspection of British Transport Police
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Force in numbers



Anti-social behaviour

Anti-social behaviour incidents 12 months to 30 June 2016 against 12 months to 30 June 2017

British Transport Police

England and Wales

-31%

-1%



Crime (excluding fraud)

Change in recorded crime 12 months to 30 June 2016 against 12 months to 30 June 2017

British Transport Police

England and Wales

+12%

+14%



Crime outcomes*

Charged/summonsed

British Transport Police

England and Wales

12%

10%

Evidential difficulties: suspect identified but victim does not support action

British Transport Police

England and Wales

2%

13%

Investigation completed but no suspect identified

British Transport Police

England and Wales

60%

48%



Domestic abuse

Domestic abuse as a percentage of all recorded crime (excluding fraud) 12 months to 30 June 2017

British Transport Police

England and Wales

1%

11%

*Figures are shown as proportions of outcomes assigned to offences recorded in the 12 months to 30 June 2017

Effectiveness overview

Inspecting British Transport Police

As part of its annual inspections of all police forces in England and Wales, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) assesses police effectiveness, efficiency and legitimacy (PEEL). HMICFRS is an independent inspectorate which has a legal responsibility, under section 63 of the Railways and Transport Safety Act 2003, to inspect British Transport Police.

British Transport Police is the police force responsible for policing the railways of England, Wales and Scotland. The force therefore transcends local and national borders. In October 2016, HMICFRS was commissioned by the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Transport to inspect the effectiveness of British Transport Police against the following areas:

- preventing crime and tackling anti-social behaviour;
- investigating crime and reducing re-offending;
- protecting vulnerable people;
- tackling serious and organised crime; and
- specialist capabilities.

British Transport Police differs from most police forces in several ways. Firstly, it falls under the remit of the Secretary of State for Transport, and not the Home Secretary (as for forces in England and Wales) or the Cabinet Secretary for Justice (for those in Scotland). Secondly, the force is funded almost entirely by the rail transport industry through police service agreements with the British Transport Police Authority. The Authority uses a charging model,¹ informed by policing data, to determine each service operator's contributions, based on covering the full annual costs of policing (including those of the Authority) and reflecting each operator's police service agreement. The nature of working on the rail network mean that the force also provides some services that are generally outside the remit of local forces, such as dealing with fatalities on the rail network. Finally, the force does not have a resident population, rather it provides a service to passengers, rail staff and others who work on or live near the railway.

¹ *The introduction of the new charging model: a review*, British Transport Police Authority, April 2010. Available at: <https://btpa.police.uk/livesite/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/1270553190NewChargingModel.pdf>

This inspection was carried out according to the same criteria as inspections of Home Office police forces. Although the jurisdiction of the British Transport Police differs from theirs and its focus is the rail network, the principles of keeping people safe and reducing crime are the same.

Judgments

Overall effectiveness 2017



Question	Grade
Preventing crime and tackling anti-social behaviour	<p>Good</p>
Investigating crime and reducing re-offending	<p>Good</p>
Protecting vulnerable people	<p>Good</p>
Tackling serious and organised crime	<p>Good</p>
Specialist capabilities	Ungraded

Summary

This is the first time we have inspected the effectiveness of British Transport Police using the PEEL² methodology. We found that the force compares favourably with the best performing Home Office forces at keeping people safe and reducing crime.

The force has an effective approach to preventing crime and reducing anti-social behaviour. It understands its communities, namely, the people who use and work on the rail network. It uses innovative methods to communicate with the travelling public and to obtain, both from rail users and staff, feedback in order to inform the

² www.justiceinspectrates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/peel-assessments/how-we-inspect/2017-peelassessment/#effectiveness

prioritisation of its services. However, the force needs to provide problem-solving training for all its officers and relevant staff, to improve the standard of crime-prevention practice across the entire organisation.

Crimes are investigated to a high standard, and investigators keep victims regularly updated. The force attends incidents promptly and carries out immediate actions at the scene to ensure good evidence is collected. The force is good at continuing to investigate crimes even when the victim does not support police action, particularly in cases of domestic abuse. Nevertheless, it needs to improve its recording of supervisory actions on its crime-recording system, and to recruit enough detectives to ensure that the workloads of investigators remain manageable.

British Transport Police has a highly effective approach to protecting vulnerable people on the rail network. Its officers and staff fully understand its community, and work with partner organisations and the rail industry to provide tailored care to people who are vulnerable through their age, disability, or because they have been subjected to repeated offences, or are at high risk of abuse, for example. The force accurately identifies vulnerable people when they first contact the police, and the force's safeguarding hub ensures all referrals to other organisations are carried out consistently and to a high standard. The force should, however, develop welfare initiatives for officers and staff who carry out investigations involving vulnerable victims.

