

Police Data Quality Review

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# Data Quality Review

**Devon and Cornwall Police Authority**

**Audit 2006/2007**

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# Introduction

## This report

- 1 This report presents the results of our review of data quality at Devon and Cornwall Police Authority (the Authority). The purpose of the review was to determine whether the Authority has robust arrangements in place to secure the quality of key performance data, and whether these arrangements are being applied in practice.
- 2 The work was undertaken during the period October 2006 to March 2007, as part of the appointed auditor's responsibility to examine the economy, efficiency and effectiveness of the Authority's use of resources under section 5(1)(e) of the Audit Commission Act 1998, and in accordance with the Commission's Code of Audit Practice and Standing Guidance for Auditors.
- 3 The results of the work will contribute to:
  - the auditor's conclusion on value for money, published in the annual governance report;
  - the Police Performance Assessment Framework (PPAF) published by the Home Office; and
  - an Audit Commission national report on police data quality, to be published in 2007.
- 4 This work has been undertaken as part of a partnership between the Commission and the Police and Crime Standards Directorate of the Home Office, with whom the results will be shared.

## Background

- 5 Good quality data is the essential ingredient for reliable performance and financial information to support decision making. The data used to report on performance must be fit for purpose, representing an organisation's activity in an accurate and timely manner.
- 6 Last year we reported that management arrangements for crime recording were 'good'. Our overall rating of the detailed data testing undertaken of the standard of crime recording was also 'good' and this represented sustained performance.

- 7 Last year we highlighted a number of strengths in the Authority and Force arrangements, in particular:
  - Leadership and accountability for crime recording was clear and robust.
  - Management arrangements relating to crime recording policy and administration had improved since our last review.
  - Risk focused audits were conducted throughout the year. Auditing had also been extended beyond 'crime related' incidents to cover all incident categories, eg public safety and anti-social behaviour.
- 8 To secure further improvements and address weaknesses found during the review last year the Force and Police Authority agreed to an action plan, for example, it agreed that to sustain the high standards of accuracy in crime recording performance the Force needed to promote the sharing of the skills and expertise of the Force Crime Registrar and to formalise the audit procedures.
- 9 Since we undertook our last review the Force has undergone a major restructure of the Command Team following the retirement of the Chief Constable in July 2006. A new Chief Constable was appointed and took up his post on 15 January 2007. More recently changes have been made to the membership and portfolios of the command team and the meeting structure.

## Audit approach

- 10 Our work has included the following elements:
  - review of the Authority's overall corporate arrangements to secure data quality, and the way in which it works with the Force to achieve this;
  - analysis of published performance information, and the systems for producing and reporting this; and
  - checks of supporting data at operational level.

Our assessments are reported using a four-band rating system, consistent with the categories used in Home Office PPAF assessments (Table 1):

**Table 1 Assessment categories**

<b>AC category</b>	<b>PPAF category</b>	<b>Descriptor</b>
4	Excellent	Arrangements that deliver well above minimum requirements for users, are highly cost-effective and fully contribute to the achievement of wider outcomes for the community - performing strongly.
3	Good	Arrangements that consistently deliver above minimum requirements for users, are cost-effective and make contributions to wider outcomes for the community - performing well.
2	Fair	Arrangements that deliver minimum requirements for users, but are not consistently cost-effective nor contribute significantly to wider outcomes for the community - adequate performance.
1	Poor	Arrangements that do not deliver minimum requirements for users, are not cost-effective and make little or no contribution to wider outcomes for the community - inadequate performance.

- 11 The focus of the second and third elements of this work has been on data relating to recorded crime and user satisfaction surveys, published as statutory performance indicators in the Home Office's Police Performance Assessment Framework (PPAF).
- 12 We have also considered in our review the implementation of the National Standard for Incident Recording, by assessing the arrangements being put in place and testing samples of data. The purpose of this work is to support the implementation of the national standard. The outcome is summarised briefly below, and is being reported separately to the Authority and the Force.
- 13 Where appropriate, we have applied a proportionate approach to this review, based on the results of our work on data quality in previous years, and of other relevant work. Wherever possible, we have also drawn on relevant HMIC findings.

## Main conclusions

- 14 The direction of travel for overall corporate arrangements to secure data quality has deteriorated over the last 12 months although the results of detailed data testing have improved.
- 15 There is continued commitment from senior officers within the Force to the integrity of crime recording. However, there are a number of weaknesses within the corporate management arrangements that increase the risk to this integrity. The organisation's commitment to data quality is not outlined in strategic documents. Accountability and responsibility for data quality is not cascaded well across the organisation or embedded. Different parts of the organisation have different levels of understanding and commitment to data quality. The Force has made some progress on ensuring that the skills and expertise of the Force Crime Registrar (FCR) are shared and has recently reviewed the contingency arrangements in place.
- 16 The Force has not yet formalised its audit procedures and it is unclear how risks are assessed. However, it has been able to increase the capacity of the audit team and has also relied significantly on the results of the compliance audits it undertakes, the results of which have been excellent for crime data. These are unlikely to be sustained without appropriate and equally robust management arrangements. Managers have also been slow to respond to deterioration in the compliance performance for the National Standard for Incident Recording - compliance testing within the Force has assessed this as poor.
- 17 The Police Authority has risk assessed data quality as a low priority due in part to previous good audit results in this area. However, this approach limits the challenge to the Force and slows decision making on deteriorating issues.

## Corporate arrangements for data quality

- 18 We assess the corporate arrangements for data quality as fair, providing adequate performance; this represents a deterioration in the direction of travel. (Table 2).

