

**Devon and Cornwall Police Authority Performance Management Committee**

**9 December 2005**

Open for the purposes of FOI

Joint Report of Deputy Chief Constable and the Chief Constable

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## **Forensic Performance**

### **Recommendation(s):**

- i. That the Committee note the progress of the use of forensic services within the area of domestic burglary and resulting performance improvement.**

### **Introduction / Summary**

1. This briefing provides details of the use of forensic science in providing a service to support the reduction and detection of crime. Concerns have been raised previously regarding the position of the Force nationally with its use of forensics. This has been particularly in the area of domestic burglary. As a result (and given trends in burglary detection) this briefing considers performance within the area of domestic burglary.

### **Background Information**

2. In 2004/5 64% of burglary scenes had SOCO attendance. This was the lowest nationally, with a decreasing trend in attendance being recorded. A 30% recovery rate for fingerprints (the 11th lowest nationally, and a 7% recovery of DNA (15th lowest nationally) was seen. 39% of DNA exhibits recovered resulted in an identification (14th highest nationally) and 22% of fingerprints (9th highest nationally). Overall conversion rates were low (2nd lowest nationally for fingerprints).
3. Both the Lanner and Carrier report contained a number of recommendations for improved performance of forensic services. Key to this is the provision of accurate, consistent and reliable performance information to allow local managers to manage their SOCO performance and investigation procedures. The implementation of SOCRATES will assist in this, although as an interim measure, the Trend and Performance Statistics (TAPS) performance monitoring tool has been expanded to provide forensic performance data.
4. As a result of improved data availability and subsequent improvements in performance management the following performance around the area of domestic burglary is seen. The accompanying PowerPoint presentation gives this information in a graphical format, and better presents trends
5. SOCO attendance at domestic burglary scenes has improved. The latest scene attendance figures are above 70%, with an increasing trend in performance being seen recently.
6. Exhibit recovery rates have improved for DNA, and remain stable for fingerprints. Identification rates are stable for DNA (even given the rise in recovery) and are increasing for fingerprints.
7. Conversion figures are only available for September and October (due to changes in data recording procedures to improve accuracy). However, over a quarter of domestic burglary identifications have already resulted in a detection, with many other cases ongoing (suspect being located). The number of no action is partially due to cases being added at the end of October and not being

progressed before month end and also partially to 'bedding in' of the data collection procedures in BCU's. In subsequent months the number of no actions should decrease significantly.

8. Detection of domestic burglary, prior to August was on a decreasing trend, lowest in the most similar family of forces, and highlighted within the PSU iQuanta overview chart. However, in recent months performance has improved significantly, with an increasing trend in performance now being recorded.
9. Forensic Spend. At the last PMC meeting, a request was made to compare spend on Forensics across Forces. A comparison between the percentage spend on forensics as a proportion of the budget is given on the next page. As is seen the Force spends around 1% of its budget on forensics. Most Forces spend between 1% and 2% of their budget on forensics. However, correlation between spend and performance is more complex. This is because the more exhibits taken and analysed the higher the cost, but this does not completely correlate with improved identifications and detections. Correlating outcomes with spend showed no significant correlation.

**Contact: for further information:**

Dr. Richard Bullock, Force Performance Analyst, tel: 01392 452812; email  
richard.bullock@devonandcornwall.pnn.police.uk

<b>Force</b>	<b>% of budget on Forensic (2004/5)</b>
North Yorkshire	0.20
Metropolitan Police	0.54
Gloucestershire	0.70
Cumbria	0.75
Avon and Somerset	0.90
Hertfordshire	0.94
Devon and Cornwall	1.01
Surrey	1.05
Thames Valley	1.10
South Wales	1.12
Cheshire	1.21
Essex	1.25
Humberside	1.29
Dyfed-Powys	1.31
Nottinghamshire	1.34
West Midlands	1.34
West Mercia	1.36
Leicestershire	1.38
Durham	1.38
Warwickshire	1.42
Cleveland	1.44
Kent	1.44
Suffolk	1.44
Northumbria	1.45
Wiltshire	1.49
South Yorkshire	1.59
Northamptonshire	1.62
Norfolk	1.62
Hampshire	1.66
Derbyshire	1.66
North Wales	1.67
Staffordshire	1.67
Cambridgeshire	1.70
Lincolnshire	1.76
Bedfordshire	1.81
Dorset	1.83
West Yorkshire	1.94
Merseyside	1.95
Greater Manchester	1.95
Sussex	2.15
Lancashire	2.51
Gwent	4.43