While the British Transport Police's strategic approach to serious and organised crime is new, the force has effective processes in place to identify, assess and prioritise organised criminal groups. It has ready access to the specialist capabilities it needs to tackle serious and organised crime. It uses intelligence effectively to understand the threat to the rail industry and the travelling public from organised crime groups, however it needs to improve its recording of disruptions so that it can assess better the long-term effects of its activity on serious and organised crime.

The force has the necessary arrangements in place to fulfil its national policing responsibilities and to respond initially to an attack requiring armed officers. It has structured assessments of all six threats specified in the strategic policing requirement (SPR), with clear accountability for each threat area. The force conducts regular exercises with the rail industry, Department for Transport, other police forces and special forces, to test its ability to respond to SPR threats. British Transport Police has fulfilled its commitments to increase its armed officers in London, and is part-way through an increase in armed officers in Manchester and Birmingham. The force should consider with the Metropolitan Police Service and the City of London Police, a joint armed policing threat and risk assessment, which would focus on the threats facing the entirety of London, and also reflect their own operational jurisdictions.

Preventing crime and tackling anti-social behaviour



Good

Prioritising prevention

British Transport Police has an effective approach to reducing crime and keeping people safe, and a clear vision for crime prevention on the rail network. It is part-way through a transformation project, which aims to align resources with demand in an efficient and effective way. The new way of operating means that most areas of the rail network combine neighbourhood and response policing within the same teams. However, at larger railway stations and on the London Underground network there are dedicated neighbourhood policing teams made up of officers, police community support officers (PCSOs) and community volunteers. We think the current balance between dedicated neighbourhood policing teams and fully integrated teams is appropriate and places resources where the risk of harm is greatest. However, the force needs to do more to engage with the rail industry to explain the changes.

When the force has completed its transformation project, specifically the introduction of neighbourhood policing teams, further work will be needed to understand the effects resulting from the redeployment of dedicated neighbourhood officers, and to ensure that the balance of neighbourhood teams and response officers best meets demand.

British Transport Police provides effective crime-prevention services to the public. Neighbourhood policing teams are given the time to carry out crime-prevention activities, such as bicycle marking and targeted patrols of businesses that have suffered instances of shoplifting or anti-social behaviour. The force also has a dedicated crime reduction unit, which provides specialist advice to the rail industry and officers and staff to 'design out' crime. This unit is also responsible for the Secure Stations Scheme which, on behalf of the Department for Transport, sets safety standards for crime reduction at overground and underground railway stations. The force is also responsible for the Railway Safety Accreditation Scheme, setting the standards in accordance with which rail staff may be designated accredited persons (who are able to control anti-social behaviour through the issuing of penalty notices and confiscating alcohol and tobacco products from young people).

Understanding communities

British Transport Police has a comprehensive understanding of its communities, using data from the rail industry, community profiles and specific problem profiles³ to understand the threats that the travelling public and the rail industry face. The force uses innovative methods, such as the '61016' text service encouraging people to report crime on the rail network, to engage with its communities. The force makes good use of social media to help it prioritise its services and to provide feedback to members of the public. It works with Transport for London and train-operating companies to publicise its messages about staying safe and reporting unwanted or criminal behaviour. British Transport Police uses the results of the annual rail staff survey to decide which services should be advertised at particular stations. The force also uses both the twice-yearly national rail passenger and the railway policing surveys (which received almost 6,000 responses in 2016), to inform its priorities for the year ahead.

British Transport Police takes action to reduce tensions on the rail network between different groups of users. For instance, it has officers who work in the network rail control rooms and provide it with real-time information about factors that affect the travelling public, such as overcrowding and disruption which could cause unrest; it uses this information to direct the deployment of its resources.

Tackling crime and anti-social behaviour

British Transport Police is good at tackling crime and anti-social behaviour on the rail network. In the 12 months to 30 March 2017, there were 29,924 recorded incidents of anti-social behaviour on the network; this is a reduction of 31.5 percent from the previous 12 months. This compares with a reduction of 0.9 percent in England and Wales forces in the same period. British Transport Police cannot use some anti-social behaviour powers in the same way as a Home Office police force, but it makes good use of railway-specific powers, such as the withdrawal of implied permission⁴ and acceptable behaviour contracts, to deal with anti-social behaviour.

³ A problem profile is intended to provide the force with greater understanding of established and emerging crime or incident series, priority locations or other identified high-risk issues. It should be based on the research and analysis of a wide range of information sources, including information from partner organisations. It should contain recommendations for making decisions and options for action.

⁴ British Transport Police has access to powers under railway-specific legislation. In some areas joint working with the railway industry has led to individuals being served with notices by railway operators withdrawing implied permission to be on station premises; if such individuals continue to enter railway premises and refuse to leave, the force may arrest them for a criminal offence under s.16 Railway Regulation Act 1840.