**Table 2 Arrangements for data quality**

	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	Direction of travel	
Devon and Cornwall Police Authority					↓	deteriorated

Source: Audit Commission

- 19 Devon and Cornwall's arrangements for securing data quality have deteriorated over the last 12 months. In this year's assessment the Audit Commission has examined the corporate management arrangements more robustly as well as how effectively these arrangements are embedded.
- 20 The Force can demonstrate that there is top level commitment to data quality through a number of channels including the role of the Force Crime Registrar, audit procedures, regularity control, ownership of systems and through regular monitoring and review. Responsibility for data quality has also been assigned within the organisation and the role of the Force Performance Board is well established. The organisation continually strives to improve data quality through the use of audits and the capacity in audit has recently been increased. Leadership was assessed as 'fair' in a recent HMIC baseline assessment. However, the organisation's commitment to data quality is not outlined in any key strategic documents and there is no overarching data quality strategy. Responsibility for data quality is not cascaded through the organisation and made explicit in roles and responsibilities of key personnel. Accountability and ownership of data quality is not embedded across the organisation. Different parts of the organisation have different levels of commitment and understanding of data quality.
- 21 Data quality reviews are reported appropriately and recommendations are routed through the line managers to the Force Performance Board. As a consequence of audit reviews Action Plans are drawn up and monitored by the Force Performance Officer. But there is no documented audit approach for compliance tests and it is unclear how risks are assessed. There are no defined audit programmes for data quality reviews and short term plans are subject to change. Senior management do not endorse audit plans or risk assessments. A particular risk for the Force is its reliance on the experience and skill of the Force Crime Registrar and the lack of contingency arrangements in place for this responsibility.. The Force has recently responded to the findings of this review with improved activities including a revised approach to audit programming and risk assessments through Force Tasking.
- 22 Clear guidance is available for the key systems and there are external data sharing protocols in place. However, there are no processes to validate data from third parties.
- 23 Good security arrangements have been established for the business critical systems. The Force has both a business continuity plan and a complete Disaster Recovery capability based on primary and support servers to provide backup in the event of failure. There is also a purpose built disaster recovery unit. However, the Force has a number of legacy IT systems that are not integrated and require human intervention. IT systems present a challenge for the Force to manage and Information management was recently assessed as 'fair' in a HMIC Baseline assessment (October 2006).

- 24 Data quality skills across the organisation are not strategically managed. The Force has not undertaken an assessment of the data quality skills that it has in place across the workforce. Instead it targets training to those responsible and although staff receive training on specific systems they work with there is no corporate training plan. Staff feel that training could be improved and is currently inconsistently applied across departments. They also feel that training is often out of date and updates are not cascaded effectively in the organisation. Training provided is not formally evaluated and adapted, for example, there is a self training package for NSIR on the intranet but usage is voluntary and the Force is not monitoring use. In response to the findings of this review the senior management team have approved this training as mandatory and will put in place evaluation processes. In a recent HMIC assessment training was graded as 'fair'.
- 25 There are no set data quality targets for staff and they are not proactively encouraged to improve data quality, for example the senior managers do not have this included within their personal targets.
- 26 To improve arrangements for data quality and achieve the next level of assessment the Force should consider the following actions which have been incorporated within the recommendations in Appendix 3.
- Develop a formal data quality strategy which covers all departments and functions. The strategy should be supported by a delivery plan and reflected in the Corporate Plan.
  - Communicate its commitment to data quality to staff throughout the organisation and include this within corporate documents.
  - Develop and implement clearly defined data quality objectives.
  - Document the compliance audit procedures including risk assessments and ensure audit plans are endorsed by senior managers.
  - Develop data quality targets for staff, including improvement targets.
  - Ensure the roles and responsibilities of data quality for all staff are clearly defined and incorporated into job descriptions and this is applied consistently throughout the organisation.
  - Develop and implement a Corporate Training programme to ensure consistency, help drive improvements and formalise the evaluation of training.

## The Police Authority role

- 27 Devon and Cornwall Police Authority's arrangements for data quality are fair; providing adequate performance. This represents a deterioration in the direction of travel. (Table 3).

**Table 3 Arrangements for data quality**

	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	Direction of travel	
Devon and Cornwall Police Authority					↓	deteriorated

Source: Audit Commission

- 28 The Police Authority arrangements for securing data quality contain a number of weaknesses, for example;
- The Authority's approach appears fragmented with the Performance Committee, Corporate Governance Committee and Planning and Consultation Committee all having responsibility for elements of data quality.
  - The lead member for NCRS and NSIR does not sit on the Performance Management Committee.
  - There is no formal training available routinely for members.
  - Some feel that the role of lead members lacks clarity.
  - The Authority has been slow to challenge the deterioration in NSIR compliance.
  - Data quality has not been assessed as high risk and is therefore not seen as a priority for the Authority at this time.
- 29 However, some strengths were also identified in the arrangements for securing data quality, including the following.
- The Authority has a lead member for NSIR and NCRS.
  - The Performance Committee meets every two months with regular updates on data quality.
  - The Performance Committee monitors action plans.
  - The Authority has recently improved capacity with the appointment of a Risk Officer to assist in challenging the Force.

## Results of data testing

- 30 Compliance with the National Crime Recording Standards is excellent. (Table 4).

**Table 4 Data testing results 2006/07**

Devon and Cornwall Police Authority	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	Direction of travel	
Crime data					↑	Improved
User satisfaction data						

Source: Audit Commission

### Crime data

- 31 There is a high standard of decision making in relation to crime and incident data and high standards of compliance with the National Crime Recording Standards. We assessed overall standards as excellent. However, there is a risk that these excellent results are unlikely to be sustained unless complemented by equally robust corporate arrangements.
- 32 In response to HMIC recommendations the Force now closes incident logs at the earliest opportunity and Communications staff are closing some incidents prematurely and risk failing to comply with the NCRS. Call handlers have responsibility for updating and finalising incidents. Details of reported incidents are e-mailed to a Neighbourhood Beat Manager for 'slow time' resolution and the incident log is closed. There is no cross reference for this action, the ability to audit the final resolution is lost and as a result the compliance with NCRS cannot be tested or assured.

