
Summary of Recent External Inspection Reports

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1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide members with details of recent external inspection reports and an overview of the process in place to manage the Force's response to inspection recommendations and findings.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 On 19 July, the Home Office announced that HMIC will be extending its remit to inspect fire and rescue services in England. To reflect this, HMIC changed its name to HM Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS). Initial work to establish a fire and rescue programme will be done separately from HMICFRS's work on policing.

- 2.2 Two joint inspection reports have been published by HMICFRS and Her Majesty's Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate (HMCPSI) since the last Joint Independent Audit Committee:

[Living in Fear – The Police and CPS Response to Harassment and Stalking](#)

[Making it fair - a joint inspection of the disclosure of unused material in volume Crown Court cases](#)

- 2.3 Northumbria Police was not visited for either inspection.
- 2.4 Corporate Development Department acts as the central liaison point for all HMICFRS related matters.
- 2.5 All HMICFRS inspection reports and other external inspection reports are considered by Chief Officers. A project lead is appointed to consider inspection findings and prepare an action plan in response to any recommendations and areas for improvement identified. These action plans are agreed at Executive Board and by the Police and Crime Commissioner.
- 2.6 Project teams are appointed to support implementation of the action plan, as appropriate. All activity is regularly reviewed by the respective owners. Delivery is overseen at Chief Officer/ Director level and reported to the Scrutiny Meeting of the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner.
- 2.7 There are no matters of exception for the current reporting period for existing action plans in response to previous inspections.

Living in Fear – The Police and CPS Response to Harassment and Stalking

- 2.8 This national thematic report presents the findings of a joint inspection by HMICFRS and HMCPSI in 2016/17 into how crimes of harassment and stalking are tackled.

- 2.9 The findings of HMICFRS/HMCPSI highlighted a number of issues including: stalking often went unrecognised; charges did not always reflect the seriousness of the offending; offences were not dealt with appropriately by using stalking-specific powers; specific questions relating to harassment and stalking were sometimes overlooked in risk assessments; and Police Information Notices (PINs) were sometimes used as informal sanctions and instead of, rather than after, thorough investigations.
- 2.10 Four recommendations were made for chief constables and an action plan is being prepared.

Making it fair - a joint inspection of the disclosure of unused material in volume Crown Court cases

- 2.11 This national thematic report presents the findings and recommendations of a joint inspection by HMICFRS and HMCPSI which analysed the disclosure process in detail and reviewed volume Crown Court cases at random, as well as those cases identified by the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) as failing because of an issue with disclosure.
- 2.12 An inability to deal with disclosure appropriately can have a negative impact on the efficiency of the justice system, incur extra costs and cause emotional distress to victims, witnesses and defendants.
- 2.13 The inspection identified a number of issues which contribute to widespread failures by both police and prosecutors.
- 2.14 The findings are being considered in the context for Northumbria Police.

3. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 There are no additional financial considerations arising from this report.

4. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 4.1 There are no legal considerations arising from the content of this report.

5. EQUALITY CONSIDERATIONS

- 5.1 There are no equality implications arising from the content of this report.

6. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 6.1 HMICFRS expects that progress is made in response to the recommendations and uses progress against previous recommendations to assess risk when considering future inspection activity.
- 6.2 The Force prepares action plans in response to HMICFRS findings, as appropriate, and delivery will be monitored at the Force Assurance Board and by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 The Committee is asked to note the recent inspection report.