The force uses a structured and collaborative problem-solving approach aimed at addressing the underlying causes of crime on the rail network. Problem-solving plans are the responsibilities of either neighbourhood officers or PCSOs, with local station commanders responsible for their supervision and management. Plans relating to more significant problems are monitored and managed through the force tasking process. The assistant chief constable responsible for territorial policing scrutinises a selection of problem-solving plans every six weeks; the relevant officers or PCSOs and supervisors are held to account, and best practice is communicated effectively. The force works in partnership with the rail industry, charities such as Railway Children, and the Department for Transport, to develop plans to address the underlying causes of crime and anti-social behaviour.

British Transport Police enhances its neighbourhood response by its successful use of volunteers through Citizens in Policing.⁵ The force has 151 special constables and volunteers (including railway chaplains and pastors). All PCSOs and new recruits have received specific problem-solving training, but the force recognises that there is a problem-solving skills gap among the rest of its frontline officers. At the time of inspection it had planned to begin problem-solving training for sergeants and constables in January 2018. Until this skills gap is resolved, British Transport Police cannot be certain that it is taking all opportunities to prevent crime and reduce anti-social behaviour.

British Transport Police makes good use of evidence and analysis to inform its day-to-day policing. The force uses data from other organisations with which it works to inform its plans to tackle anti-social behaviour on the rail network, such as shoplifting and begging. It also analyses the use of anti-social behaviour tactics and rail-specific bylaws (such as the removal of implied permission), and evaluates and reviews its prevention campaigns (such as the discreet text service) for reporting unwanted or criminal behaviour. The force is also using the detailed analysis carried out as part of the transformation project to place resources where they are needed most.

⁵ Citizens in Policing is an umbrella term for over 500,000 volunteers who support the police either directly or indirectly. There are three types of volunteers: those who are trained, managed and mentored within the force, such as special constables; those who support the police, such as pastors; and those who hold the police to account, such as independent advisory groups.

Investigating crime and reducing re-offending



Good

Initial investigation

British Transport Police is good at conducting initial investigations. It attends incidents promptly where appropriate, and taking into account the national coverage of the force, this is a considerable achievement. Officers take appropriate steps to identify and secure evidence as part of the 'golden hour'⁶ immediately following an incident, particularly for fatalities on the rail network.

British Transport Police has received only four referrals from Action Fraud⁷ over the past four years, and the force's own review highlighted cases that should have been transferred to Action Fraud rather than retained by the force. The force should work with Action Fraud to establish a process which meets its requirements as a national force without a resident population, and makes sure that vulnerable victims of fraud on the rail network are not missed.

British Transport Police currently does not conduct telephone investigations, although it is considering how they might form part of its planned new way of working (as set out in the 'prioritising prevention' section above).

During 2017, British Transport Police made significant changes to the way it allocates crime investigations to teams and individuals. The intention behind the changes is to ensure that crimes are investigated by the most appropriate teams and officers, however, it is at present too early for us to comment on the effectiveness of these changes. Officers and staff responsible for carrying out investigations told us they feel the new crime-allocation policy is much better than its predecessor, but that the force has further to go to make sure that their workloads remain manageable. The force should undertake further periodic reviews of the process by which it allocates crime investigations, to make sure victims receive a good service from appropriately skilled and experienced officers and staff.

⁶ Golden hour refers to the time after a crime has been committed during which there is maximum potential for recovery of forensic evidence.

⁷ Action Fraud is the UK's national fraud and cyber-crime reporting centre. It provides a central point of contact for information about fraud and cyber-crime. For more information see:

<https://actionfraud.police.uk/>

Investigation quality

Investigations conducted by British Transport Police are generally of a high quality. We reviewed a small sample of files, and found in almost all that effective investigations were undertaken, with appropriate lines of enquiry. Most cases included an investigation plan, though many of these were generic, particularly in cases involving low-level crimes. However, the use of the force's ICT system for crime recording needs to be further enhanced; the files we reviewed from early 2017 did not present a full record of all actions by supervisors. Moreover, force investigators were only identified by their name and warrant number, therefore it was difficult for us to determine whether crimes had been investigated by the most appropriate teams.