### User satisfaction data

- 33 The Force has robust corporate arrangements in place to support the quality of user satisfaction information and this is assessed as good.
- 34 Data quality checks and performance reports are well managed. There are various data quality checks throughout the user satisfaction data collection process and systems are access-controlled and are both reliable and robust. Performance is reported regularly to the Force Performance and Targets Board, which is chaired by the Chief Constable. Data is signed off by a senior officer prior to submission to the Home Office (HO).

- 35 Members are not kept up to date with all Home Office recommendations. The results of the last Home Office data quality review were not formally reported to members. This included two recommended areas for improvement: adding a mandatory demographic question allowing respondents to answer 'do not wish to say' on postal questionnaires; and removal of erroneously included victim support questions in road traffic collision surveys. Although the Force disagreed with the latter recommendation, this means that members are unaware of relevant HO comments.
- 36 There is uncertainty about the future delivery of user satisfaction surveys. User satisfaction surveys are currently undertaken by post but this system is to be replaced by telephone surveys with effect from April 2007. A decision is pending on whether the function should remain in-house or be contracted-out. Nevertheless, staff have not yet received training on the forthcoming system and some familiarisation will be needed whichever service provision option is selected.
- 37 Some processes are weak. For example, there are no checks to ensure that BCUs have taken action to address feedback provided to them from victims who reported particularly unsatisfactory experiences. This means that opportunities to remedy systemic weaknesses may not have been realised.
- 38 Detailed testing of user satisfaction revealed a number of areas of good practice:
- all exclusions were found to be valid in our test sample;
  - the required number of responses was achieved over the relevant twelve month period; and
  - all core satisfaction questions were included in the relevant surveys.
- 39 There were also some weaknesses highlighted in the detailed testing, for example;
- there were some failures to issue victim satisfaction survey forms within the required timescale;
  - some transposition errors between hard-copy victim responses and the relevant recording database; and
  - some samples were unrepresentative.

### **National Standard for Incident Recording (NSIR)**

- 40 Compliance with the National Standard for Incident Recording has recently declined and this is evident from current audit activity undertaken by the FCR. The Force was a pilot site for the National Standard for Incident Recording and the codes in use have been adjusted to reflect developments over the last three years. However, the Force has not fully adopted the National Incident Category List (NICL) listing and alignment with the codes is not precise, consequently there are some anomalies in practice, although this does not affect data returns.

- 41 There is a risk that the quality of data and analysis of data may be wrong. Force Policy precludes the use of some codes where juveniles are the source of the problem and are wrongly categorising incidents.

## Published performance indicators

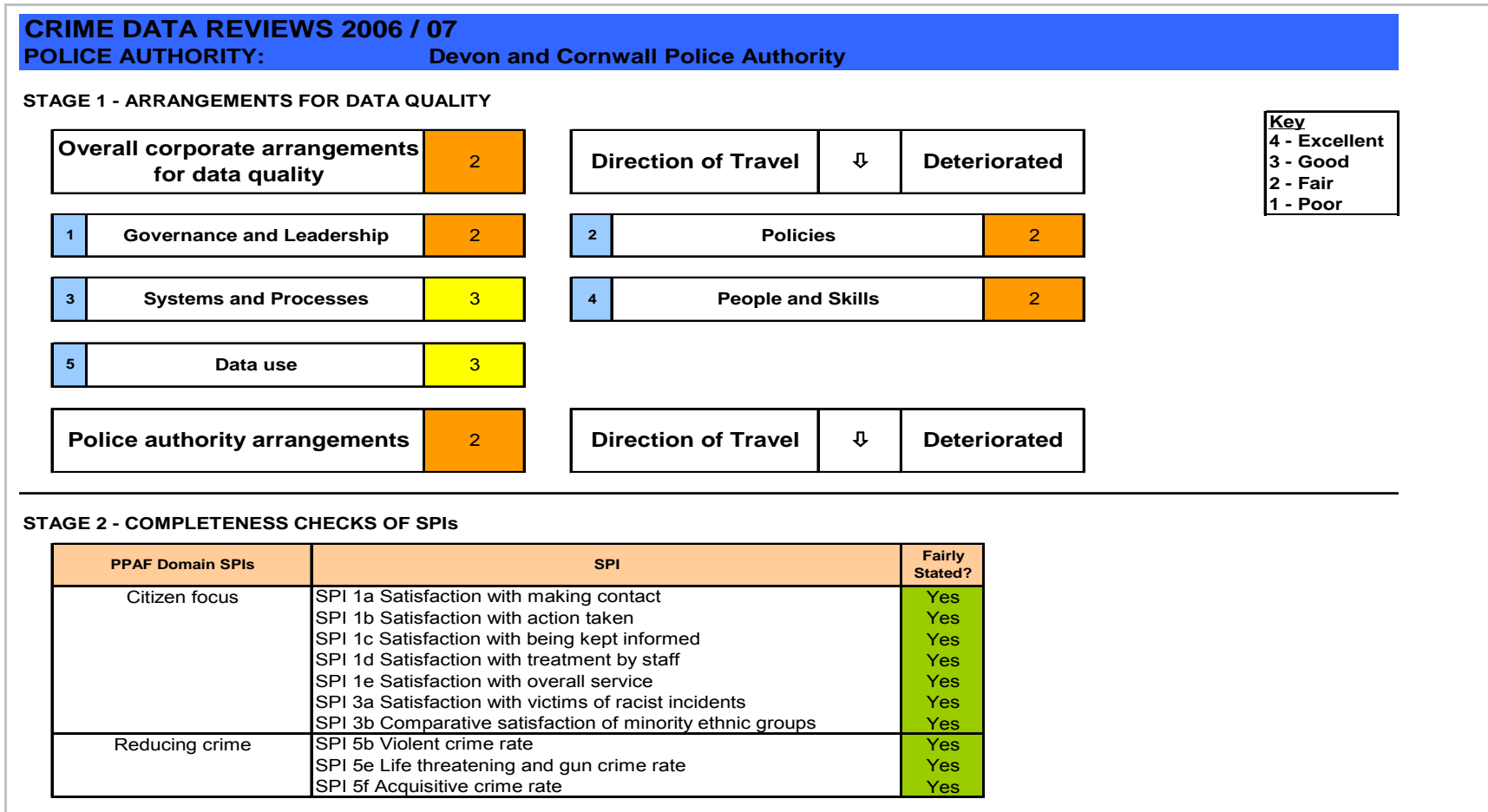
- 42 All Statutory Performance Indicators (SPIs) included within the review are fairly stated based on testing of samples. However, weaknesses were identified in the systems used to generate the indicators, for example:
- analysis of the system used to generate SPIs 5b, SPIs 5e and 5F (violent crime, life threatening and gun crime and acquisitive crime) revealed that prior year performance comparisons are not based on contemporaneous population figures, the most recently available figures being used instead. The Force believes that this mirrors the Home Office approach but we consider this results in erroneous prior year statistics; and
  - a review of the system used to generate SPI 5e-life threatening and gun crime-revealed that there are no independent checks on data exclusions by data input officers to ensure that these are valid. As there is a degree of subjectivity to these decisions, we consider checks would be beneficial to ensure that exclusions are robust.