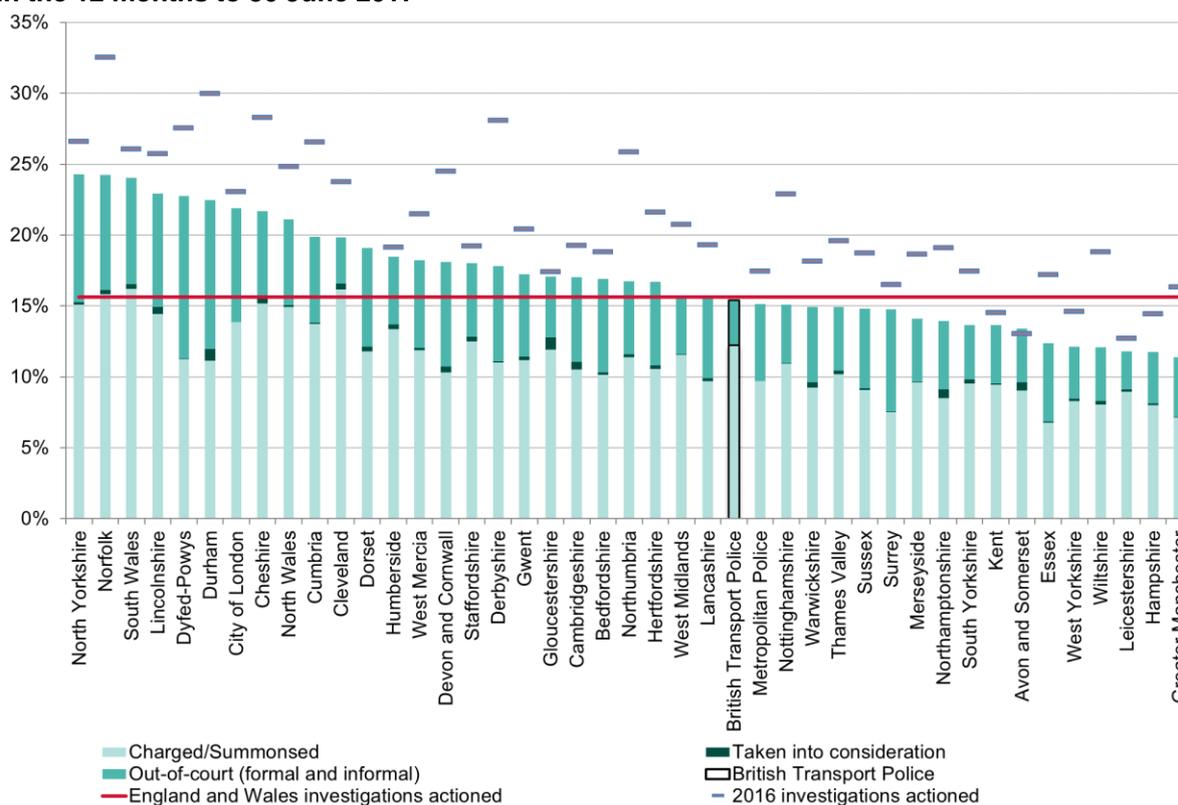
The force has too few detectives, and is part-way through a recruitment exercise to bring additional experienced detectives into the force. Nonetheless, we found during our inspection that compared to six months earlier - before the changes to the force's allocation of crime investigations - there had been a marked decrease in the number of cases being investigated by each detective. We were told that detectives now have workloads of 10 to 12 current cases, compared with 17 or 18 previously. The force should ensure that detectives' workloads remain manageable once the crime-allocation policy has been fully understood and established.

Victims of crime receive a good service from British Transport Police, and the files we reviewed showed that, in most cases, investigators maintain appropriate contact with victims throughout investigations. The force uses an external research agency to provide a victim of crime survey, to seek the views of approximately 420 victims of crime every month. The results are presented in force information and performance meetings, and are used to identify areas for improvement and to challenge force teams and processes.

The force has access to support for digital investigations through its high-tech crime unit (HTCU). The force has a device triage system; it uses a mix of digital examination devices, of which half can examine the data currently stored on a phone and half can also examine deleted data. At the time of inspection, the force had a small backlog of 20 devices awaiting examination, but it can prioritise urgent cases when needed, so that the backlog does not cause delays to investigations.

British Transport Police achieves good results for victims, and the force is in line with the rest of England and Wales for the proportion of individuals who are charged/summonsed for an offence. Even when victims do not support police action, the force takes appropriate steps to continue investigations; it has a very low proportion of outcomes (2 percent) where a suspect has been identified but the victim does not support action - this is very encouraging.

Figure 1: Proportion of investigations where action was taken, by force, for offences recorded in the 12 months to 30 June 2017^{8,9}



Source: 2016 and 2017 Home Office Crime Outcomes Data

Reducing re-offending

British Transport Police could not provide data relating to the use of arrests, bail and voluntary attendance. However, in the files reviewed we found that the force makes arrests promptly, and attempts to find and arrest suspects through public appeals, briefings and prompt liaison with other forces. The force puts details of people who are wanted onto the Police National Computer.

British Transport Police has a dedicated central team responsible for the management of foreign national offenders, and staff from other agencies, such as Border Force and UK visitor and immigration services, are embedded with the force. This system works well, and the force is aware of the high-risk and prolific foreign national offenders on the rail network. However, the force could do more to increase its referrals of arrested foreign national offenders to the Immigration Enforcement

⁸ Investigations where action was taken includes the outcome categories of: charged/summonsed; taken into consideration; and out-of-court (formal and informal).

⁹ Suffolk Constabulary was unable to provide 2017 crime outcomes data. Dorset Police was unable to provide 2016 crime outcomes data. Therefore figures for England and Wales will differ from those published by the Home Office. For further information about this data, please see annex A.

Command and Control Unit. In the 12 months to June 2017, the referral rate for arrested national offenders was 30 percent, which is significantly lower than that for England and Wales forces (57 percent).

The force conducted its own review of its pilot integrated offender management team, which manages prolific offenders. This review highlighted that the force's approach to managing prolific offenders was achieving little reduction on the overall level of crime, as the force's crime profile shows that there are in any case relatively few such offenders. Our data show that at 1 July 2017, British Transport Police had 149 individuals on the integrated offender management system; 16 percent of whom had reoffended in the 12 months to 30 June 2017, compared to the England and Wales average of 37.5 percent. The force told us that following its review it expects its approach to integrated offender management to move away from reducing volume crime (and those crimes which cause less harm), to focus on crimes of violence and public protection, such as sexual offences. The force should make sure that these changes are clearly communicated to the rail industry.

During daily management meetings, the force briefs all frontline officers with details about known offenders and sex offenders. Where there may be risk of reoffending, divisional intelligence teams provide pictures and details of offenders to local teams. The force is proactive in its approach to identifying anonymous offenders, particularly for crimes typically involving large groups of people (such as pickpocketing); intelligence teams scan national databases every day and work alongside other police forces regarding series of offences which may be linked, to help them identify such offenders.

Areas for improvement

- The force should increase the number of qualified detectives to ensure workloads are manageable.
- The force should ensure that checks are routinely conducted to verify the identity, nationality and overseas convictions of arrested foreign nationals.
- The force should improve its initial investigation of cases by providing responding officers with access to photographic and/or video-recording equipment to show evidence of injuries and crime scenes.

Protecting vulnerable people and supporting victims



Good

Identifying vulnerability

British Transport Police has a comprehensive understanding of the scale and nature of vulnerable people on the rail network. The force works closely with the rail industry and partner agencies, such as the NHS, local authorities and other police forces, to analyse data, helping it to understand where harm is concentrated. From this analysis, the force has produced a sophisticated assessment of vulnerable people on the rail network, which it uses to prioritise its services towards identified locations, and works with charities and local authorities to reduce harm. In the sample of files and call logs reviewed, we found many examples of caring and compassionate behaviour on the part of British Transport Police call handlers and attending officers and staff.

The force has a clear definition of vulnerability, adopting that used by the National Police Chiefs Council,¹⁰ and officers and staff have a good understanding of the force's strategy for protecting vulnerable people. Call handlers use a structured approach to decide how to respond to incidents involving vulnerable people, and the force has dedicated suicide prevention mental health teams for each of its three divisions. These teams are available to provide advice to call handlers, make referrals to health services, and produce suicide prevention plans. This comprehensive approach demonstrates that the force works hard to make sure vulnerable people are not overlooked on the rail network.

The force is good at identifying vulnerable people when they contact the police; in all but one of the 60 cases examined during our inspection, this was done correctly.

The force is working in partnership with a charity to provide a 'safeguarding children on transport' training package for over 30,000 rail staff, to enhance their awareness of vulnerable children and young people using the rail network, and enable them to provide the appropriate response.

The force command and control system identifies repeat callers when the same contact number is used, but should the same victim contact the police using a different number this will not be automatically recognised by the system, and will make it necessary for the call handler to carry out further searches. The force has

¹⁰ A person is vulnerable if as a result of their situation or circumstances, they are unable to take care of or protect themselves, or others, from harm or exploitation.

already identified this as an area for improvement, and work is under way which will enable the system to identify repeat callers by their personal information.

Initial response

British Transport Police identifies vulnerable people adequately during the initial response stage. All reports of domestic abuse are discussed at the daily management meeting. Officers conduct face-to-face DASH¹¹ risk assessments for all reported domestic abuse incidents; these are checked for quality by the officer's immediate supervisor, and then again after 24 hours by the force domestic abuse co-ordinator, who carries out further research and, where appropriate, refers the case onwards to other agencies. Even prior to our inspection, the force had recognised that it needs to provide attending officers and staff with a method for assessing vulnerable people which supports the 'threat, harm, risk' assessment system currently used by the workforce. The force has produced a vulnerability handbook which will address this need, and at the time of our inspection was part-way through a programme of training to support this. The force should ensure that once the method for assessment is in place, it is supported by a robust quality assurance process to monitor that vulnerable people are correctly assessed at initial response.

At the time of inspection, the force was part-way through a pilot of providing body-worn video equipment to frontline officers and staff; it intends to equip all frontline personnel in this way. Once the programme is in place (anticipated for 2018/19), all attending officers and staff will be able to video-record incidents. The force should ensure it has the policies and training in place to support this.