## Overall conclusion on data quality

- 43 We conclude that there are proper arrangements in place for ensuring data quality. We will take this into account when issuing our value for money conclusion, which will be reported before the end of September 2007.

# Appendix 1 – Summary of results

Figure 1



Source: Audit Commission

Figure 2

STAGE 3 - DATA TESTING - RESULT FOR CRIME DATA REVIEW		
<b>Incident Investigation</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Rating</b>
Violent Crime	90%	Good
Fire arms related incidents	95%	Excellent
Burglary	100%	Excellent
Vehicle Crime	95%	Excellent
Acquisitive crime	95%	Excellent
Criminal damage	100%	Excellent
Disturbance	95%	Excellent
Domestic Violence	95%	Excellent
Racial Incidents	90%	Good
<b>Average percentage compliant</b>	<b>95%</b>	<b>Excellent</b>
<b>Crime Investigation</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Rating</b>
<b>Overall</b>	<b>96%</b>	<b>Excellent</b>
<b>Crime recording overall assessment</b>	Excellent	
<b>Crime recording direction of travel</b>	↑ Improved	
<b>User satisfaction</b>	<b>Rating</b>	
Sample selection	Fair	
Survey process	Excellent	
Survey data	Excellent	
<b>User satisfaction overall assessment</b>	Good	
<b>Overall assessment for the purposes of the VFM conclusion</b>		Yes
The body has put in place arrangements to monitor the quality of its published performance information, and to report the results to members.		

Source: Audit Commission

## Appendix 2 – Findings and conclusions

### Arrangements for data quality

KLOE	Assessment	Findings	Conclusions and recommendations
<p>1 Governance and leadership Has the body put in place arrangements at a senior level to secure the quality of data used to manage and report on performance?</p>	<p>Fair</p>	<p>Responsibility for data quality has been assigned within the organisation. The DCC has responsibility.</p> <p>The Force demonstrates its commitment to DQ through the audit procedures, regularity control and ownership of systems. However the organisation's commitment to DQ is not outlined in key strategic documents and different sections within the Force have different levels of understanding and commitment to DQ. Key personnel have data quality defined as part of their responsibilities, although improving data quality is not included in personal targets. Front line staff have clear responsibility and ownership of the accuracy of data, for example capability proceedings are linked to staff performance and error rates.</p> <p>The Force Crime Registrar continually monitors and reviews data quality and reports are produced as a result. These are presented quarterly to the management team and monthly to the Heads of Departments and BCU commanders to identify individual issues. Actions to remedy issues are also monitored. Issues relating to data quality are included in regular audit reports presented to the Performance Board.</p>	<p>The Force can demonstrate that there is top level commitment to data quality and performance information and that the organisation's commitment is demonstrated internally - however this is not verified in key corporate documents, such as the corporate plan.</p> <p>The DCC has overall strategic responsibility for data quality and this accountability is clear across the organisation. However the responsibility of staff is not formally cascaded, different parts of the organisation have different levels of understanding and commitment and accountability across the organisation is not yet embedded. Although data quality is part of the FCR and audit staff appraisals neither the Force Crime Registrar or his staff have specific targets for improving the quality of data.</p> <p>The organisation works well to improve data quality through its auditing arrangements for major systems but there are no defined targets or plans in place for this work.</p> <p>There is continual monitoring and review being undertaken by the FCR. Reports are produced as a result of this monitoring. Quarterly reports go to the management team and deal with themes and trends. The audit programmes are devised to reflect risks identified by the FCR from previous audit activities. These 'risks' are not agreed at a Senior Manager level.</p>

KLOE	Assessment	Findings	Conclusions and recommendations
		<p>The management team is currently being re-organised and new departments set up to manage the Force work, this includes a new department which will hold responsibilities for professional standards, performance and inspection.</p> <p>The Force Review and Inspection Unit address performance issues and conduct compliance checks. The Force does not have an overarching data quality strategy. It continues to strive to improve through the use of audits.</p> <p>Capacity in audit has recently been increased.</p> <p>Although the work and audit programmes address relevant issues there is no documented approach to the audits, it is unclear how risks are assessed and there is no long term plan. The Force is highly reliant on the experience and skills of the Force Crime Registrar.</p> <p>Data quality is not part of the corporate risk assessments and risks identified in drawing up audit programmes are not agreed at a senior management level. In response to this review the Force has already begun to address these issues.</p>	<p>R1 Strengthen succession planning to ensure adequate contingency arrangements are in place.</p> <p>R2 Strengthen the audit approach and procedures to undertake risk based compliance audits.</p> <p>R4 Outline the organisation's commitment to data quality in key documents and ensure this message is reinforced across the organisation.</p>