Mental health

British Transport Police has an exceptionally good understanding of its role in identifying and supporting people with mental health conditions, particularly those who are drawn to kill themselves using elements of the railway network, and the demand this creates. British Transport Police has an effective strategy for supporting people in mental health crisis and preventing suicide on the railway. In 2016/17 there were 9,546 reported incidents on the rail network which involved crisis episodes and/or suicidal behaviour, with 877 of these involving individuals under 18 years-of-age.¹² The force works with the rail industry to promote better infrastructure safety and security to prevent unauthorised people being able to access the tracks. The force and the rail industry work in partnership to provide education to rail staff about

¹¹ DASH is a risk identification, assessment and management model adopted by UK police forces and partner agencies in 2009. The aim of the DASH assessment is to help frontline practitioners identify high-risk cases of domestic abuse, stalking, harassment and so-called honour-based violence.

¹² The number of individuals under 18 could be higher as there were 852 incidents recorded of the 9,546 in which the date of birth of the individual is unknown.

people who are in crisis, and to direct such people towards support and long-term care from charities and health providers. The processes and priorities relating to mental health and suicide prevention are well-understood and acted upon across the force. The force reports that in 2016/17, some 1,837 life-saving interventions were made on the rail network by British Transport Police and partner agencies in respect of people in mental health crisis.

Control room staff have a good understanding of the importance of taking immediate action where necessary to protect people with mental health conditions on the rail network. Staff use a standardised assessment tool to identify such people, and the force has clear guidance which is set out both in the Mental Health Manual of Guidance¹³ and the mental health crisis and suicide prevention strategy, From Crisis to Care.¹⁴ This guidance enables staff to make effective decisions about how to support people with mental health conditions. The force also has a robust regime of checks and audits within the control rooms to ensure that call-handling staff assess threat, harm and risk appropriately.

British Transport Police has dedicated suicide prevention mental health teams for each division, and a strategic hub at force headquarters provides guidance and oversight to the divisional teams. These teams provide advice and support to the workforce, and routinely review logs where intervention may be required. Mental health nurses are available seven days a week and can be contacted by frontline officers and control room staff. The London-based team has an officer and a psychiatric nurse working together on a patrol of central London stations. In other parts of the country, the force works successfully in partnership with local forces and mental health trusts to provide a mix of mental health nurses and triage cars, to which its officers and staff have access.

Investigating crimes involving vulnerable people

The force investigates offences involving vulnerable victims adequately. The force does not have a separate public protection unit. However, crimes involving vulnerable victims are investigated by officers with the appropriate specialist skills in the three divisional criminal investigation departments (CIDs). In the last 18 months, all CID officers have undergone continued professional development focused on the identification and treatment of vulnerable victims and witnesses. The force offers support to staff through referrals to the occupational health team and the TRiM¹⁵

¹³ Provides support to British Transport Police officers and staff who may be required to attend incidents involving people suffering or exhibiting mental health problems.

¹⁴ Provides guidance to British Transport Police officers and staff regarding suicide prevention and related mental health problems.

¹⁵ Trauma risk management is a process used to assess officers and staff involved in traumatic incidents to identify if they need further support.

process, but it acknowledges that it does not offer any long-term psychological assessments or support for staff who investigate crimes involving vulnerable people. The force should carry out further work to understand this risk and provide appropriate support to its workforce.

Although we found variance in the size and complexity of the workloads of investigators across the force, the files we reviewed as part of the inspection demonstrated that vulnerable victims receive a good service. Once the force has completed the introduction of its crime-allocation policy, it should review the workloads of investigators working with vulnerable victims, to ensure these are manageable and that victims continue to receive a good service. The force is reliant on Home Office forces to apply for Clare's Law¹⁶ disclosures and domestic violence protection notices and orders,¹⁷ as these were omitted from the relevant legislation. Work is continuing with the Home Office to rectify this.

British Transport Police achieves good results for victims, particularly in cases of domestic abuse, where its charged/summonsed rate is very high compared to the rate for England and Wales.

Partnership working

British Transport Police takes action with other agencies to make sure arrangements to safeguard vulnerable people are in place, particularly those at risk of killing themselves. The force provides profiles of vulnerable people and locations where incidents involving vulnerable people have taken place, to partner agencies such as local authorities, mental health trusts, the rail industry and the Samaritans charity. It seeks comparative data for each area from the Public Health England online system. The partner agencies we spoke with as part of the inspection were very complimentary about the service that British Transport Police, particularly frontline officers and staff, provides to vulnerable people. Inspectors found that immediate safeguarding is carried out appropriately, and that officers and staff work well with partner agencies and charities, such as Railway Children, to provide longer-term safeguarding and outreach services to vulnerable people.