KLOE	Assessment	Findings	Conclusions and recommendations
<p>2 Policies Has the body defined its expectations and requirements in relation to data quality?</p>	<p>Fair</p>	<p>There is no overarching data quality policy but there are a number of policies that support systems on an operational level. There is clear guidance available for NSIR and NCRS. A number of procedures and guidance notes are in place but these do not cover all aspects of data quality across all business areas. For example, IT systems are a challenge for the Force. Many legacy systems are not integrated and require human intervention. Relevant staff, ie those inputting data, have operational procedures to follow and easy access to the guidance available on the intranet. NCRS sets clear standards and there is written guidance and on line guidance available to users. Data quality for systems is assigned to the system owners. There are good mechanisms in place to monitor compliance - the FCR, has responsibility for the audit programmes - NSIR, NCRS and Crime Compliance - these are devised to reflect the risks identified from previous audit activities.</p>	<p>There is no overarching data quality policy in place but there are a number of policies that support systems at an operational level. Data quality for systems is assigned to system owners. There is clear guidance available for NSIR and NCRS. A number of procedures and guidance notes are in place but these do not cover all aspects of data quality across all business areas. Relevant staff have access to guidance and there are dedicated staff for training in the Communications Room. There are good mechanisms in place to monitor compliance. Instances of failure to comply with national standards are dealt with appropriately. The Force provides updates on national standards in a timely fashion published via the intranet. R5 Develop a data quality strategy to enforce key principles with clearly defined data quality objectives.</p>

KLOE	Assessment	Findings	Conclusions and recommendations
		<p>Hence, 'people crimes' in particular hate, sexual and domestic violence are foci for attention while 'property crime' (with the exception of damage to dwelling) has a lower priority. The FCR has a basic agenda but neither the analysis nor programme is agreed at any senior level. The programmes have to be flexible to reflect the dynamic nature of emerging priorities - current activity is focusing on detection compliance and the use of Penalty Notices. The Force tests compliance against corporate policies through the Force Crime and Incident Registrar who actively checks policy compliance as well as audit. The Force provides updates on national standards in a timely fashion published via the intranet.</p>	
<p>3 Systems and processes Are there effective systems and processes in place to secure the quality of data?</p>	<p>Good</p>	<p>The Force audits key systems regularly and weaknesses are dealt with appropriately. It also recognises the importance of a 'right first time' culture but staff feel that more needs to be done to achieve this.</p> <p>The Force has recently changed processes to help drive improvements in data quality; this has led to fewer inputters of data which allows for greater expertise and focused training.</p> <p>Support is available to staff- there are dedicated training officers in the communications room. Support for other staff is provided through system owners. User guides are also available on the intranet and in hard copy.</p>	<p>The key systems in place are performing well. Appropriate controls are in place and high level reviews of data are carried out before reporting to senior managers.</p> <p>There are security arrangements in place for the business critical performance information system. Procedure notes and manuals are in place for performance information system. The Force Review and Inspection unit addresses performance issues and conducts implementation and compliance checks. They also check compliance with policy.</p>

KLOE	Assessment	Findings	Conclusions and recommendations
		<p>Key personnel are confident in the systems in place which they feel are reliable. Data is integrated into wider business planning.</p> <p>There are appropriate system controls in place, with delegated levels of security. Regular and enforced password changes are in place; access controls are in place and lock downs after a screen has been inactive for a predetermined period. System owners regularly review the effectiveness of controls.</p> <p>The Force has appropriate arrangements in place for the business critical performance information system. There is a business continuity plan and a complete Disaster Recovery capability based on primary and support servers to provide backup in the event of failure. There is a purpose built disaster recovery unit at Plymouth.</p> <p>Where there are instances of sharing data protocols have been put in place and the Force Information Officer has developed standard data sharing protocols to be used across the Force.</p>	<p>The organisation has a proforma protocol for data sharing which has been developed by the Force Information Officer and all relevant standards are complied with. However there are no processes in place to validate data from third parties.</p> <p>The organisation does recognise the importance of right first time culture but more needs to be done to achieve this.</p>

KLOE	Assessment	Findings	Conclusions and recommendations
<p>4 People and skills Does the body have the resources in place to secure data quality?</p>	<p>Fair</p>	<p>The Force has not undertaken an assessment of data quality skills across the organisation. However, senior managers put in place appropriate induction training and support where necessary. The Force concentrates on the competence of supervisors to manage day to day operational activities to a good standard. Key staff are clear about their responsibilities; this is from the top senior management level, DCC and the Force Performance Manager, FCR to call centre staff. However, some staff indicated that because there is not a strict 'right first time' culture, not all staff accept responsibility; some staff felt 'that other areas of the Force do not appreciate the significance of correct data'. Also staff felt that an 'Overall view is that Communications don't accept that they own NSIR compliance'. Staff also felt that training could be improved and the approach to training was currently inconsistently applied across departments</p> <p>There are no set data quality targets for staff and staff are not proactively encouraged to improve data quality. Key personnel, such as FCR, does not have specific data quality targets. The FCR believes he has only limited influence to deliver improvements in data quality. Improving the quality of data is not included in the Force Auditors' personal targets. Compliance targets are set and much effort is made in achieving these.</p>	<p>Data quality skills across the organisation are not strategically managed. The Force has not undertaken an assessment of the data quality skills that it has in place across the workforce instead training is targeted at those with responsibility. Although staff were clear about their responsibility for data quality this was not formally written. There are no set data quality targets for staff and staff are not proactively encouraged to improve data quality. Key personnel such as FCR do not have specific data quality targets.</p> <p>Although staff have received training on the specific systems they work with and guidance and dedicated training staff are available in some areas there is no corporate training plan. Staff also felt that training was out of date and updates are not cascaded in the organisation. Training is not formally evaluated and adapted. The Force prioritises its training and focuses on supervisors however some staff felt that training could be improved and be more consistent across the organisation.</p> <p>R6 Undertake a review of staff data quality skills and develop and implement training programmes across the organisation to ensure consistency and help drive improvements. Evaluate the training to ensure it is effective.</p> <p>R7 Define the roles and responsibilities of data quality for all staff and incorporate into job descriptions. Set data quality targets for staff and evaluate at staff performance appraisals.</p>

KLOE	Assessment	Findings	Conclusions and recommendations
		<p>The NSIR compliance relies heavily on the Communications Staff and this function has suffered personnel difficulties recently. As a consequence NSIR compliance has deteriorated from good to poor in recent months.</p>	
<p>5 Data use Are there effective arrangements and controls in place for the use of data by the body?</p>	<p>Good</p>	<p>The Force uses data well. Its performance analysis and task allocation is reported to those charged with governance and used in day to day management. The Force holds tactical tasking meetings every fortnight which examines intelligence on offenders, trends, locations for problem solving and direct intervention. The analysis uses weekly crime volumes, predictive analysis and intelligence assessments leading to the allocation and direction of specialist units. The reviews include full consideration of service quality issues and public confidence issues. The Force uses exception reporting when necessary. Management action is taken appropriately in light of issues identified by data returns and performance information reports. This is undertaken through the tactical tasking meetings. Performance analysis uses prediction to help allocate resources to key areas of activity. This is undertaken through the fortnightly tactical tasking meetings. The performance reviews involve full consideration of service quality issues.</p>	<p>The Force uses data well. Its performance analysis and task allocation is reported to those charged with governance and used in day to day management. Management action is taken appropriately in light of issues identified by data returns and performance information reports. Senior managers routinely use data supporting performance information to plan and allocate resources. This is undertaken through the tactical tasking meetings. All data returns have a full audit trail and verification controls are in place. Data is submitted in a timely and is subject to senior approval.</p>

KLOE	Assessment	Findings	Conclusions and recommendations
		<p>Senior managers routinely use data supporting performance information to plan and allocate resources. This is undertaken through the tactical tasking meetings.</p> <p>All data returns have a full audit trail and verification controls are in place and are verified through the Unit Supervisor (DATA services unit). Data is submitted in a timely fashion 'Data is submitted to a clearly defined schedule which complies with the HO requirements'.</p> <p>All data is subject to senior approval.</p>	

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## The police authority role

KLOE	Assessment	Findings	Conclusions and recommendations
<p>1 Governance and leadership Has the body put in place arrangements at a senior level to secure the quality of data used to manage and report on performance?</p>	<p>Fair</p>	<p>The Police Authority has a dedicated lead member for data quality. Responsibility for this role has recently changed and the lead member does not currently sit on the Performance Committee.</p> <p>The Police Authority Performance Committee considers data quality, the Corporate Governance Committee considers risks and the Planning and Consultation Committee considers victim satisfaction. This is fragmented and there is little evidence of members challenging the quality of data provided to them. There is evidence of members challenging performance. The Performance Committee has seen recent improvements and the new Chair wants the Committee to be more proactive and receive reports that are more than 'to note'.</p>	<p>Arrangements to secure the quality of data are adequate but there is little evidence that members challenge this.</p> <p>R8 Ensure that the lead member for NCRS and NSIR performance sits on the Performance Management Committee to ensure a co-ordinated response to performance issues.</p>
<p>2 Policies Has the body defined its expectations and requirements in relation to data quality?</p>	<p>Fair</p>	<p>There is no overarching strategy for data quality. The Police Authority has risk assessed data quality as a low priority. The Police Authority has free access to the Force information but has not defined its expectations or requirements for data quality in a protocol.</p>	<p>There is no overall strategy for data quality in place although the Police Authority is happy with the reports produced and presented to them.</p> <p>R9 Develop a protocol to be agreed between the Authority and the Force which sets out expectations and requirements for data quality.</p>

KLOE	Assessment	Findings	Conclusions and recommendations
<p>3 Systems and processes Are there effective systems and processes in place to secure the quality of data?</p>	Fair	<p>The Performance Committee meets every two months and Data quality updates on NCRS and NSIR are presented to each committee. The Committee also monitors progress against action plans. The Authority sets up Task and Finish groups to deal with specific problems. It has also appointed a Risk Officer to assist in challenging the Force. The Police Authority has been slow to respond to the fall in data quality in NSIR compliance.</p>	<p>Systems and processes are adequate. The Performance Committee considers NCRS and NSIR and monitors progress against action plans. However, it has been slow to respond to a fall in performance in NSIR compliance.</p>
<p>4 People and skills Does the body have the resources in place to secure data quality?</p>	Fair	<p>The lead officer in the PA is experienced and competent. However, some felt that the responsibilities and role of lead members is unclear and the Authority has not undertaken a skill mix of members to match competencies and responsibilities. The Authority is looking to improve member understanding through its induction training. However there is no formal training for data quality and no plans to implement this to cover this area of responsibility. Commitment and engagement is variable, for example a recent training programme had only one attendee. The Authority does offer 'on-line training' to its members but this could be extended.</p>	<p>There is a good level of Officer experience and competence in the Police Authority but commitment and engagement is variable amongst members. Training for members needs to be improved. R10 Undertake a skills mix of members to link competencies to roles and responsibilities and ensure that these are set out and communicated. R11 Extend the provision of on-line training for members in key areas to facilitate learning.</p>
<p>5 Data use Are there effective arrangements and controls in place for the use of data by the body?</p>	Good	<p>Reports are presented to the Performance Committee and there are effective arrangements in place. The Authority has access to the Force data and good quality reports.</p>	<p>Effective arrangements are in place for the use of data.</p>