¹⁶ Clare's Law, or the domestic violence disclosure scheme, has two functions: the 'right to ask' the police about a partner's previous history of domestic abuse or violent acts; and the 'right to know' – police can proactively disclose information in prescribed circumstances.

¹⁷ Domestic violence prevention notices (DVPNs) may be issued by an authorised police officer to prevent a suspected perpetrator from returning to a victim's home and/or contacting the victim. Following the issue of the DVPN, the police must apply to magistrates for a domestic violence prevention order (DVPO). The DVPO will be granted for a period of up to 28 days.

Owing to its national coverage, the force has a central safeguarding hub which is responsible for any referrals to other organisations, police forces and multi-agency safeguarding hubs (MASHs)¹⁸ throughout the country. This ensures the force provides the same standard of information to support vulnerable victims in each case. The central safeguarding hub is also responsible for the review of all domestic abuse and stalking and harassment risk assessments, and protection forms for adults and children. This hub works well; it also provides training on vulnerable people, and disseminates best practice to the workforce. The force has a dedicated engagement coordinator who works with any subsequent multi-agency risk assessment conferences.¹⁹

Area for improvement

- The force should ensure that it has appropriate processes in place to support officers and staff undertaking investigations involving vulnerable victims.

¹⁸ A multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH) is a location in which staff from the police, local authority and other safeguarding agencies share data, research and decision making about local children and adults who are vulnerable; the purpose is to ensure a timely and joined-up response for children and vulnerable adults who require protection.

¹⁹ A multi-agency risk assessment conference (MARAC) is a meeting where information is shared on the highest risk domestic abuse cases between representatives of local police, health, child protection, housing practitioners, independent domestic violence advisers, probation and other specialists from the statutory and voluntary sectors.

Tackling serious and organised crime



Good

Understanding threats

British Transport Police's strategic response to serious and organised crime²⁰ has recently been formulated. During 2017 the force renewed its policies and processes in this regard, and carried out a range of work to build a detailed understanding of serious and organised crime on the rail network. The force uses the nationally-recognised risk assessment process, MORiLE,²¹ to assess threats. In partnership with other police forces and the National Crime Agency, it has carried out some analysis to understand the threat from county lines.²² However, the force needs to continue work with other forces to understand this threat fully. British Transport Police has produced an assessment of the threat posed to the force by serious and organised crime, and specific problem profiles of newer threats such as modern slavery. It uses these profiles to direct its resources. Officers and staff use an adequate range of intelligence sources to increase the force's understanding of serious and organised crime, and it understands where the gaps are in its intelligence. The force uses its tasking meeting to direct operational activity to gain knowledge and fill these gaps, in order to improve its understanding of serious and organised crime.

The force takes action to search for organised criminal activity, and frontline officers are trained to look for signs of organised crime, such as metal theft; it recently identified an organised criminal group (OCG) responsible for pickpocketing in several locations throughout the country and in Europe. The force has effective processes in place for assessing OCGs, and these are scrutinised at the covert tasking meeting. At the time of the inspection the force had mapped 16 OCGs; as it does not have a resident population, no comparisons with the number of mapped OCGs per head of

²⁰ Serious and organised crime is when serious crime is planned, co-ordinated and conducted by people working together on a continuing basis. Their motivation is often, but not always, financial gain.

²¹ The 'management of risk in law enforcement' process developed by the National Police Chiefs' Council. This tool assesses the types of crimes, which most threaten communities, and highlights where the force does not currently have the capacity or capability to tackle them effectively.

²² The term 'county lines' describes organised drug-dealing networks expanding – usually from large cities into smaller towns – in order to exploit new markets and evade police detection. This activity is often accompanied by violence and intimidation as new groups compete with locally-established drug dealers.

population by other police forces can be made. The force needs to carry out further work to understand the process that should be in place for monitoring inactive OCGs, and a system by which these are scrutinised.

Disrupting and investigating serious and organised crime

British Transport Police has put in place the structure and processes necessary to effectively disrupt and investigate serious and organised crime on the rail network. The force uses its covert tasking meeting to prioritise and manage activity aimed at tackling serious and organised crime. The serious and organised crime partnership board is known as the rail delivery group. This is a recent development and, at the time of our inspection, the board was reviewing the force's serious and organised crime profiles in order to make recommendations to the force and rail industry partners aimed at tackling this type of crime. Lead responsible officers²³ are assigned to all mapped OCGs, and their activity and progress is scrutinised in the covert tasking meeting. We found the resulting plans to be detailed, with clear undertaking by the lead responsible officers and partnership working with the rail industry and other forces.

The force has access to specialist and technical services to help it disrupt and investigate serious and organised crime. As part of Operation Transit, a recent fraud operation, the force was able to access specialist surveillance and other services without the need to call upon support from regional units. Nevertheless, it has ready access to regional capabilities throughout England and Wales when it needs them. The force has worked with other forces to develop a response to the threat from county lines, and works well with other law enforcement partners to bring about intelligence, disrupt criminal activity and protect vulnerable people exploited by criminal gangs. We found that officers at community hubs are tasked as part of disruption and investigation plans, and that officers are aware of their responsibilities.

The force does not yet fully follow the national guidance about recording disruptions of OCGs. Although we found evidence that effective disruptions had taken place, including those involving local policing teams, these had not always been recorded correctly and therefore the effects could not be assessed. The force is introducing an annual organised crime assessment which it told us would address this. Nonetheless, at the time of the inspection, we did not find evidence that any detailed analysis has been carried out to understand the effects of disruptions or activity that

²³ A nominated lead responsible officer has overall charge of coordinating and leading the investigation and intervention of an organised criminal group (OCG).

British Transport Police has on serious and organised crime. British Transport Police needs to improve its understanding of the effects it has both short- and long-term on serious and organised crime.

Preventing serious and organised crime

The force has several operations in place to help deter people from becoming involved in serious and organised crime; these are specific to the rail network, and the force works with community organisations around the country to stop young people in particular becoming involved in crime. Currently, the force does not use gang injunctions,²⁴ as there are very few gangs that operate as such on the rail network. However, the force works very closely with other forces, such as the Metropolitan Police Service, to reduce knife crime and prevent young people from joining gangs.

British Transport Police obtains intelligence from prison intelligence functions through its established officer in the Metropolitan Police Service prisons intelligence unit. The force is involved in long-term prison intelligence work on a number of individuals involved in serious and organised crime. British Transport Police makes use of ancillary orders, such as serious crime prevention orders, and there is a consistent approach across the force through the covert tasking meeting to managing such orders.

Area for improvement

- The force should improve its understanding of the effects of its activity on serious and organised crime, and ensure that it learns from experience how to maximise its disruptive effect on such activity.

²⁴ Gang injunctions allow courts to place prohibitions and requirements on the behaviour and activities of a person involved in gang-related violence. These conditions could include prohibiting someone from being in a particular place or requiring them to participate in rehabilitative activities.

Specialist capabilities

Ungraded

National policing responsibilities

British Transport Police has the necessary arrangements in place to ensure that it can fulfil its national policing responsibilities. It has carried out a structured assessment of all six threats specified in the strategic policing requirement (SPR). Each SPR threat has a chief officer lead, and there are effective processes in place to ensure that the three areas of the force which have responsibilities under the SPR threats (crime; counter-terrorism (specialist operations); and territorial policing), work collaboratively. The force conducts regular exercises with the rail industry,

Department for Transport, other police forces and special forces, to test its ability to respond to SPR threats.

Firearms capability

In HMICFRS's 2016 effectiveness inspections, we examined how well forces were prepared to manage firearms attacks. Subsequent terrorist attacks in the UK and Europe have meant that the police service maintains a firm focus on armed capability in England and Wales.

It is not just terrorist attacks that place operational demands on armed officers. The threat can include the activity of OCGs or armed street gangs and all other crime involving guns. The Code of Practice on the Police Use of Firearms and Less Lethal Weapons²⁵ makes forces responsible for implementing national standards of armed policing. The Code stipulates that a chief officer be designated to oversee these standards. This requires the chief officer to set out the firearms threat in an armed policing strategic threat and risk assessment (APSTRA). The chief officer must also set out clear rationales for the number of armed officers (armed capacity) and the level to which they are trained (armed capability).

British Transport Police has a good understanding of the potential harm facing the public; its APSTRA conforms to the requirements of the Code and the College of Policing guidance.²⁶ The force last reviewed its APSTRA in April 2017. We found that the designated chief officer scrutinises the APSTRA closely; he formally

²⁵ Code of Practice on Police use of Firearms and Less Lethal Weapons, Home Office, 2003.

²⁶ College of Policing authorised professional practice on armed policing available at: www.app.college.police.uk/app-content/armed-policing/?s

approves its content, which includes the levels of armed capability and capacity that the threats require. His decisions and the rationale on which they are based are clearly auditable.

However, we are of the view that the assessment of threat and risk could be improved. Although British Transport Police works closely with City of London Police and the Metropolitan Police Service in the deployment of armed officers in the capital, a joint APSTRA as a single point of reference for the three forces does not currently exist. A joint APSTRA would focus on the entire threat in London and, while it would reflect each force's operational jurisdiction, it would potentially leave the three forces in a stronger position to address it.

We established the force has fulfilled its commitment to increase the availability and number of armed officers in London. In addition, the force has plans to further increase the number of armed officers in the force to provide an armed capability in both Birmingham and Manchester, which are already underway.

There can be little doubt that the British Transport Police's ability to respond to terrorist attacks within minutes and the bravery of the officers involved has saved lives.