### SPI completeness checks

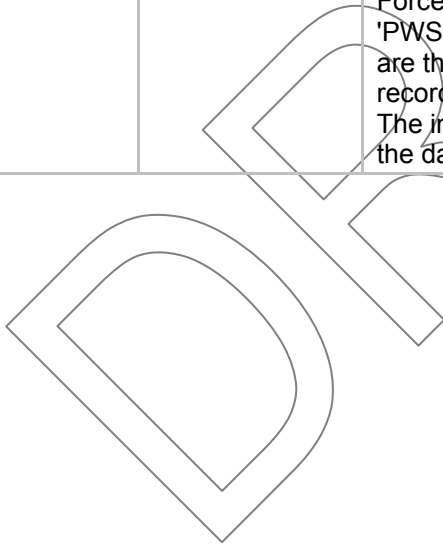
SPI		Assessment	Findings	Conclusions and recommendations
1	User satisfaction	Fairly stated	<p>The inter-year performance variance was analysed for the last two years and considered reasonable. Performance improved marginally for SPI 1a between 2004/05 and 2005/06, but the other four indicators are unchanged. Overall performance remains below the most similar forces average, in some cases to a considerable degree.</p> <p>A senior officer has been charged with identifying measures to try to secure improved satisfaction levels.</p>	The SPI is fairly stated.
3	Satisfaction of ethnic groups	Fairly stated	<p>The inter-year performance variance was analysed for the last two years and considered reasonable. Overall performance deteriorated significantly between 2004/05 and 2005/06 so that the force is now below the MSF average. Satisfaction levels are similar between white and ethnic minority victims.</p> <p>A senior officer has been charged with identifying measures to try to secure improved satisfaction levels.</p>	The SPI is fairly stated.

SPI	Assessment	Findings	Conclusions and recommendations
5b	Violent crime rate	<p>Fairly stated</p> <p>The inter-year performance variance was analysed for the last two years and considered reasonable. Performance improved between 2004/05 and 2005/06 and is now better than the MSF average. Analysis of the system used to generate this SPI and SPIs 5e and 5F revealed that prior year performance comparisons are not based on contemporaneous population figures, the most recently available figures being used instead. The force believes that this mirrors the Home Office approach but we consider this results in erroneous prior year statistics.</p>	<p>The SPI is fairly stated.</p> <p>R12 The Force should use the correct population estimates when calculating prior year crime rates for comparison purposes.</p>
5e	Life threatening and gun crime	<p>Fairly stated</p> <p>The inter-year performance variance was analysed for the last two years and considered reasonable. Performance improved marginally between 2004/05 and 2005/06 but is now slightly worse than the MSF average. Analysis of the system used to generate this SPI revealed that there are no independent checks on data exclusions by data input officers to ensure that these are valid.</p>	<p>The SPI is fairly stated.</p> <p>R13 Introduce checks to ensure that exclusions from life threatening and gun crime SPIs are valid.</p>
5f	Acquisitive crime	<p>Fairly stated</p> <p>This is a new indicator. The inter-year performance variance was analysed for the first three quarters of 2005/06 and 2006/07 and considered reasonable. Performance has improved marginally. No inter-force comparative data is yet available.</p>	<p>The SPI is fairly stated.</p>

## Data testing

Data	Assessment	Findings	Conclusions and recommendations
<p><b>Crime data</b></p>	<p>Excellent</p>	<p>In response to HMIC recommendations the Force seeks to close incident logs at the earliest opportunity and as a result Communications staff are closing some incidents prematurely and risk failing to comply with the NCRS. Constables do not have access to the 'command and control' logs and therefore call handlers have the task of updating and finalising incidents. This ensures operational staff are released for front line duties.</p> <p>Details of reported incidents are e-mailed to a Neighbourhood Beat Manager for 'slow time' resolution and the incident log will be closed. However the compliance with the NCRS 72 Hour rule cannot be tested or assured because there is no cross reference for this action, and the ability to audit the final resolution is lost.</p>	<p>Compliance is excellent with regard to Crime Data however there is risk of failing to comply with the NCRS through some new practices.</p>

Data	Assessment	Findings	Conclusions and recommendations
NSIR	Poor	<p>The Force was a pilot site for the National Standard for Incident Recording. Compliance might have been expected to be high because of this but there has been a recent serious decline in standards- this has been identified through the Force audit activity.</p> <p>The NICL listing is not fully adopted and the alignment with the codes is not precise. There are some anomalies in practice for example, 'matched log' is used as an equivalent to the NICL coding 'Admin-Duplicate.</p> <p>Because the Force was a pilot the codes in use have been adjusted to reflect developments over the last three years. Force Policy prohibits the use of 'PWS-domestic incident' where juveniles are the problem. These incidents are recorded as 'ASB-Rowdy/Inconsiderate. The impact of this will inhibit the quality of the data and analysis.</p>	<p>The Force audit activity has identified a recent and serious decline in performance which needs to be addressed as a matter of urgency.</p> <p>R3 Address the deterioration in NSIR performance.</p>



Data	Assessment	Findings	Conclusions and recommendations
<p><b>User satisfaction</b></p>	<p>Good</p>	<p>Data quality checks and performance reports are well managed. There are various data quality checks throughout the user satisfaction data collection process and systems are access-controlled and are both reliable and robust.</p> <p>Performance is reported regularly to the Force Performance and Targets Board, which is chaired by the Chief Constable. Data is signed off by a senior officer prior to submission to the Home Office (HO).</p> <p>Nevertheless we found some weaknesses relating to information provided to authority members, training arrangements and the conduct of surveys, Members are not kept up to date with all Home Office recommendations. The results of the last Home Office data quality review were not formally reported to members. This included two recommended areas for improvement: adding a mandatory demographic question allowing respondents to answer “do not wish to say” on postal questionnaires; and removal of erroneously included victim support questions in road traffic collision surveys. Although the Force disagreed with the latter recommendation, this means that members are unaware of relevant HO comments.</p> <p>There is uncertainty about the future delivery of user satisfaction surveys. User satisfaction surveys are currently undertaken by post but this system is to be replaced by telephone surveys with effect from April 2007. A decision is pending on whether the function should remain in-house or be contracted-out.</p>	<p>Data quality checks and performance reports are well managed User satisfaction arrangements are generally sound but some improvements are needed:</p> <p>Performance is reported regularly to the Force Performance and Targets Board, which is chaired by the Chief Constable. Data is signed off by a senior officer prior to submission to the Home Office (HO).</p> <p>The results of the last Home Office data quality review were not formally reported to members. There is uncertainty about the future delivery of user satisfaction surveys. User satisfaction surveys are currently undertaken by post but this system is to be replaced by telephone surveys with effect from April 2007.</p> <p>Some processes are weak. For example, there are no checks to ensure that BCUs have taken action to address feedback provided to them from victims who reported particularly unsatisfactory experiences.</p> <p>R14 Ensure that the results of all external reviews are reported to the Police Authority to enable members to challenge performance.</p> <p>R15 Ensure victim satisfaction survey forms are issued within the required timescales, are transposed correctly and that samples are representative.</p>

Data	Assessment	Findings	Conclusions and recommendations
		<p>Nevertheless, staff have not yet received training on the forthcoming system and some familiarisation will be needed whichever service provision option is selected.</p> <p>Some processes are weak. For example, there are no checks to ensure that BCUs have taken action to address feedback provided to them from victims who reported particularly unsatisfactory experiences. This means that opportunities to remedy systemic weaknesses may not have been realised.</p> <p>Detailed testing of user satisfaction revealed a number of areas of good practice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>all exclusions were found to be valid in our test sample</li> <li>the required number of responses was achieved over the relevant twelve month period; and</li> <li>all core satisfaction questions were included in the relevant surveys.</li> </ul> <p>There were also some weaknesses highlighted in the detailed testing, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• there were some failures to issue victim satisfaction survey forms within the required timescale; and</li> <li>• some transposition errors between hard-copy victim responses and the relevant recording database; and some samples were unrepresentative.</li> </ul>	

## Appendix 3 – Action Plan

Recommendation	Priority 1 = Low 2 = Med 3 = High	Responsibility	Agreed	Comments	Date
<b>Devon and Cornwall Police Authority</b>					
R1 Strengthen succession planning to ensure adequate contingency arrangements are in place.	3	DCC - Tony Melville/Ch Supt Ansell	Yes	Compile process map of the audit and compliance unit roles, responsibilities and working practices	30/09/07
R2 Strengthen the audit approach and procedures to undertake risk based compliance audits .	3	DCC - Tony Melville/Ch Supt Ansell	Yes	Prepare a 12 month audit programme on all OIS incident data and identify the risk based approach agreed via the Force Performance and Improvement Tasking Board (PIT)	30/09/07
R3 Address the deterioration in NSIR performance.	3		Yes	Comments still awaited	
R4 Outline the organisation's commitment to data quality in key documents and ensure this message is reinforced across the organisation.	2	ACC (CF)	Yes	To include Data Quality within the re-write of the IM Strategy. To be discussed with the new ACC on appointment .	31/08/07
R5 Develop a data quality strategy to enforce key principles with clearly defined data quality	2	ACC (CF)	Yes	To review the organisation's strategy documents in order to obtain sign-up to an effective document for D&CC	31/08/07

Recommendation	Priority 1 = Low 2 = Med 3 = High	Responsibility	Agreed	Comments	Date
objectives.					
R6 Undertake a review of staff data quality skills and develop and implement training programmes across the organisation to ensure consistency and help drive improvements. Evaluate the training to ensure it is effective.	2	ACC (CF)	Yes	To implement the national training package for MoPI which includes the requirement for accuracy in the collection and recording of information. D/Segt Tony Cook, of the D&CC MoPI Work Group is meeting with other regional reps on 31/05/07 to QA the national computer based training package that includes the data Quality units.	31/08/07
R7 Define the roles and responsibilities of data quality for all staff and incorporate into job descriptions. Set data quality targets for staff and evaluate at staff performance appraisals.	2	ACC (CF)	Yes	To discuss with HR the requirement for the core competencies of all relevant roles to contain reference to data accuracy/quality. Meeting to be held 24/05/07	31/08/07
R8 Ensure that the lead member for NCRS and NSIR performance sits on the Performance Management Committee to ensure a co-ordinated response to performance issues.	3			Police Authority to formally consider the report at the Corporate Governance Committee on 5 June 2007 and to ask Members to decide on what action they wish to take.	
R9 Develop a protocol to be agreed between the Authority and the	2			Police Authority to formally consider the report at the Corporate	

Recommendation	Priority 1 = Low 2 = Med 3 = High	Responsibility	Agreed	Comments	Date
Force which sets out expectations and requirements for data quality.				Governance Committee on 5 June 2007 and to ask Members to decide on what action they wish to take.	
R10 Undertake a skills mix of members to link competencies to roles and responsibilities and ensure that these are set out and communicated.	3			Police Authority to formally consider the report at the Corporate Governance Committee on 5 June 2007 and to ask Members to decide on what action they wish to take.	
R11 Extend the provision of on-line training for members in key areas to facilitate learning.	2			Police Authority to formally consider the report at the Corporate Governance Committee on 5 June 2007 and to ask Members to decide on what action they wish to take.	
R12 The Force should use the correct population estimates when calculating prior year crime rates for comparison purposes.	2		Yes	Comments still awaited	
R13 Introduce checks to ensure that exclusions from life threatening and gun crime SPIs are valid.	2		Yes	Comments still awaited	
R14 Ensure that the results of all external reviews are reported to the Police Authority to enable members to challenge	2			Police Authority to formally consider the report at the Corporate Governance Committee on 5 June 2007 and to ask Members to decide on	

Recommendation	Priority 1 = Low 2 = Med 3 = High	Responsibility	Agreed	Comments	Date
performance.				what action they wish to take.	
R15 Ensure victim satisfaction survey forms are issued within the required timescales, are transposed correctly and that samples are representative.	2		Achieved	Victim satisfaction surveys within the Force have moved to an in-house Telephone Surveying methodology. Samples are drawn according to mandated timescales and survey interviews only conducted within the appropriate timeframes. Offences and incidents that miss this timeframe are removed from the available sample base by the Survey Supervisor. Survey responses are input directly by the interviewers at the time of interview and the accuracy of the input is monitored by the Survey Supervisor.	NFA

